

New Dimensions of Expansion of Evangelical Groups in Sri Lanka.

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The paper focuses on the new dimensions of evangelical groups established in Sri Lanka. It is evident that conversion growth of evangelical groups is on rapid influx. Hence they exploit effective strategies to increase the affiliation to their evangelical resurgence. Therefore there is a new dimension of their missionary praxis. The objective of the study was to socially analyze the religious emigration of migrant workers who work in Middle- East and Europe by the overseas branches of evangelical groups who are currently operating in Sri Lanka. The research is carried out in 2014-2015 amongst evangelical Christian community in Sri Lanka. As per methodology I already have engaged in several participatory observation sessions involving some evangelical Christian communities and intend to conduct series of interviews both individual and groups -wise. Findings thus far indicate a rapid expansion of foreign missions through establishing international cells with the mediation of the evangelical leadership active on the island.

This study aimed to determine the causes of religious conversions of Sri Lankan migrant worker and Sri Lankan Diaspora. The outreach approach of evangelical groups has resulted enormously attracting persons who are alienated from their own cultural context and experience culture shock as most of them live in a socially discriminated and emotionally imbalanced atmosphere. Therefore migrant worker's communities both in Middle- East and Europe have become happy hunting grounds for proselytizing into evangelical resurgence. With this increasing phenomenon it is evident that evangelical groups have intensified conversion agenda and it reaches beyond parameters in keeping with new evangelism called 10/40 of AD2000 and 'Beyond movement'. The event of religious conversion in this context is not merely proselytizing instead a paradigm shift from prevailing status to new identity. The prime cause of this study population to change their conventional religions is social mobility that they possess from self contempt to self esteem and from alienation to fellowship.

Key words: missionary praxis, proselytization, culture shock, social mobility