

SOCIO ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF SINGLE PARENTS IN THIRUVANANATHAPURAM DISTRICT

*A Dissertation Submitted to the University of Kerala in the
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Master of Arts
Degree Examination in Sociology*

SUBMITTED BY

Name : **SETHULI . L.V**
Exam Code : 56018401
Candidate Code : 56021115023
Subject Code : SO 245

UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF

Dr. SAJI P JACOB



**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
LOYOLA COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
SREEKARIYAM, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
UNIVERSITY OF KERALA**

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DECLARATION

I, **SETHULI . L .V** do hereby declare that the Dissertation Titled **SOCIO ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF SINGLE PARENTS IN THIRUVANANATHAPURAM DISTRICT** is based on the original work carried out by me and submitted to the University of Kerala during the year 2021-2023 towards partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts Degree Examination in Sociology. It has not been submitted for the award of any degree, diploma, fellowship or other similar title of recognition before any University or anywhere else.

Place: Thiruvananthapuram

Date: 18/08/2023

Ms. **SETHULI . L .V**

CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that this dissertation entitled **SOCIO ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF SINGLE PARENTS IN THIRUVANANATHAPURAM DISTRICT** is a record of genuine work done by Ms. **SETHULI . L .V** Fourth semester Master of Sociology student of this college under my supervision and guidance and that it is hereby approved for submission.

Dr. Saji P Jacob

Principal

Loyola College of Social Sciences
Sreekariyam, Thiruvananthapuram.

Recommended for forwarding to the University of Kerala

Dr. Nisha Jolly Nelson

Head, Department of Sociology
Loyola College of Social sciences
Sreekariyam, Thiruvananthapuram.

Forwarded to the University of Kerala

Dr. Saji P Jacob

Principal

Loyola College of Social Sciences
Sreekariyam, Thiruvananthapuram.

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SETHULI . L .V
MA SOCIOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

Families have always held a significant role in shaping individuals, imparting valuable life lessons, and exerting a profound influence on one's life. However, in today's society, we observe a predominant trend towards nuclear families, with single-parent families becoming increasingly common. A single parent is someone who is solely responsible for raising their child or children due to various circumstances such as divorce, separation, loss of a partner, abandonment, widowhood, domestic abuse, rape, single parenthood by choice, or single-parent adoption. These single-parent families face a growing presence in society.

This study was dedicated to exploring the challenges faced by single parents, particularly in the realms of social and economic difficulties. The prevalence of divorce, separation, and non-marital partnerships has risen significantly, leading to an increase in the number of children being raised by single parents. Additionally, the reasons for single parenthood have evolved over time. Generally, parenthood involves taking on the responsibilities of raising a child, while a single parent is someone who raises a child in their household without a partner living with them. This category can encompass adopted children, foster children, and even stepchildren.

The primary focus of this study was to address two key questions: What is the current situation of single parents, and what are the social and economic challenges they encounter? Single parents are often engaged in a strenuous battle to provide a good future for their children. The research primarily employs a qualitative approach and examines eight specific cases. These cases shed light on the issues faced by single parents as they strive to secure a better future for themselves and their children.

CHAPTER 1

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF SINGLE PARENTS

INTRODUCTION

In recent years there has been a sudden rise in the phenomenon of single parent families. A single parent is a person who lives with a child or children and who does not have a spouse or live in partner. The single parent family is not a new phenomenon in India, or even around the world. This study is based on the most recent National Family Health Survey 1998-1999, in India. The population of interest includes all mothers aged 15 to 49 years, without a spouse, living with one or more of their own children under 18 years of age. We find that being a widow increases the likelihood of being a household head compared to the likelihood of household headship among the divorced and the separated in India. This study provides some evidence on the continuing social discrimination against widows in India.

Problems of single mothers are linked with the upbringing of children, their future and setting down in life. Till the time children get married and or get jobs they are dependent on the single parent. The study revealed that financial problem was the main stressor for majority of the single mothers. The emotional life of the single mother was also affected by their single status. Majority of the single mother reported that they felt lonely, helpless, hopeless, lack of identity and lack of confidence. In social sphere majority of single mothers tried to avoid attending social gatherings and had changed their dressing style due to depression they had developed poor food and eating habits. Majority of the single mothers found it hard to maintain discipline among the children due to absence of male members. The mothers complained about loneliness, traumatic and depression and found it difficult to handle the responsibility of childcare and to establish a routine for her children. India is one of the best lands nurturing their children and analyses best land of nurturing their weakness develop strength, having a proper plan to bring their children into a high level of achievement usually male children from high independence to high responsibility die hard due to the cultural obligations and parental expectations to take care of them in elder age. Parenting denotes the biological relationship of a father and mother to a child that emerges with the fundamental concern of the Indian society.

Single parenting is a social sacrifice and unpleasant test of stamina in one's life for bringing up the child, reacting more when greater than the average working hours lacks the importance of emotional strength of the child to deal with often ends up with a little neglect. In the present

world single parenting is often judged for every aspect of living around by the adjacent families and different sort of parents has different sets of concerns and have always been existed but willingly choose to bring up a child is common among young married couple and it is hard to define once the child becomes the victim of it adversely affect the mental and emotional being of the child. Raising a child independently without any support of the partner is a big challenge for both the parents because bring changes in the inner world with the outer environment needs support from both the parents. A child living life with single parenting loses their child hood and decency due to the parental, workforce, commitment and social isolation. It was often seen that mothers are close to their children to lean more towards mother side because of their protective, nurturing characteristics, from a long established mother child relationship continuing as the child grows up as compared to father where the role is always domestic ,There are 320 billion children worldwide between 0-17 years of age living with single parents mostly headed by single mothers and near about 2.3 billion children are living in India where rising sociocultural issue is the ultimate cause of single parenting after the death of the parents .India is not lagging it, behind that they are not considering participating, competing, and cultivating the culture of single parenting more markedly.

The world of modernism and materialism has revolutionized the outlook of Indian culture through different cognitive contents that western countries have experienced from a very long period due to many concerns and connections. In Indian culture death was the only possible reason for single parenting, now other personal issues show active participation. Most of the single parent families in India are mother headed because it is not common for a mother to abandon her family. In 2009, the overall divorce rate was around 9/1000 in United state. It was also found that more influence came from the south, with the rates there being about 10.5/1000, as opposed to the north where it was around 7/1000. This resulted in about 1.5% (around 1 million) children living in the house of a recently divorced parent in the same year. Along with this, it has been shown that for the past 10 years or so, first marriages have a 40% chance of ending in divorce. And, for other marriages after a first divorce, the chance of another divorce increases. In 2003, a study showed that about 69% of children in American living in a household that was a different structure than the typical family. This was broken down into about 30% living with a stepparent, 23% living with a biological mother, 6% with grandparents as caregivers, 4% with a biological father, 4% with someone who was not a direct relative, and a small 1% living with a foster family

Around the mid-1990s, there was a significant number of single parents raising children, with 1.3 million single fathers and 7.6 million single mothers in the United States alone. However, many parents desire, or attempt, to get sole custody, which would make them a single parent, but are unsuccessful in the court process. There are many parents who may single parent, but do so without official custody, further biasing statistics.

Traditionally father is the primary financial supporter of the Indian family, his absence reflects a bad impression to the development of forming values in children in family because father is perceived to be the primary disciplinarian and mothers are usually not adequately prepared the disciplinarian role in absence of father results in elevated risk of experiencing cognitive, social, and emotional problems. Most of the mothers in the culture of India are house wives due to low education and in many cases mother as a primary parent found it difficult to handle the child hardly enough to provide the basic needs of the family. Families headed by single mothers are especially vulnerable to material hardship, which sets the conditions for psychosocial problems and child maltreatment.

Researchers have found that the more time children spend in poverty, the greater the adverse impact on their cognitive and academic achievement. Poverty in early and middle childhood may have a greater impact on academic achievement than poverty in adolescence. The longer a single mother remains on government financial support and in poverty, the more profoundly a child's academic performance is affected. Many single mothers work, but their jobs tend to be unstable, pay minimum wage, and provide few benefits. Poorly paid jobs are correlated with increased grade repetition for the children in these families, and parental job instability is correlated with low self-esteem, depression, aggression, and school dropout among adolescents. Families often delay seeking healthcare until the need is critical and avoid preventive services because of an inability to pay.

