



Reframing Polygamy: Positive Impacts on Marriage from the Perspective of First Wives in Malaysia

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Abstract: Marriage is one of the fundamental provisions in Islamic law, frequently emphasized both explicitly and implicitly in the Qur'an. One of its primary objectives is to preserve lineage (maqāṣid ḥifẓ al-nasab), whether through monogamous or polygamous arrangements. Within the framework of Islamic jurisprudence, polygamy is considered a form of shar'ī dispensation, permissible under certain conditions. However, prevailing academic discourse often portrays polygamy in a negative light, particularly from the perspective of women. Studies that highlight the positive aspects of polygamy—especially those based on the lived experiences of first wives—remain scarce and have received limited scholarly attention. This study aims to explore the positive dimensions of polygamous practices as experienced by first wives in Malaysia. Employing a qualitative approach, data were collected through semi-structured interviews and the analysis of relevant documents. Informants were selected using purposive snowball sampling to ensure rich and in-depth data. Data analysis was conducted using thematic and content analysis methods. The key findings of this study reveal three positive impacts: (1) increased spiritual dependence on Allah SWT, (2) ego moderation through relational reflection, and (3) enhanced fulfillment of responsibilities by the husband, serving as an indicator of his capacity to practice polygamy with fairness and accountability.

Keywords: First Wife, Polygamy, Positive Effects, Marital Experience

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Abstract: Pernikahan merupakan salah satu ketentuan mendasar dalam syariat Islam yang secara eksplisit maupun implisit sering ditekankan dalam Al-Qur'an. Salah satu tujuan utama dari institusi pernikahan ini adalah menjaga keberlanjutan keturunan (*maqāṣid ḥifz al-nasab*), baik melalui praktik monogami maupun poligami. Dalam konteks hukum Islam, poligami dianggap sebagai salah satu bentuk dispensasi syar'i yang diperbolehkan dalam kondisi tertentu. Namun demikian, wacana akademik yang berkembang cenderung menggambarkan poligami secara negatif, khususnya dari sudut pandang perempuan. Kajian-kajian yang menyoroti dampak positif dari poligami, terutama yang bersumber dari pengalaman istri pertama, masih sangat jarang ditemukan dan kurang mendapat perhatian. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi sisi positif dari praktik poligami sebagaimana dirasakan oleh para istri pertama di Malaysia. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur serta analisis dokumen relevan. Informan dipilih menggunakan teknik snowball sampling secara purposif untuk mendapatkan data yang mendalam. Analisis data dilakukan dengan pendekatan tematik dan analisis isi. Temuan utama penelitian ini mengidentifikasi tiga dampak positif: (1) meningkatnya ketergantungan spiritual kepada Allah SWT, (2) pelunakan ego melalui proses refleksi relasional, dan (3) meningkatnya pemenuhan tanggung jawab oleh suami sebagai indikator kelayakan dalam menjalankan poligami secara adil dan bertanggung jawab.

Keywords: Istri Pertama, Poligami, Dampak Positif, Pengalaman Pernikahan

Introduction

From an Islamic perspective, marriage, whether polygamy or monogamy, is not just a social bond, but rather a sacred institution that is based on Islamic law and guided by certain moral principles and legal procedures. Therefore, any man who intends to practice polygamy must meet strict requirements, including physical, financial and emotional ability as well as the ability to be fair to all his wives.¹ In other words, a husband who wants to be polygamous, needs to have at least two conditions. First, there are enough funds to finance various needs with the increase in wives. Second, he should serve all his wives fairly. Every

¹ Naqiyah et al., "Polygamy Legal Politics in Southeast Asian Muslim Countries: Legal Pluralism and Qur'anic Perspectives," *Al-Manahij: Journal of Islamic Law Studies* 19, no. 1 (May 26, 2025): 51-64, <https://doi.org/10.24090/mnh.v19i1.13201>; Sidi Gazalba, *On the threshold of the Wedding Door* (Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Antara, 1976).

wife should be treated equally in fulfilling the rights of marriage as well as other rights.²

