

20% TN families run by single women: Expert

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One of every 200 families in India is now run by single women, according to the latest census.

More than 20 per cent of the families in seven states in India including Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh are now led by single women as per the 2011 census, said professor P. Madhava Soma Sundaram, head of the department of Criminology & Criminal Justice, MS University, Tirunelveli. The other states with more than 20 per cent families run by single women are Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Gujarat and Chhattisgarh.

He addressed a workshop on women-led families sponsored by the National Commission for Women at the Amrita University in the city.

The reason behind the growing tribe of single women are the rapidly increase rate of divorce and separation, death of husband, and prolonged migration of husbands.



Prof P. Madhava Soma Sundaram speaks at the workshop at Amrita University.

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A host of psychological issues plague families headed by single women. Besides, the women have to carry a huge financial and parenting burden leading to increasing stress and anxiety, he claimed.

The single women have to discharge multiple roles of a provider, protector and decision maker. In such families, women and children often become the victims of crime due to vulnerability. Especially families with limited economic resources may be at heightened risk of vulnerability, if they do not receive economic help during times of need. Government assistance

is required to improve the economic status of low income female-headed families and protect them from abuse, insisted Madhava Soma Sundaram.

Academics, lawyers and women rights activists addressed issues of crime and violence against women and children in families run by single women, and the role of the Government, NGOs and corporate world in their empowerment.

Recommendations from the workshop will be submitted to the National Commission for Women to help the government formulate policies to support families headed by single women.