Families headed by single mothers tend to eat fewer fruits and vegetables, and daughters in those families are more likely to be overweight or obese than daughters in families with two parents. Single mothers face enormous barriers to achieving economic self-sufficiency. Many have low educational attainment, have limited job skills, lack transportation, and may have mental health and/ or substance abuse issues, and a large number live with recurring intimate partner violence. When single mothers transition from welfare to work, older children spend more time unsupervised and frequently are burdened with additional household responsibilities; these situations can have negative outcomes for children. Researchers in a

study of how job displacement of single mothers affects children concluded that mothers' job displacements have a negative impact on the educational attainment and social-psychological well-being of children in mid-childhood and adolescence. Displacement can entail a sequence of events that can cause stress and strife in the family: job loss notification, dismissal, unemployment, job search, and lack of job offers.

A critical protective factor for children living in poverty and vulnerable to psychosocial problems is the quality of their relationship with their mother. Positive relationships can be difficult to sustain in these conditions of struggle. Many single mothers receiving government assistance have been exposed to trauma, such as child sexual and physical maltreatment, sexual assault as adults, and violence. Becoming a single parent can happen through separation or divorce, the death of a partner, assisted conception or other circumstances. Both men and women can be single parents.

If there has been a separation or divorce, it is often the mother who is the resident parent, with children spending time with both parents separately. Children need to adjust to not having both parents around all the time. Some children have to adjust to a new house, school or other changes. If a parent has formed a new relationship, there may be new adults or other children to get used to.

Some children have lived with a single parent their whole life and may not have to deal with the changes that children from two-parent families can face the problems. Such trauma history is known to adversely affect all kinds of relationships. Single mothers exposed to violence are more likely to use aggressive parenting styles. Researchers have found that a father's absence from a child's life is associated with negative social, emotional, and cognitive outcomes from infancy to adolescence. A positive relationship with just one parent, whether or not the parent resides with the child, has been shown to reduce conduct problems and improve educational outcomes.

Adolescents with non-resident fathers who are warm and supportive have fewer internalizing and externalizing problems, especially adolescent boys. Comparisons of countries with comprehensive welfare policies (e.g., housing, financial assistance, and medical aid) to those without indicate that those policies are a protective factor, reducing poverty and increasing overall well-being for children. In addition, consistent child-support payments by the nonresident father contribute positively to children's educational attainment and cognitive

outcomes. Faced with economic hardship, increasing numbers of single mothers and their children are living in alternative familial arrangements. Living with grandparents, for example, has been shown to significantly enhance the financial security of children. Researchers exploring the role of child benefits in various countries found that providing single mothers with additional child benefits (cash aid, tax credits, and tax allowances) was associated with higher levels of poverty reduction. Risk Factors Poverty significantly increases the risk of psychosocial disadvantage and mental health problems among the children of single mothers. Dysfunctional and negative relationships also increase the risk of negative outcomes for children. Job instability and unemployment among single mothers increase children's risk for low self-esteem, depression, and aggression.

Children deprived of a father are at greater risk for drug and alcohol abuse, poor educational performance, adolescent pregnancy, criminal activity, poverty, and homelessness. They are more likely to commit suicide than are those who grow up in a home with both their mother and father. Supporting single mothers toward economic self-efficiency and lifting the burden of poverty is one of the best ways to ensure the well-being of children and their successful transition to adulthood. Education and job training for these women is critical, as is parenting skills training. Historically, death of a partner was a common cause of single parenting. Diseases not infrequently resulted in a widower or widow responsible for children. At certain times wars might also deprive significant numbers of families of a parent. Improvements in sanitation and maternal care have decreased mortality for those of reproductive age, making death a less common cause of single parenting. Single mothers by mastering any skill will help them generate a livelihood. The single mothers should be linked with the existing job/work oriented vocational training programs for women implemented by NGOs/companies or vocational training programs especially focusing on single mothers should be initiated to be able to generate livelihood opportunities for single mothers.

Today single parent families have become even more common than the so-called "nuclear family" consisting of a mother, father, and children. Today we see all sorts of single parent families: headed by mothers, fathers, and even by a grandparent raising their grandchildren. Life in a single parent household—though common—can be quite stressful for the adult and the children. The single parent may feel overwhelmed by the responsibilities of juggling caring for the children, maintaining a job, and keeping up with the bills and household chores. And

typically, the family's finances and resources are drastically reduced following the parents' breakup.

Single parent families deal with many other pressures and potential problem areas that other families may not face. The single parent faces some unique challenges and should always be ready to tackle them and maintain a happy family. The main challenge is how to influence a child's growth and development positively without the child being affected substantially by the absence of the other parent. This, therefore, raises the stakes of single parenthood in owing to that sole responsibility bestowed on a single parent that is, usually, shared by both parents in healthy parenthood.

In many cases, such responsibility becomes enormous on the single parent especially when the parent is not receiving alimony or child support from an ex-spouse. It, therefore, calls for stringent budgeting aimed at reducing the overall expenses in order to make ends meet. Most single parents volunteer to work overtime or take on additional part-time jobs in pursuit of financial security. It is always important for such parents to make the children understand their economic status and personal responsibilities. Quality time with the kids is limited because the parent is strained between responsibilities that make him or her chronically fatigued. It is important that such a parent find time to get enough rest and recuperate lest they experience depression and burnout, and this may easily cause hopelessness in life on the parent.

Unless the single parent is properly planned and has personal systems and mechanisms in place, responsibilities of a single parent, may turn out to be overwhelming. Most single parents utilize childcare facilities and baby sitter services to offload some of their duties. Despite the challenges that come with single parenthood, the single parent has a responsibility to the family. Showing love to the children, staying active, creating appropriate routines, setting realistic expectations for the children and defining the future of the family fall under one roof in single parenting

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Parenting is the most important factor in family life. Parents are the pillar of family. They taking an important role in a child's development. Here we are stating the problem of single parents and their children. Single parent has many limitations than other members of the society. They choose this lifestyle because, maybe they were separated from their partner or

their spouse has died. They may face similar and different issues in our society according to circumstances. Children are more likely to misbehave in the society and they may not like the controlling of others. In the life situations the parent may not be able to share the day-to-day activities or will not get time to spent with their children. New relationship is difficult among them because may their children does not like that or even society were also suspicious about those relationships. To meet the daily needs its difficult them to live for themselves. They were more conscious about their children's future. In the given context, this study aims to examine the problems and prospects of Single Parenting within the purview of Trivandrum district with special focus on single mothers. The socio-economic, psychological and emotional issues faced by single parents during the upbringing of their children as well as how single parenting has positively or negatively affected the mindset, personality and life of parent as well as children will be analyzed. Suitable measures and modalities by which single parenting can turn into a healthy, fruitful experience for parents as well as the children shall also be suggested.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM

SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDYING SINGLE PARENTHOOD IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

The family unit stands as the most significant institution within society, with fathers and mothers playing pivotal roles. In traditional societies, joint families prevailed as the norm, providing a safety net for children who may have lost their parents, as other family members would step in to support them. However, in modern times, nuclear families have become increasingly common. This shift in family structure poses unique challenges in managing family dynamics.

One of the notable developments in contemporary society is the rise in single-parent households. Single parents, often mothers or fathers, face distinct challenges in raising their children without the presence or support of a partner. This shift in family structure carries profound implications, both for the parents and, crucially, for the children involved.

Social and Psychological Impact on Children:

Single parenthood can have a significant impact on children, both socially and psychologically. Understanding these effects is critical for addressing the well-being of the younger generation.

Economic and Emotional Strain on Single Parents:

Single parents often bear the dual responsibility of providing financially and emotionally for their children. This can lead to increased stress and demands on single parents, warranting attention and support.

Evolving Family Structures:

The rise in single-parent families reflects the evolving nature of family structures in contemporary society. Studying this phenomenon helps sociologists and policymakers adapt to these changes effectively.

Community and Policy Implications:

Research on single parenthood informs the development of support systems, policies, and community initiatives aimed at assisting single parents and ensuring the well-being of their children.

Understanding Diverse Family Dynamics:

Exploring the challenges faced by single parents contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of diverse family dynamics, enhancing our ability to address the needs of all types of families.

Prevention and Intervention:

By studying single parenthood, we can identify potential risk factors and develop strategies for prevention and intervention, ultimately working towards better outcomes for single-parent families.

In conclusion, the shift from traditional joint families to contemporary nuclear and single-parent households represents a significant societal change. Understanding the challenges faced by single parents and their children is essential for ensuring the well-being of all members of these evolving family units. This research is not only vital for academic purposes but also for the development of practical solutions and policies that can support single-parent families in today's complex society.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The chapter devoted to present past literature on the problems and prospects of single parenting besides like other related issues in their life.

