

The Mediating Role of Disciple-making Process in the Relationship of Church Ministry Programs and Church Membership Retention

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Abstract: The church needs to grow to accomplish its mission. In the past 14 years, the churches at East Indonesia Union Conference (EIUC) have added 56,984 members through baptism and profession of faith. However, 23,106 members have dropped out or have been missing in that duration of time. It appears that there is a need to determine the factors that contribute in the retention of members at EIUC. To approach the issue of church retention, a theory emerges indicating that church ministry program (CMP) with the mediation of disciple-making process (DMP), can explain church membership retention (CMR). This theory is tested in this study.

This research employs a correlation method with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The study uses a self-designed questionnaire which is validated by the panel of experts. Using convenience sampling, the respondents are chosen to represent the members of EIUC churches. The study determines predictive variables to look contributions of CMP, DMP, and demographic variables to CMR. Lastly, the mediating role of DMP is taken to establish the model for CMR using SEM.

This study is organized in 5 parts. The first part contains the overview of the study. Part 2 discusses the literature review of the biblical-theological and theoretical principles of CMR, DMP, and CMP. In particular, it presents the different dimensions for each variable. Likewise, this chapter includes the discussion of the variables. Part 3 discusses the methodology of the study. Part 4 presents the analysis and findings of the study. Lastly, part 5 presents the summary of the findings.

Keywords: Church membership retention, discipleship, church ministry programs, membership nurturing