

**O'Sullivan, Marie, 2003, *Effective Leadership in Second level Schools: Some Staff Perceptions.***

### **ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION**

This study is an analysis of the perceptions of effective leadership among the *staff* of three second level schools. This is achieved by exploring models of leadership that have been put forward as effective and creating a questionnaire reflecting those views.

The focus of this study was threefold:

- Firstly to establish what staff perceive effective leadership to be.
- Secondly, to analyse whether a gulf exists between the theory of effective leadership and the reality of same.
- Finally, it explored whether the perception of effective leadership changes according to the student body taught or school type one teaches in.

Data were gathered by means of a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Among findings of interest was the support for the transformational style of leadership, mixed views on visionary leadership and overwhelming support for the disciplinary function of school leadership.

Drawing on the findings, the author sees the need primarily for training in leadership for all those involved in senior management within schools. This would enable leaders within schools to facilitate staff needs, embrace societal changes and engage new legislation without fear.