SINGLE PARENT FAMILY-CONCEPT

Single parent families can be defined as families where a parent lives with dependent children, either alone or in a larger household, without a spouse or partner. There was a rapid and drastic increase in the number of single-parent families in the latter half of the twentieth century. This change has been used by some to argue that we are witnessing the breakdown of the family (defined as a married couple residing with their dependent offspring) with negative effects for children, families, and society (Popenoe 1996).

Types of single parent families are generally categorized by the sex of the custodial parent (mother-only or father-only families).

Mother-only families include widows, divorced and separated women, and never-married mothers. In the case of divorce, mothers are usually given custody in the United States and other developed countries. In Italy, in 1997, for example, 90 percent of children whose parents divorced went into the custody of their mothers. Since the vast majority of single parents are mothers, most of the research focuses on female-headed families. However, regardless of sex, single parents share similar problems and challenges (Grief 1985).

Father- only families formed as a result of widowhood, desertion by the mother, or wives refusing custody. The increase in father-only families is due, in part, to the efforts of fathers to obtain custody of their children. Factors supporting their transition into primary parenthood include financial security, prior involvement in housework and child care during the marriage, satisfaction with child-care arrangements, and a shared sense of responsibility for the marital breakup (Grief 1985).

In a study conducted by Kavas and Hosgor (2013), the challenges encountered by single mothers in Kerala were examined. Their research highlighted a multitude of difficulties faced by these women, encompassing issues like maintaining authority within their new family

dynamics, striving to preserve a sense of completeness in their households, and confronting negative societal attitudes directed at single mothers and their children. This constant state of distress and strain has profound implications for the mental health of these women.

Mental health, defined as one's psychological well-being and the absence of significant distress, is a constant concern for these single mothers. The unrelenting stress they face often leads to mental health issues. Notably, depression is a prevalent problem among single mothers, and it has adverse effects on their parenting quality while also jeopardizing the well-being of their children. Chujor and Bosa (2012) delved into the impact of depression on children raised by single mothers and discovered that these children often exhibited depressive symptoms, harbored thoughts of self-harm, and displayed various behavioral problems.

Jammu (2009) conducted a study that examined the broader spectrum of problems experienced by single mothers. Their research highlighted the particularly challenging role of being a single parent, especially when the family is headed by a woman. The challenges faced by single mothers are intricately linked to the upbringing of their children, the future prospects of their offspring, and their ability to establish a stable life. Until their children are married or employed, single mothers bear the financial responsibility for their children. The emotional well-being of these mothers is also significantly affected by their single status, with many reporting feelings of loneliness, helplessness, hopelessness, a diminished sense of identity, and a lack of confidence.

In the social sphere, the majority of single mothers tend to avoid attending social gatherings and may alter their dressing styles as a result of their depression. The stress they endure can lead to unhealthy eating habits, compounding their challenges. Furthermore, many single mothers find it exceedingly difficult to maintain discipline among their children due to the absence of male figures in their households. These mothers frequently voice feelings of loneliness, trauma, and depression, making it challenging for them to navigate the responsibilities of childcare and establish routines for their children. The emotional and social burdens faced by single mothers in Kerala paint a complex picture of the struggles they endure on a daily basis.

Ann M Mile, David E Myers and Alvin S Rosenthal in “Sociology of education “(1986) is to show the effects of mother’s employment and living in a one parent family on children’s achievements. We take advantage of two nationality representative data bases of students from

two stage groups and demonstrate the importance of model specification to the determination of effects. Results show that mother's employments and living in a one parent family can have negative effect on school achievements but that these effects differ by age, race and family structure. The results also demonstrate the importance of mediating variables such as income and time use.

Olga Stavrova, Detlef Fetchenhauer in "journal of cross-cultural Psychology (2015) they state that the question of whether parenthood is generally beneficial for wellbeing is currently being hotly debated in the social science single parents are nearly unanimously assumed to be worse off than their partnered counterparts. The present research question this finding by demonstrating that whether single partnered parents are actually less happy than partnered parents depends on a country's culture norms regarding childbearing practices. Most notably, the detrimental effect of a country's social norm of a two-parents family existed even among single who parents who did not share this norm themselves

Benjamin Schlesinger in "Children one-parent families (1995) show the extensive literature on one-parent families, the topic of children and the impact of living in these families has not resulted in numerous publications. The author reviews selected studies which focus primarily on Canada and the United States during the 1978-93 period. The strengths of one-parent families are discussed, and suggestion for further research are made.

David Richter, Sakari Lemola in "Growing up with a single mother and life satisfaction in adulthood "(1992) is states that single parenthood is increasingly common in Western societies but only little is known about its long-term effects. Individuals who grew up with a single mother for their entire childhood and to a lesser degree also individuals who experienced parental separation showed a small but persistent decrease in life satisfaction into old age controlling childhood socio-economic status. This decrease was partly mediated by worse adulthood living condition related to socioeconomic and educational success, physical health, social integration, and romantic relationship outcomes. No moderation by age, gender, and societal system where the childhood was spent was found.

Sara Villa in "The Hardship of single parent" (1983) is show the obstacles and joys meant for a partnership of two. Being a single parent can be overwhelming and it is extremely tough to be a single parent having no one to share the load of responsibility. Personal circumstances, divorce, abandonment, and death of partner are some of the main reasons that leave the main

custodian responsibilities of raising children to a single parent. Few parents are really prepared for dealing with the aftermath of the loss of a partner regardless of the cause. Feelings of desperation, being overwhelmed and stressed out are very typical.

David M. Kleist in “Single parent families- A difference that make a difference?” (1999) they state that single parent families can no longer be viewed as nontraditional families. More than 25% of American families are headed by either a mother or a father. As more single-parent families have appeared on the American landscape, interest has grown as to the effect of single parent households on children’s well-being. A common myth has developed that single parent households are detrimental to a child’s wellbeing.

Penny Burgess and Michael S. Nystul in “The single parent family” (2016) is show at least 160,000 Australian men and women are single parents as the result of separation, divorce, death of the spouse, or birth out of wedlock (social welfare commission, 1976). With the custody, care and control of approximately 282,000 children, these single parents can face an array of social problems and as Schlesinger (1972) observed, warrant greater attention from the helping professions.

Laurie C. Maldonado and Rense Nieuwenhuis in “Single parents in context” (2019) they state one of the most pressing challenges of single-parent families is

the concern for their socio-economic well-being. Single-parent families are more likely to the poor than two-parent families, and there is growing concern about the rising inequality among family types. Much research has focused on how children fare in single-parent families and whether or not they are at a disadvantage. However, concerns are not limited to children living in single parent families, but also to single parent themselves. Single parenthood is strongly gendered: single parents are mostly mothers, and they therefor experience unequal opportunity and gender discrimination in the labor market.

Joyce G. Malima in “The effect of single parenting on students” (2016) is shows the study aimed to assess the effects of single parenting on student’s academic performance in secondary schools in Arusha City council. The purpose was fulfilled through for specific objectives: to identify the causes of single parenting, to identify the challenges faced by single parents on students’ academic performance, to propose the solution to overcome the challenges faced by single parents on students’ academic performance, to determine the effects of single parenting

on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Arusha city and to determine the relationship between single parenting factors and students' academic performance. The study followed survey design were by quantitative technique was applied.

EN Stephen in "Single parent families and their impact on children" (2016) is shows that in Nigeria, the number of children in single parent families has risen significantly over the past four decades, causing substantial concern among policymakers and the public. Researchers has identified the rise in single parent families (especially mother-child families) as a major factor driving the long-term increase in child poverty in Nigeria. The effects of growing up in single parent households have been shown to go beyond economics, increasing the risk of children dropping out of school, disconnecting from the labor force, and becoming teen parents. Although many children growing up in single parent families succeed, other will face significant challengers in making the transition to adulthood. Children in lower-income, single parent families face the most significant barriers to success in school and the work force.

J Langlois in "Single parent mothers, poverty and mental health" (1994) is sates that the goal of this article is to discuss an overview of literature published from 1968 to 1993 and dealing with links between single parenting, poverty and mental health. Results show that the population of single parent mothers is growing and that they are becoming increasingly poor. Of the six mental health variables listed by the author, four clearly demonstrate that single parent mothers are in two-parent families. Results also indicate that self-esteems, distress and psychological well-being are affected by economic variables.

Dawson in "The effects of the single- parent family on Academic Achievement" (1983) is shows it is argued that, historically, society has discriminated against children from single parent families especially those of divorced parents. Research is cited which shows that children from one parent households have lower levels of socio-emotional development and academic achievement, students from two-parent families have higher reading comprehension than do students from one-parent families, the academic achievement of black children in one-parent families is lower than that of white children from similar families, boys are more affected by divorced and manifest more "acting out" behavior than girls.

