Title: Critical factors that facilitated the conversion of Muslims in the Garut District West Java province Indonesia

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Abstract:

The central focus of the study is to determine the critical factors that facilitated the conversion of Muslims in the Garut District, West Java Province, Indonesia. The study was conducted among 280 Garut Seventh-day Adventist church members. They were asked to respond to a self-constructed instrument validated within the context of Garut community. Descriptive statistics were used to find out the level of agreement to the factors such as barriers to their conversion, internal and external influences that led to their conversion, evangelism and contextualization, and church growth strategies used by pastors and church members to enhance and nurture the spiritual growth of the newly converted Garut SDA church members.

The study showed that Garut people give more emphasis on informality and openness. They are friendly, show a sense of respect to other people, very cooperative and accommodating.

Although many obstacles impeded the path of evangelism concerning Garut people, however, it is evident that many open doors also existed for the Gospel. The study discovered that there are specific contributing factors and mission strategies which have contributed to the significant growth of SDA church in Garut. Of first importance is the role and work of the Holy Spirit as a driving force for Garut conversion and growth. Furthermore, cultural approach, community services such as charity clinic and micro-economic development, training for pastors...
and laymen, and contextualization strategies, were among the very effective and applicable strategies.

Furthermore, based on the finding of the research, the Garut conversion and growth model is proposed as effective factors and mission strategy for winning the Garut people for Christ and how they can be nurtured in their new found faith.

The recommendations of the study include the equipping and training pastors from other ethnic groups before deploying them into the mission field. Community services like charity clinics, health programs, nutrition seminars including micro-economic development program can be integrated with other mission strategies. Increased contextualization and more nurturing strategies should be employed to ensure authentic conversion and spiritual growth.