This study focused on the positive versus negative effects of polygamy based on the experiences of first wives. Three main reasons are the basis why only this positive view is studied. First, society is often exposed to the negative elements of polygamy rather than the positive effects. As a result, even a person who has not practiced polygamy is of the view that polygamy has a negative effect. Therefore, it is unfair to give an opinion on polygamy based only on the experience of others, and then the view is taken as a public opinion and opinion. Second, whatever is given permission by Allah SWT, it will surely bring good. In the context of polygamy, positive values need to be revealed so that people can understand the goodness. Third, the negative view of polygamy that is often highlighted and often gets a place needs to be countered so that it does not become a bad stigma while what makes polygamy worse is that the perpetrator is not polygamy itself. If polygamy is alluded to as the face of a human being, of course polygamy has a very ugly and ugly appearance.

Clearly, polygamy is not something beautiful and good and some argue that monogamy is a characteristic of developed society. In an article titled *Polygamy's Right and Wrongs: Perspectives on Harm, Family and Law*, it emphasizes that every individual's experience is different and that there are women who feel safe and satisfied in the polygamy system. This article does not provide a black-and-white answer, but invites readers to look at polygamy with a more critical, but also empathetic eye.³

Opponents of polygamy often raise the issue of women's equal rights. The argument brought is that women do not get the equality they want even in monogamous marriages and the only way is to get out of marriage with their

² Emk. Alidar Emk. Alidar and Rauzatul Jannah, "Penyelesaian Poligami Ilegal melalui Jalur Hukum Pidana menurut Hukum Islam: Studi Kasus di Pengadilan Negeri Jantho," SAMARAH: *Jurnal Hukum Keluarga dan Hukum Islam* 3, no. 1 (August 9, 2019): 69, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v3i1.4949>.

³ Gillian Calder and Lori G. Beaman, eds., *Polygamy's Rights and Wrongs: Perspectives on Harm, Family, and Law* (U: University of British Columbia Press, 2014), <https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/distributed/P/bo70049865.html>.

husbands. If there is injustice in monogamy, this is also polygamous marriage. Therefore, the inherent injustices cannot be resolved by polygamous marriage.⁴

According to John Witte, 2015 in his study entitled *Why Two in One Flesh? The Western Case for Monogamy over Polygamy*, states that:

*Monogamous households are filled with many ugly harms, too: wife and child abuse, deprivation and abandonment of children, wastrel habits, welfare abuses, and, sadly, so much more. That has not led to the abolition of monogamy but only to the closer policing and punishment of each harm as it occurs. Why not do the same here? If polygamy really does cause or correlate with various harms, why not just punish those harms when they occur? If polygamous wives or children really do suffer from increased levels of abuse, neglect, or deprivation, why not give them model contracts with strong, built-in protections for the vulnerable that are scrupulously enforced?*⁵

This raised matter is a matter that should be a guide for all parties and not easy. Polygamy should be judged based on its substance, not solely on the way it is implemented. Otherwise, the polygamy mentioned in the Quran is only in name and only its writing. The justification of the first wife's view was taken as the subject of the study because they were the ones who felt the real situation of honey's life more than the second, third and fourth wives. Hence, this study was conducted to identify the positive effects of polygamy based on the experience of the first wife. This view is important to create an alternative discourse on the importance of judging things with an open chest and in a harmonious atmosphere, especially since polygamy has been explicitly mentioned in Islamic teachings.

A study by Mariam Sultan Abdulla Al-Shamsi and Leon C. Fulcher (2005)⁶ entitled *The Impact of Polygamy on United Arab Emirates First Wife and*

⁴ Lori G. Beaman, "Opposing Polygamy: A Matter of Equality or Patriarchy?," in *The Polygamy Question*, ed. Janet Bennion and Lisa Fishbayn Joffe (Utah State University Press, 2016), 42-61, <https://doi.org/10.7330/9780874219975.c002>.

⁵ John Witte Jr, "Why Two in One Flesh? The Western Case for Monogamy Over Polygamy," *Emory University School of Law Journal* 64, no. 6 (2015): 1730.

⁶ Mariam Sultan Abdulla Al-Shamsi and Leon C. Fulcher, "The Impact of Polygamy on United Arab Emirates' First Wives and Their Children," *International Journal of Child & Family Welfare* 8, no. 1 (March 1, 2005): 46-55, <https://ugp.rug.nl/IJCFW/article/view/37720>.