Shirley MH Hanson and Marsha L Heims in "Single parents' families:

Present and future perspectives” (1994) is states that major changes are taking place in American and Canadian families exerting dramatic influences on family life and the professional of nursing. This was a recently completed project involving a multidisciplinary team of scholars from across North America that brought together the latest information available on a wide variety of single parent families. The purpose of the chapter is to present a synthesis of the demographic, theoretical and research literature that resulted from this project.

Doris J Roundtree in “Implementing Parenting Workshop with SOLVE Adolescent Mothers” (1994) is shows that this practicum was designed to help adolescent mothers understand the cognitive, physical, and emotional development of their children and create appropriate expectations of child development from birth to one year of age. Twenty adolescent mothers attended six classes which covered the development of the young child during the first 12 month of life. Current videotapes, informative materials, slides, and films were used to support workshop presentation. A nutritionist and a home economist also assisted in the 10-month implementation of this practicum. A pre-and posttest were administered to the participants in order to assess the effectiveness of the program.

Patricia Doetsch in “Reducing the Risk for child abuse by developing and implementing a parenting program for teenage mothers” (1964) is states that adolescent parents are unprepared for parenthood. Their lack of preparedness places their children at risk for maltreatment. This educational program was designed to enhance the parenting skills of adolescent mothers thereby reducing the risk for maltreatment among their children. This parenting skills training program consisted of six weekly sessions focused on: child development from birth to age 2, positive reinforcement techniques, discipline techniques, cognitive restructuring techniques and problem-solving techniques. An evaluation component was developed and administered to pregnant and parenting students. The results of this program were mixed.

Lorena B. Agero in “single parents of school children: tales of survival” (2016) is shows the purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to shed light and find out the realities faced by single mothers with school aged children. Fourteen single parents with school aged children from Bansalan, Davao del Sur were carefully chosen to participate in this study through purposeful sampling. The results of the interviews were transcribed, translated as well as coded to produce major themes and core ideas. In-depth interviews and focus group discussion were conducted to find out the experience of single parents these are the following: adversities, fears and insecurities, steadfastness, disenchantment and self-sacrifice.

Ludger Woessmann in “An international look at single parent family” (2015) states that when Daniel Patrick Moynihan raised the issue of family structure half a century ago, his concern was the increase in black families headed by women. Since then, the share of children raised in single parent families in the United States has grown across racial and ethnic groups and with-it evidence regarding the impact of family structure on outcomes for children. Recent studies have documented a sizable achievement gap between children who live with a single parent and their peers growing up with two parents. These patterns are cause for concern, as educational achievement is a key driver of economic prosperity for both individuals and society as a whole.

Kudenga Mugove in “Challenges encountered by single parents in the learning and development of children” (2017) shows that children are supposed to grow in a family setting where both mother and father take their respective roles in the upbringing of the child. In recent years there has been a sudden rise in the phenomenon of single parent families. Single parent families face challenges in properly raising their learning and development of their infant children. The research employed mixed methodologies. It used questionnaires, observation checklist and document analysis as research instruments. The sample of research participants consisted of 30 school teachers, 18 school heads and 20 parents and 20 children in grade 1 and 2. The data is presented in the form tables and excerpts. The study found out that single parents faced challenges in paying fees for their children, supplying their children with adequate stationary, monitoring the school attendance of their children and providing their children with emotional support.

The complex phenomenon of single parenthood is explored within Roy’s (Roy and Roberts, 1981) adaption framework. Correlation analysis of a large family data set supported the literature and the conceptual framework. Findings suggested that single parents experienced a characteristic set of stressors distinguishing them from two-parent families. The mere availability of help with parenting seemed less important in fostering the children’s positive adaption than the quality of the relationship among the adults involved with the children. Practitioners are advised to address family support and the ability to cope with environmental factors when developing a treatment plan.

June Andrews in “A conceptualization of parenting” (2008) shows that the purpose of this paper is to provide a framework for examining the parenting process. Tasks, roles, rules, communication, resources and relationships are described as essential components of

parenting. The conceptualization of parenting is not tied to a particular family structure of type. Rather, parenting is examined as a process undertaken with a goal of ferrying children from conception and birth through developmental challenges and life events to adulthood. As a bridge between the conceptualization of parenting and its application to single parent families, questions are raised concerning what it takes to parent adequately.

Eric Kwakye in “Single parenting and its effects on children’s academic performance in Ashaiman” (2013) states that the study intended to investigate the single parent and its effects on children’s academic performance in Ashaiman. The purpose of the study was found out the influence of family pattern on the academic performance and truancy behavior of student. Descriptive survey research design was employed. A total of eighty parents whose children attend junior high school were randomly selected and the academic records of students were obtained from the head of the schools. Personal data forms were used to collect information on their age, sex, religion, level of education, ethnic background and the type of home.

Nancy J Warren, Ingrid A Amara in *Journal of Divorce* in 1985 says that, A parent group for divorcing parents that is shown to be helpful and welcomed by participants is described. The group, part of the Parenting After Divorce (PAD) project, was designed as an educational prevention program to help parents facilitate their children's adjustment after divorce. Extensive follow-up assessment of group impact on child, parent and family functioning has been undertaken, as well as measurement of consumer satisfaction with the group experience. The group described has been given ten times to groups of 4-6 single, custodial parents. The important elements of this model are presentation of content based on knowledge from research and clinical experience, of a structured and directed approach, a focus on the child's needs and stage of development, role playing and other active exercises, and consideration of co-parenting issues. Response to the group suggests that parents with greater post-divorce stress (less coparented agreement, less visitation for the children, greater drop in quality of life after divorce) benefit the most. A session-by-session description of the program is given, along with data from consumer satisfaction surveys and indications of how the model can be adapted to other settings.

Vic Groze in, *Adoption and single parents* 1991 point out the interrelationships among family structure, patterns of family decision making, and deviant behavior among adolescents. Mother-only households are shown to be associated with particular patterns of family decision making and adolescent deviance, even when family income and parental education are

controlled. In contrast to adolescents in households with 2 natural parents, youth in mother-only households are perceived as more likely to make decisions without direct parental input and more likely to exhibit deviant behavior. The presence of an additional adult in a mother-only household, especially for males, is associated with increased parental control and a reduction in various forms of adolescent deviance. Finally, patterns of family decision making and family structure both make independent contributions to adolescent deviance, and the impact of family structure on deviance of adolescent males is hardly affected by controlling for patterns of family decision making.

Larry L Bumpass, R Kelly Raley in *Redefining single-parent families: cohabitation and changing family reality*

This paper explores the implications, for the measured prevalence and duration of mother-only families, of marked changes in nonmarital fertility, unmarried cohabitation, and home leaving and re-entry. Throughout, estimates are compared on the basis of marital definitions and definitions including cohabitation. The duration of the first single-parent spell appears to have increased under the marital definition, but declines substantially when cohabitations are taken into account. A substantial proportion of single mothers have spent some time as single parents while in their parents' household. Hence, we argue that definitions of single-parent families must be based on living arrangements rather than on the parents' marital status.

Leslie Anne Diez in "The academic performance of students from solo parents' families of Jesus F Magsaysay High School" (2018) is shows that this study aimed to determine the level of parental involvement of solo parents to the education process of their children in the facts of school work support, financial support and moral support as perceived by their children and to look into the relationship of these to the academic performance of the students. The study described the profile of the student's respondents according to sex, number of household members, the present parent in their home, the highest educational attainment of their present parent, and their household's monthly income. The research used the First Grading Period general average of the respondents as the sole basis for their academic performance.

Aileen S Garcia and Liane Pena Alampy in "Parental efficacy, experience of stressful life events and child externalizing behavior as predictors of

Filipino mothers and father's parental hostility and aggression" (2003) is states that this study assessed relation of parental efficacy, experience of stressful life events, and child Externalizing behavior to Filipino mothers and father's parental hostility and aggression. Orally-administered surveys were conducted with 117 mothers and 98 fathers for the first year of data collection, and again a year later with 107 mothers and 83 fathers. Path analyses showed that mothers' report of child externalizing behavior predicted subsequent parental hostility and aggression. For father, child externalizing behavior and experience of stressful life events predicted parental hostility and aggression.

