**Title:** A study of the Seoul Seventh-day Adventist English Language School with special focus on evangelism

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**Abstract:**

Although the Seoul SDA English Language School has operated for nineteen years, there has been no systematic research on the impact of this method of evangelism on the growth of the church in Korea.

A historical study of the Seoul SDA English Language School (SELS) was done by using reports made by the English Language School and Church. A questionnaire was used to gather data from the church members who were baptized through the language school, and who are attending church in Seoul.

SELS was established in Seoul in 1969 with the purpose of spreading the gospel. In 1986 SELS had 7,403 English students and six branch language schools. Its finances are covered by the English students’ tuition fees. English and Bible courses are taught by student missionaries. They cooperate with the chaplains in evangelistic activities, which include Bible classes and meetings. The SELS Church operates an evangelism and nurture program in conjunction with the school.

From 1969 to 1986, 714 persons were baptized into SDA Church through SELS evangelism. Of these, 461 persons appear to have become backsliders. Most of those who stayed
in the SDA Church remained at the SELS Church. Through SELS, 14 churches were established during that period. Many of the baptized members became SDA institutional workers. Many English students obtained a better understanding of Christianity and Adventism, and misconceptions about the SDA Church were cleared.

A survey was conducted of 50 persons baptized through SELS, found to be attending church in Seoul. These were mostly economically unstable college and university graduate young adults. They were led into SDA Church through Bible classes and Bible meetings, evangelistic meetings, youth meetings, and personal work. Because of the fellowship of church members and pastoral workers, and their conviction of truth as well, they remained in Adventism.

Conclusions

The chaplains’ duties are very heavy. Bible class materials are not adequate for the students. The Voice of Prophecy (VOP) course material is too doctrinal. Religious pamphlets and VOP course material are effective are effective in personal Bible teaching. Church-related activities in cooperation with SELS are effective in attracting and keeping new members.

Recommendations

More chaplains should be hired to do evangelistic work. Culturally seasoned material for Bible classes is needed. Bible class material should be revised according to the students’ needs. Chaplains’ time should not be used for other non-evangelistic jobs. Church members should learn how to do personal Bible teaching. Church-related activities for SELS students should continue to be emphasized. It is imperative to explore ways of reaching whole family through the SELS student who become interested in the Bible.