

Influence of Acculturation on the Ambition Level of Second and Third Generation Migrants of Andaman and Nicobar Islands

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Andaman and Nicobar Islands witnessed migration from 1857 during the penal settlement plan of the British Government followed by Independent migration after 1947. Government extended certain facilities to the migrants like job reservation, easy access to government jobs in the Islands, reservation for higher education etc during the 50's, 60's and 70's. Population of the Islands have now reached to an alarming level and the facilities and opportunities have shrunk down, yet people have not changed their mindset rather anything related to their ambition remain in and around the Islands only. This study aims to understand how acculturation has influenced the ambition level of the 2nd and 3rd generation migrants of the Islands. The study proposes to follow the methodology based on grounded theory. Using Theoretical sampling method, second and third generation migrants of the Islands were recruited. Individual interview sessions, lasting approximately 45 to 90 minutes were conducted with the participants to know how acculturation has impacted their ambition level. The transcripts of the interviews were thematically analysed with the help of NVivo 10. The attachment of the migrants to the Islands, their preference about education and ambition and cultural aspect were found to be the major aspects in shaping of ambition of the second and third generation migrants of the Islands.

Keywords: Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Acculturation, Migrants, Islands, Ambition

Andaman and Nicobar Islands houses people from different regions, ethnic groups, castes and creeds of Indian Sub continent and very few from Myanmar (Burma), Sri Lanka etc. The Islands were the penal settlement colony of the Britishers. In the aftermath of the war of 1857 (Anderson, 2009), the islands were utilised for deportation of political and criminal convicts (Zehmisch, 2012). During the British rule in India, the Andaman Penal colony functioned as a permanent outpost in the Indian ocean (Anderson, 2003). Considering the distance and isolation of the Islands, convicts never returned back, rather settled down in the Islands itself after the completion of the punishment tenure (Zehmisch, 2017). These people who preferred to live on the Islands itself are from different communities and they forget their differences and made themselves into one single cultural matrix and are now known as "Locals" (Dhar, 1985). In the Andaman Islands the settled convicts also faced the prospect of compromising caste,

most essentially because they were locked to a common chain (Anderson, 2009).

Later the British Government also started a rehabilitation scheme which has the provision for the loyal convicts to settle down with their mainland families as free, self-supporting colonists at the end of their term (Zehmisch, 2012). To create families for the permanent settlement of the colony in Andaman Islands (Dhingra, 2005), the British Government encouraged self-supporters to marry convict women, too (Sen, 2004). In these weddings, no formal rules were observed rigidly and flexibility was practiced (as cited in Zehmisch, 2012). There was an attempt to reconstruct caste amongst 'Hindus' after 1884 (Sen, 2004), however, as suitable matches in the same caste and region were regularly lacking, inter-caste marriages became common and the offspring from these unions were classified as 'local-born' community by the administration (Zehmisch, 2011). Common criminals and political prisoners