According to Irwin Garfinkel, Sara McLanahan in *Single mothers and their children: A new American dilemma* says that, between 1960 and 1983, the proportion of all American children growing up in female-headed households increased from 8.2 to 20.5 percent. Today, 51 percent of black children in the United States are being raised in families without fathers. And the all-female-headed families are living in poverty. What has caused the increase? Some liberal sociologists have blamed this "feminization of poverty" on feckless fathers and wage discrimination against female workers. Conservatives have argued that welfare programs such as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) have discouraged fathers and mothers from staying together, because the benefits provided to single mothers exceed what working husbands and wives could expect. Garfinkel and Mchahan, professors at the Institute for Research on Poverty at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, believe that both liberal and conservative explanations for the rise in single motherhood are incident; changing sexual mores also played a key role. Single motherhood, the authors stress, is a self-perpetuating phenomenon: Single mothers are very often the children of single mothers. The phenomenon is not limited to blacks. White daughters of single parents, for example, are 53 percent more likely than their counterparts in two-parent families to marry as teenagers. They are 164 percent more likely to have a premarital birth, and 92 percent more likely to dissolve their own marriages-if they marry. Single motherhood, as the authors put it, 'mushroom over time,' as the

Frederick A Andal in "single parenting style as a predictor of juvenile delinquency on selected cities of Cavite" (2016) is shows that the purpose of the study was to relate single parenting style as a predictor of juvenile delinquency in selected cities in Cavite. It aims to determine the parenting style of single parents, test its significance on the three cities of Cavite; Dasmarinas, Imus and Bacoor and to know the relationship between single parenting styles and juvenile

delinquency. A descriptive correlation method was used in this study, where in survey was distributed to 118 respondents composed of 59 single parents and 59 children with an age of 10-18. The results of the study suggest that most of the single parents in the selected cities of Cavite exhibited Authoritative parenting style. However no significant relationship was observed between any parenting styles as a predictor of juvenile delinquency but rather single parentings style can be predictor for a tendency of the child to commit delinquency.

Munroff blum, Boyle H michaei and David offord in Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry 1988 says that Data from the Ontario Child Health Study were used to examine the association between single-parent family status and child psychiatric disorder and poor school performance. Bivariate results indicate that children of single-parent families are at a small hut statistically significant increased risk for poor outcome. These same families, however, experience severe economic and social hardship. When variables indicative of hardship, such as poverty and family dysfunction, are controlled for in a multivariate analysis, the relationship between single-parent family status and childhood psychiatric disorder and poor school performance becomes statistically nonsignificant. The implications of these findings are discussed.

Maldonado and Laurie Chisholm in “Doing better for single parent families: Poverty and policy across 45 countries” (2017) is states that single parents disproportionately face a triple bind of inadequacies in resources, employment and policy which combined together further complicates the lives of single parents and their families. Single parents’ resources, their socio-economic background-as well as having only one earner and career in the household-make it difficult to provide their families. The majority of single parents are mothers and work in full time employment, yet for many their employment is inadequate. Single parents are often in jobs with low wages, without employment protection and with little flexibility to balance work and family responsibility. Policy such as an inadequate cash transfers, unaffordable child care, unpaid parental leave, or lacking safety-net can fail to protect families from poverty.

Sanford M Dornbusch in “Single parents, extended households and the control of adolescents” (1985) is shows that this paper uses a representative national sample of adolescents to study the interrelationship among family structure, patterns of family decision making and deviant behavior among adolescents. Mother-only households are shown to be associated with particular patterns of family decision making and adolescent deviance, even when family income and parental education are controlled. In contrast to adolescents in households with 2

natural parents, youth in mother-only households are perceived as more likely to make decisions without direct parental input and more likely to exhibit deviant behavior. The presence of an additional adult in a mother-only household, especially for males, is associated with increased parental control and a reduction in various forms of adolescent deviant.

Deborah A Dawson in *Family structure and children's health: United States, 1988* point out the Children's well-being is strongly associated with family structure. In numerous studies, children from divorced families and those living with single parents have been found to have more emotional, behavioral, and academic problems than children living with both of their biological parents (1-6). Other studies have found that children from divorced or single-parent families are overrepresented among "juvenile delinquents" and among clients at outpatient psychiatric clinics or other mental health facilities. These findings are of special concern because of the increasing proportions of children living in one-parent, disrupted (divorced or separated parents), and combined households. It is estimated that nearly half of today's children will live in a single-parent family at some point during their childhood. About one-third will experience the divorce of their biological parents, and one-fourth will live with a stepparent by age 16 (6, 10–13). Family structure in and of itself is not necessarily a predictor of child health and development; in fact, children living with two biological parents who experience a great deal of conflict may have at least as many problems as children from disrupted households or those where the father never has been present (14–19). More likely, family structure is a proxy for the process variables that directly affect children's well-being (1, 17, 20, 21). These include the characteristics of family relationships that accompany marital dissolution (for example, decreased attention, affection, and communication) as well as factors that reflect the task overload experienced by all single parents, including never-married women (22-24). Because process variables such as these are difficult to measure, they are rarely included in studies based on large, nationally representative samples. Examination of the proxy variable of family structure is of value for two reasons. First, its relationship to child health is suggestive of the action of the process variables, leading to hypotheses that can be tested through smaller, observational studies. Second, it may help to identify population subgroups that are in need of special services or social support systems. This report examines family structure in relation to a number of measures of children's health and well-being: physical health, academic performance, and emotional or behavioral problems. These measures are compared for four categories of children: those living with both biological parents, those living with an unmarried mother who was formerly married to the child's father, those living with an unmarried mother

who was never married to the child's father, and those living with a mother and stepfather (or other no biological father). Results are presented for all children 17 years of age and under and within categories of selected demographic and social characteristics. The former includes the child's age, gender, race, and ethnicity; the latter include presence or absence of siblings, mother's education and employment, and family income-both in absolute dollar terms and as a percentile of the poverty level for a family of equivalent size and structure. Although the main focus of the report is on the associations between family type and children's health, the report also includes a description of the types of family arrangements in which today's children live and a discussion of the relationship between family type and the other demographic and social characteristics.

B Douglas Downey in *Journal of family issues* 1994 point out the Very little is known about the academic performance of children from single-father families. How do they achieve in school relative to children from single-mother and two-parent families? Do the same processes posited to explain the school performance of children from single-mother households account for the educational performance of children in single-father homes? These questions are addressed using a nationally representative sample of 8th graders from the National Longitudinal Study of 1988. Eight different educational outcomes are compared for 409 children in single-father, 3,483 in single-mother, and 14,269 children in biological two-parent families. Children from single-father and single-mother families perform roughly the same in school, but both are outperformed by children from two-parent families. The intervening processes explaining school performance for children from single-father and single-mother families are somewhat different, however. Economic deprivation, or the lack of economic resources, is more useful for understanding the school difficulties of children from single-mother families, whereas interpersonal deprivation, or the lack of interpersonal parental resources, provide a more accurate description for why children from single-father families do poorly in school.

Nancy E Dowd in "Stigmatizing single parents" (1995) is states that the law embodies pictures of family that focus singularly on the patriarchal marital nuclear family. The value law places on the nuclear family are premised on its perceived essential role in the socialization of citizens as well as its presumed inherent worth as a form of intimate association. We use these pictures and consequent definitions of family to distribute resources, including financial support, fringe

benefits, tax breaks and housing. We use them to decide who is entitled to create families by reproductive technology or adoption and who is entitled.

Elena Rousou in “Mental health among single mothers in Cyprus; a cross sectional descriptive correlational study” (2019) is shows that international literature reveals that single mothers experience increased levels of chronic stress, which is mainly due to economic hardship and reduced levels of social support. Eventually this leads to psychological distress. While most of the studies commonly identify that mental health, disorders are common among single mothers compared to their married counterparts, the magnitude of the problem might be even larger since diagnosis-specific tools may mask important levels of distress of milder intensity. This study aims to assess the level of mental distress experienced by single mothers as measured by the GHQ-28 and how it is influenced by socio economic factors, as well as the level of perceived social support.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Title of the Study

Socio economic problems of single parents in Thiruvananthapuram district

3.2 Research question

General: To find out the socio economic problems of single parents.

Specific: To understand socio-economic, psychological and emotional issues faced by single parents during the upbringing of their children.

To analyze how single parenting has positively or negatively affected the mindset, personality and life of parent as well as children.

To suggest suitable measures and modalities by which single parenting can turn into a healthy, fruitful experience for parents as well as the children.

3.3 Research Design

The research design used in the study is descriptive as it describes the problems and prospects in single parenting some real-life revelations. It is also analytical as the study analyses their issues in –depth.

3.4 population and sampling

Single mothers hailing from Trivandrum District form the population of the study. Seven cases are selected using purposive sampling method.

3.5 Tools of Data collection

Unstructured interview guide is used to collect qualitative data from the respondents. Data has been collected from both parents and children of single parenting families. Data collected through interview and observation has been availed for the purpose.

3.6 Limitations of the study

Unstructured interview guide is used to collect qualitative data from the respondents. Data has been collected from both parents and children of single parenting families. Data collected through interview and observation has been availed for the purpose.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

Case 1

Mrs. A is 45-year women living in Attingal, Trivandrum. She is a wage labour, her husband died of a heart attack 4 years ago. She has two children.

Analysis

Mrs. S, a resilient 45-year-old woman residing in Attingal, Trivandrum. Her life has been marked by significant challenges and hurdles since her husband tragically passed away from a heart attack two years ago. Mrs. S earns her livelihood as a wage laborer, and her daily income amounts to a mere Rs 500. This meager income places her in a constant state of financial strain, as she must navigate the monthly expenses that include rent, her children's education fees, and the costs of their bus fares, among other essentials.

Mrs. S is a devoted mother with two children. Her eldest son is pursuing a 6-month graphic design course, which necessitates a considerable amount of financial resources. Meanwhile, her youngest daughter is studying in the 9th standard, which also requires significant financial support. However, the family's limited income makes fulfilling these educational aspirations a formidable challenge.

In their community, Mrs. S and her children often find themselves overlooked and marginalized. The absence of her husband has left them vulnerable to exploitation and deception, particularly when her son seeks part-time employment to contribute to the family's finances. Many employers take advantage of their circumstances and pay her son less than he deserves, exacerbating their financial struggles.

Mrs. S's daughter is deeply affected by the absence of her father and the family's financial constraints. She worries that her dreams may remain unfulfilled due to these challenges. Moreover, she faces difficulties at school, which may stem from the emotional toll of their circumstances.

To secure her daughter's safety, Mrs. S walks a lengthy 8-kilometer distance to her workplace to save money on transportation. Despite her unwavering determination, the family continues to grapple with a crisis situation, where financial instability and societal indifference compound their daily struggles. Mrs. S's story is a poignant reminder of the resilience exhibited by single mothers facing overwhelming odds in their pursuit of a better life for their children.

Case 2

Mrs. B is 30 years old women living in Thiruvananthapuram. She works as a tailor. Her husband divorced her and she is living with her one and only daughter. Her monthly income is 5000 rupees.

Analysis

Mrs. B, a 30-year-old woman residing in Thiruvananthapuram, is facing a multitude of challenges in her life. Having married at the age of twenty-one, she experienced marital discord that led to her divorce. Despite her young age, she has already encountered a series of hardships that have left a significant impact on her life.

Educationally, Mrs. B has completed her +2 education level, which implies a higher secondary schooling level in the Indian context. Following her marriage, she gave birth to a daughter who is now six years old and attends 1st standard in school. However, her daughter faces the additional challenge of a mental condition, which has necessitated her enrollment in a special school. Unfortunately, it was this very challenge that led to her husband's decision to leave them.

The financial circumstances of Mrs. B's life are particularly challenging. Her monthly income as a tailor amounts to a mere 5000 rupees, which is insufficient to meet the basic needs of her household. A significant portion of their income comes from scholarships granted to her daughter by the school, which serves as a lifeline for their financial sustenance.

Hailing from an economically disadvantaged background, Mrs. B shoulders the responsibility of managing her home and caring for her daughter single-handedly. The difficulties she encountered during her divorce—financial, physical, emotional, and mental—have taken a toll on her overall well-being. Moreover, society's judgmental attitudes and lack of support have compounded her challenges.

In an attempt to make ends meet, Mrs. B resorted to borrowing money from money lenders. However, her financial constraints made it impossible for her to repay these debts. Although she engages in small-scale sewing work, her income from this occupation falls far short of covering their daily expenses.

Compounding her challenges is the lack of familial support due to her love marriage. Her family members did not stand by her during her difficult times. Consequently, Mrs. B's life has spiraled into a situation that she describes as "horrible."

Despite her dire circumstances, Mrs. B's focus remains steadfastly on her daughter's well-being. Her dedication to caring and protecting her child has restricted her ability to seek better employment opportunities in other locations.

In summary, Mrs. B's life is a poignant portrayal of the complexities that arise from an interplay of family conditions, financial hardships, and the care demands of a child with special needs. Her narrative underscores the need for social support systems that address the unique challenges faced by single parents, particularly those in situations similar to hers. It also highlights the importance of societal empathy and understanding toward individuals navigating such circumstances.

Case 3

Mr. C is 46-year-old women living in Thiruvananthapuram. She works as a staff in textile shop. She has two children.

Analysis

Mrs. C, a 47-year-old woman residing in Thiruvananthapuram, has overcome significant challenges in her life. Her story is a testament to her determination and resourcefulness in the face of adversity.

Seven years after her marriage, tragedy struck when her husband died in a car accident. This sudden loss not only brought emotional turmoil but also placed immense financial burdens on her shoulders. With her husband's passing, Mrs. C found herself thrust into the role of the sole breadwinner and caretaker for their two children.

Her monthly income, amounting to a mere 5000 rupees, placed her in a financially disadvantaged position. Taking on the responsibility of the family's financial well-being, coupled with the increased workload, led to physical and emotional strain. The absence of her husband's income meant they had to struggle to meet even their basic needs.

In her determination to secure a better future for her children, she made the difficult decision to borrow money to support their education. However, this choice came with its own set of challenges, as repaying the loans became increasingly difficult, resulting in a growing debt burden.

Mrs. C has a son and a daughter. Her daughter, at 20 years old, is pursuing a degree, while her son, at 16 years old, is in the plus one (11th grade). Juggling her job and the responsibilities of parenting proved to be an arduous task. This demanding lifestyle brought with it various hardships, both in terms of managing their daily lives and dealing with societal expectations and judgments.

Unfortunately, Mrs. C found that her friends and relatives were unable to provide the support she needed during this trying period. Her income from working at the textile shop proved insufficient to sustain their livelihood.

In a bid to improve their financial situation, Mrs. C embarked on a creative endeavor by making and selling cakes from home. Her children joined her in this venture, helping to prepare and distribute the cakes to local shops. This small business brought some relief to their financial struggles, offering a glimmer of hope in their challenging circumstances.

Today, through their collective efforts and entrepreneurial spirit, the family has managed to alleviate some of the hardships they faced. While Mrs. C receives a widow's pension, it alone is insufficient to cover their expenses. Nevertheless, they now live in relative peace and stability, free from the major problems that once plagued their lives.

Mrs. C's story is a testament to the resilience of individuals who confront adversity with determination and creativity. Her journey reflects the importance of family support, adaptability, and the human spirit's capacity to overcome hardships and emerge stronger on the other side.

Case 4

Mrs. D, is a 37 years old lady. She breaks up their family life her husband is a drunker and she face a lot of domestic violence. She had 3 children

Analysis

Mrs. D, a determined 37-year-old woman, has faced numerous challenges in her life as she navigates the complexities of raising her three children and caring for her mother while maintaining a modest income.

Mrs. D found herself in a rented house, where she resides with her three children and her mother. She works as a cleaning staff member at a company, providing essential support to her family. Her children, aged two, ten, and eight, are all pursuing their education, which places added financial responsibility on her shoulders.

Economically, Mrs. D's situation is precarious. She relies solely on her income and that of her mother, who also works for the government. Despite their collective efforts, financial hardships have been a consistent presence in their lives.

Adding to her challenges, Mrs. D went through a painful breakup with her husband. Initially, her husband's presence was a source of regular conflict and disturbance in their rented house. He would visit, often hurling hurtful words at her. In response to these troubling circumstances, Mrs. D took the brave step of filing a complaint at the police station and initiating divorce proceedings.

The tumultuous family situation has inevitably affected the children's education and well-being. With Mrs. D having to focus on her job, her mother, and various other work commitments, she has had to juggle multiple responsibilities.

In her relentless pursuit of a better future for herself and her children, Mrs. D has not shied away from hard work. In addition to her cleaning job, she has taken on various roles, including house construction work and engaging in agriculture and poultry farming. These additional endeavors reflect her unwavering determination to provide for her family.

One noteworthy aspect of Mrs. D's story is her commitment to integrity and fairness. Despite her financial struggles, she emphasizes the importance of honesty. She mentions how people purchase eggs from her and consistently pay the agreed-upon price, highlighting the importance of ethical conduct even in challenging circumstances.

Mrs. D's journey is a testament to her strength, resilience, and willingness to overcome adversity. Her dedication to her family's well-being, her courage to take action when faced with difficult situations, and her commitment to ethical values stand as inspiring qualities in her quest for a better future.

Case 5

Case E is a 37-year-old woman who is facing significant financial challenges in her life. She is the mother of one daughter who is currently pursuing her education. Case E works as a tailor, and her monthly income from this profession is approximately 5000 units of the local currency. Despite her hard work, she finds herself in a constant state of financial crisis, struggling to meet various financial obligations.

One of the primary sources of financial strain for Case E is her tailoring shop, which she opened to improve her family's financial situation. Unfortunately, the shop has been facing numerous difficulties. It operates out of a rented room, and the income generated from the shop is insufficient to cover the rent expenses. This predicament makes it challenging for Case E and her family to sustain their livelihood.

In addition to the shop's financial struggles, Case E is burdened with several loans from microfinance companies. These loans may have been taken out to support her tailoring business or to address other pressing financial needs. The burden of repaying these loans adds to the family's financial stress and makes it difficult for them to allocate their income towards other essential expenses.

One of the most critical priorities for Case E is her daughter's education. Her daughter is currently studying in the equivalent of high school (plus two), and this comes with significant educational costs. Case E is determined to provide her daughter with a good education, but the financial constraints she faces make this goal challenging to achieve.

Case E's family consists of her, her mother, and her daughter. Notably, she mentioned that her husband abandoned her and their child nine years ago. This abandonment likely exacerbated the family's financial difficulties, as they must rely on a single income source and face the associated challenges alone. In summary, Case E is a 37-year-old tailor struggling to make ends meet for herself, her mother, and her daughter. Her tailoring business faces financial challenges, primarily due to the high cost of renting a shop space and insufficient income to cover this expense. She is also burdened by loans from microfinance companies, making it even more challenging to manage their finances. Despite these hardships, Case E remains committed to providing her daughter with a quality education, but the financial strain makes this goal a considerable struggle. The abandonment by her husband further compounds their difficulties, leaving them in a precarious financial situation.

Case 6

Mrs. F is a 54-year-old woman who has faced numerous challenges and responsibilities in her life. She lost her husband when she was in her 30s, leaving her as the sole provider and caretaker for her four daughters. Despite the difficulties she encountered, Mrs. F actively and effectively managed her household and played a pivotal role in raising her daughters.

Today, all four of Mrs. F's daughters are married and have moved out to start their own families. This significant change in her family dynamics has led to Mrs. F living alone in her home and the surrounding area. While this shift may provide her with some level of personal space, it also brings its own set of challenges.

One of the major issues that Mrs. F faces is financial strain. She is burdened with loans, which can be a considerable source of stress and can limit her financial flexibility. Her monthly income of 16,000 rupees is not fixed or stable; it varies from month to month. This variability can make it challenging to budget and plan for expenses, especially given that the types of jobs she takes on are not available every day.

To make ends meet and support her children's development, Mrs. F takes on various types of manual labor jobs. These jobs include working in construction, agriculture, cleaning, and tailoring, among others. While these jobs may be physically demanding and not always reliable, she is willing to do whatever it takes to earn money to support herself and her family.

One remarkable aspect of Mrs. F's story is her resilience and determination. Despite facing financial difficulties, societal pressure, and family-related issues, she remains focused on her children's growth and development. She doesn't allow negative comments or judgments from neighbors and relatives to deter her from her goals and responsibilities. Her ability to prioritize her children's well-being and her willingness to adapt to various types of work demonstrate her commitment to their future.

In summary, Mrs. F is a strong and resilient woman who has faced numerous challenges throughout her life, including the loss of her husband and the responsibility of raising four daughters on her own. She continues to work tirelessly in various manual labor jobs to provide for her family and ensure her children's development. Her fluctuating income and financial burdens, coupled with societal pressures and family issues, make her journey a challenging one. However, her determination and unwavering commitment to her children's well-being shine through as defining qualities in her life.

Case 7

Mrs. F, a 48-year-old woman residing in Trivandrum, has led a challenging life marked by a tumultuous marriage and the subsequent impact on her and her son's well-being.

Her life took a dramatic turn when she divorced her husband nine years ago due to his destructive drinking habits and domestic violence. Despite her brave decision to end the marriage, the scars of mental trauma and abuse lingered from their time together.

Mrs. F earns a monthly income of 7000 Rupees, working at a supermarket. This income is essential for her and her 20-year-old son, who works as a laborer in a go-down. The challenges she faced in her marriage had a profound impact on her mental health, and the decision to divorce became necessary when her son was just 11 years old.

During these difficult times, some family members provided financial assistance, offering a lifeline to help them survive the economic hardships brought on by the divorce.

However, her life has not been without its security concerns. Mrs. F has faced security issues both in her workplace and within her community, likely adding to the already existing stressors in her life.

Her son's attachment to his father and the absence of his presence in their lives have been deeply distressing. This emotional turmoil has taken a toll on her son, leading to depression.

The situation took a more concerning turn when her son was arrested in a drug-related issue, further compounding their struggles. Mrs. F worked tirelessly to secure her son's release from prison, demonstrating her unwavering commitment to her child's well-being.

Unfortunately, the drug issue led to social exclusion for both mother and son, a painful experience that only added to their difficulties. Despite these hardships, Mrs. F's determination remains unbroken. She currently resides with her family, seeking stability and support in a challenging world.

Mrs. F's story is one of strength and resilience in the face of adversity. Despite the difficulties she has faced, she is committed to her son's future, actively monitoring his behavior and working to steer him away from harmful habits. Her journey exemplifies the profound sacrifices and unwavering love of a mother who is striving for a better life for herself and her child, even in the face of daunting obstacles.

Case 8

Mrs. G is a 25 years old woman living in Trivandrum. She and her husband dissolved their relationship after 2 months of their marriage because of their personal problems. She got married at her age 20. She and her husband had their own personal and mental problems. Now she is working in a primary school. Her monthly income is 8000 Rupees. She has a 5 years old son.

Analysis

Mrs. G's story is one of resilience and determination as she navigates the challenges life has thrown at her. At the age of 25, she has already experienced significant life changes and difficulties.

She got married at a young age of 20 but had to dissolve her marriage after just 2 years due to personal problems within the relationship. This decision, though undoubtedly difficult, suggests a level of maturity and self-awareness in recognizing that the marriage was not healthy for her or her husband.

Currently, Mrs. G is working in a primary school, earning a monthly income of 8000 Rupees. While her income may not be high, it's commendable that she has taken on the responsibility of providing for herself and her 5-year-old son as a single mother. This demonstrates her commitment to her child's well-being.

One of the most challenging aspects of her situation has been the lack of support from her family for the past 5 years. It's clear that financial difficulties and fear of social humiliation played a role in their decision to distance themselves. This isolation left Mrs. D to face financial, mental, emotional, and social problems on her own, which is an incredibly daunting task.

The issue of security for herself and her son has likely been a constant concern. Additionally, the social stigma and judgment she has faced from some quarters, labeling her as a woman with bad morals, must have been emotionally taxing.

Now, her family is ready to take care of her and is pressuring her into a second marriage. However, Mrs. G is not mentally prepared for another marriage. Her reluctance is understandable, given the challenges she has already faced. She seems to have future plans, such as pursuing postgraduate studies, which reflect her ambition and determination to improve her and her son's life.

It's heartening to see that Mrs. G is considering returning to her family, which may provide her and her son with much-needed support and stability. Her story underscores the importance of resilience, independence, and the ability to overcome adversity. Mrs. D's determination to create a better future for herself and her son is a testament to her strength and unwavering commitment to their well-being.

INTERPRETATION

This study delves into the socio-economic difficulties encountered by single parents in the Trivandrum district, specifically in the areas of Karakulam, Attingal, and Chirayankeezhu. These places have witnessed a high concentration of widows, and the study examines seven cases, all of whom are women serving as single parents, with four belonging to the Hindu community and three to the Christian community.

Immediate Family Struggles and Daily Challenges:

One of the central issues highlighted in this research is the multitude of difficulties faced by these single parents when their partners departed. This departure leaves them with the overwhelming task of fulfilling not only their own responsibilities but also those of their children. These challenges extend beyond their immediate families and involve their relatives and neighbors, illustrating the broader social and economic issues at play.

Economic Disadvantage and Low Incomes:

The participants in this study reside in economically disadvantaged conditions, characterized by very low incomes that fail to cover their basic needs and expenses. This financial instability often deters them from seeking medical care when they are unwell, due to concerns about hospital expenses.

This economic strain also gives rise to the pressing issue of debt. The study reveals that all seven participants are burdened with debt, primarily stemming from their initial borrowing to meet their needs. However, the absence of a consistent source of income makes it increasingly challenging for them to repay these debts. Consequently, they face verbal abuse and threats from moneylenders, adding to their already significant stress.

Education Expenses and Income Shortages:

A substantial portion of their limited income is dedicated to their children's education. The lack of a stable income source compounds their struggle to repay their debts, as they are unable to earn.

Social Stigma and Exclusion:

Despite living in what is considered a developed society, these single parents face substantial and persistent challenges, including social exclusion. They are often excluded from various events and programs, and society often perceives them with lower levels of dignity due to their status as single parents. The absence of a partner also leaves them vulnerable to societal prejudices, such as concerns about their susceptibility to sexual harassment.

Policy and Support Gaps:

The study underscores the absence of adequate government support for single parents who are not widows. While widows receive pensions, other categories of single parents do not receive similar financial assistance. This lack of support further exacerbates their economic difficulties.

Emotional Toll:

The research findings suggest that these socio-economic hardships have taken an emotional toll on these single parents. The absence of a partner to share their concerns with has left many of them feeling angry and frustrated towards life.

While there might not be specific data on the exact numbers of single parents, the challenges they face in society are substantial and have been substantiated by this study. The findings not only shed light on the socio-economic difficulties endured by single parents but also underscore the need for comprehensive support systems and policy changes to alleviate their struggles and enhance their well-being. Additionally, this study contributes to the existing literature on the challenges faced by single parents, particularly in regions with unique cultural and social dynamics like Trivandrum.

CHAPTER 5

MAJOR FINDING AND CONCLUSION

5.1 MAJOR FINDINGS

This study delves into the socio-economic challenges confronted by single parents in specific areas of the Trivandrum district, namely Karakulam, Attingal, and Chirayankeezhu, which have shown a notable concentration of widowed individuals. The research draws upon the experiences of seven single-parent households within these areas. All seven participants in the study are women, with four adhering to Hinduism and three to Christianity. Each of these individuals has faced unique challenges as single parents, making their stories particularly insightful.

One common thread among these single parents is the profound difficulties they encountered when their partners departed from their lives. The burden of managing their households, fulfilling their familial responsibilities, and addressing daily needs became their sole responsibility. These challenges are central to the study, shedding light on the intricacies of life as a single parent.

However, it's important to note that the problems faced by these single parents extend beyond their immediate families. This research underscores the interconnectedness of these issues within the broader social and economic context, involving not just their relatives but also their neighbors. The study underscores that single parenthood is not solely a familial concern but also a critical social and economic matter.

Financially, these single-parent households find themselves in precarious circumstances, grappling with very limited incomes that fall far short of meeting their essential needs and expenses. This economic strain frequently prevents them from seeking medical care when unwell due to the inability to afford hospital expenses, presenting a significant health concern.

Debt emerges as another pivotal issue in the lives of these single parents. The burden of debt, which they struggle to repay, compounds their already challenging circumstances, creating a cycle of financial hardship that can be difficult to break free from.

The researcher's findings shed light on the pervasive and distressing issue of debt among single parents in the study area. It is evident that these individuals, who initially turned to borrowing money to meet their basic needs, now find themselves trapped in a vicious cycle of debt, with no viable means of repayment. This predicament not only places them under immense financial stress but also exposes them to verbal abuse and threats from moneylenders, exacerbating their challenges.

A significant portion of their limited income is allocated towards their children's education, emphasizing their commitment to their children's future despite their dire financial circumstances. The absence of a steady daily income is a key reason behind their debt struggles, as they often lack opportunities for sustainable employment.

This research underscores the persistent and substantial challenges faced by single parents in what is considered a developed society. They encounter difficulties not only within their immediate families but also from relatives and the broader community. The exclusion they experience from various events and programs highlights the societal discrimination they face, which often robs them of their dignity.

Living without partners, these single parents are subjected to societal prejudices, including unfounded concerns about their vulnerability to sexual harassment. The study identifies single parents as individuals raising children without the support of a partner, encompassing both men and women. In the specific cases studied, all participants were single women who had either lost their husbands or had been abandoned by their partners. Importantly, the research underscores the disparity in government support, with widows receiving pensions while other types of single parents receive no financial assistance.

Furthermore, the study highlights the emotional toll of single parenthood. Without a partner to share their concerns, these individuals often grapple with feelings of anger and frustration, which further compound their challenges.

The absence of concrete statistics on single parents in the area underscores the need for more comprehensive research to better understand their circumstances. However, the study provides valuable insights into the significant societal issues they face, shedding light on the complex web of socio-economic challenges that single parents endure in their daily lives. In summary, this research contributes to our understanding of the substantial issues faced by single parents in the study area, emphasizing the need for both societal awareness and government support to improve their quality of life and that of their children.

5.2 SUGGETIONS

- It is necessary for the parents to ensure that their children do not feel social insecurity.
- They must be taught to deal effectively with unwanted intruders
- Children of single parents should be given orientation to think beyond the social prejudices in the society.
- They should be trained to face the society with confidence even if they are isolated.
- It would be ideal to develop a support system in the family of orientation to share the responsibility of their children.
- Good Parent child relationships shall indeed be helpful in the good family life.
- Children can be motivated to help the parent in securing income from multiple genuine projects or ventures.
- As the children grow as adults, they can go for part time work along with their studies and can contribute towards family income.
- Building strong bonds between siblings is also a good remedy against social isolation.

5.3 CONCLUSION

This research focuses on the socio-economic challenges encountered by single parents, with seven cases. A single-parent family consists of just one parent raising their children, and there has been a notable increase in the number of single mother families. While some argue that single-parent families can have negative effects on children, communities, and society, it's important to recognize that they are simply an alternative family structure. Nowadays, it's quite common for children to grow up in single-parent households, primarily due to high divorce rates and marital conflicts. Society used to believe that these families only brought disadvantages, but research has shown that there are some advantages as well.

According to a study by Annice, Yarber, et al. in 2010, the socioeconomic well-being of single-parent families largely depends on the employment status of the parent. Negative effects on children from single mother families can be mitigated through sufficient job opportunities and strong social support networks for single mothers. Just like any situation, single parenthood comes with its challenges, but it also offers rewards. As a 2019 Child Development report states, "We can make a difference and succeed as single parents."

Foster (2016) describes single mothers as fulfilling numerous roles in their children's lives: they are the doctor, teacher, nurse, maid, cook, referee, hero, provider, defender, protector—true superwomen. Single mothers should take pride in their roles and understand that they are not alone. Their dedication to their families contributes greatly to helping their children grow into responsible adults. The transition from a traditional family to a single-parent family can be challenging for both parents and children, but with the right support, the disadvantages can be balanced with the advantages.

These individuals each confronted unique difficulties stemming from their partners' departure, as well as the ongoing challenges of fulfilling their responsibilities and daily needs. The study revealed that the struggles faced by single parents extend beyond their immediate families, affecting their relatives and neighbors, thus highlighting significant social and economic issues.

One notable finding was that all of the single parents in this study were burdened by debt, which they were unable to repay. Initially, they borrowed money to meet their basic needs, but later found themselves trapped in a cycle of debt. They faced verbal abuse and threats from moneylenders, compounding their economic woes. Additionally, a substantial portion of their expenses was dedicated to their children's education, further exacerbating their economic challenges.

Furthermore, single parents endured hardships not only from their immediate social circles but also from the broader community in which they lived. They often faced exclusion from various events and programs, and society often perceived them with diminished dignity. Living without partners, they were also subjected to societal prejudices, including the misconception that they might be more susceptible to sexual harassment.

It's important to note that single parents encompass both men and women. However, in this study, all seven cases were single women parents, including widows and individuals abandoned

by their partners. Notably, only widows received a pension, while other types of single parents received no financial support from the government. This lack of a support system left them without someone to share their concerns with, contributing to their frustration and anger towards life.

The research also emphasized that there is no standardized rate or comprehensive data available about single parents. Their multifaceted problems within society can only be truly understood through a thorough literature review. This study shed light on the complex socioeconomic issues faced by single parents, especially those in impoverished families, who grapple with a combination of social and economic challenges. In contrast, economically well-off single mothers appeared to face fewer problems, suggesting that economic disparities significantly influence societal attitudes and behaviors towards single parents.

In conclusion, single parents are a diverse group, and their experiences vary widely. While they exhibit resilience and determination to secure a better future for their families, they also grapple with a myriad of social and economic issues. The main economic challenges they face often stem from low income and high expenses. Moreover, they contend with psychological and emotional issues, but it is evident that social and economic problems have a more profound impact on their lives. This study has deepened our understanding of the intricate web of social and economic problems faced by single parents in society.

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APPENDIX

Interview guide

Questions to the parent

what is your occupation

What is your annual income

what caused you to become a single parent?

How do you support your family?

Do you have any financial problems?

Do you get any financial help in others?

Do you face any problems from the community?

Did anyone react negatively?

What do you expect in the future in terms of relationship?

Do you have any problems raising children alone?

Are you satisfied in your life?