Their Children is the initial basis for understanding the impact of polygamy on families, especially first wives and children. This study underlines negative impacts such as psychological distress, decreased children's academic performance, and strained family relationships. This emphasis on negative effects paved the way for later studies that attempted to explain the social, religious and psychological context of polygamy in more depth.

Reinforcing the normative dimension, a study by Nur Dianah binti Burhanuddin and Wan Ramizah Binti Hasan⁷ entitled *Factors and Wisdom of Polygamy of the Prophet PBUH* balances the discourse by tracing the rationale behind the practice of polygamy. This study emphasizes the four main purposes of the marriage of the Prophet PBUH, namely education, literacy, social and political, thus showing that polygamy is not solely the will of individuals, but the purpose of *maslahat ummah*. This study is important as a response to the negative narratives raised by previous studies.

In the same year, Siti Zubaidah Ramli, Hana Duerama and Farrah Wahidah Mustafar⁸ through the study *The Reality of Family Polygamy: Maintenance Communication According to the Perspective of Madhhab Syafie* detailed the economic aspects of polygamous households. This study found that alimony management depends on financial ability and agreement between husband and wife. This study continues the discourse towards practical dynamics in polygamous families.

Furthermore, a study by Muhammad Ajib et al.⁹ showed more complex psychological distress especially among first wives, including symptoms of trauma, anxiety, psychosomatic and interpersonal conflict. This study bridges

⁷ Nur Dianah B., Wan Ramizah H., and Hasan J., "Factors and Wisdom of Polygamy of the Prophet S.A.W," in *Proceeding of The International Conference on Contemporary Issue in Al-Quran and Hadith 2018*, 2018.

⁸ R. Siti Zubaidah, H. Duerama, and M. Farrah Wahidah, "Realiti Keluarga Poligami: Komunikasi Nafkah Menurut Perspektif Mazhab Syafie," *Jurnal 'Ulwan*. Jilid 1 (2018): 146–59.

⁹ Muhammad Ajib Abd Razak, Intan Hashimah Mohd Hashim, and Syazwani Drani, "Polygamy and Its Impact on the Mental Health of Family Members: Implications for Counseling Practice," *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation* 24, no. 4 (February 28, 2020): 4092–4102, <https://doi.org/10.37200/IJPR/V24I4/PR201521>.

the gap between the initial impact (2005 study) and more recent findings on mental health.

Nasrudin Subhi, Nurul Hidayah Mohd Nasir and Muhammad Ajib Abd Razak,¹⁰ through the study of *Polygamy: Experiences from the Perspective of the First Wife* builds a continuation of the psychological issue by delving into the inner experience of the wife. The study categorized wife's acceptance into three dimensions: emotional, cognitive, and behavioral. Although many negative reactions were noted, there were also respondents who showed the ability to adapt spiritually and socially.

At the same time, Nabila Farahana Yahya and Mekwok Mahmud¹¹ in their study *Between the Obligations and Desires of Polygamy in Forming a Happy Family* shifted the focus to the motivation of polygamous men. This study distinguishes between lust and commitment to sharia responsibility.

Continuing the issue of imbalance in the family structure, a study by Nur Kholis, Jumaiyah and Wahidullah¹² entitled *Polygamy and Gender Injustice in Marriage Law in Indonesia* highlights the weaknesses of the legal system that tends to favour the husband. The study highlights that the suffering of first wives is not solely caused by polygamy itself, but is also contributed to by the lack of protection of women's rights in the law. This aspect shows the need for policy reform and legislative strengthening.

A cross-cultural study by Alean Al-Krenawi¹³ reinforced the psychological findings by comparing women in polygamous and monogamous marriages in Palestine. The study showed low levels of self-esteem, high

¹⁰ Nasrudin Subhi, Nurul Hidayah Mohd Nasir, and Muhammad Ajib Abd Razak, "Poligami: Pengalaman Dari Perspektif Isteri Pertama," *Jurnal Psikologi Malaysia* 34, no. 3 (2020): 200–213, <http://spaj.ukm.my/ppppm/jpm/issue/view/40>.

¹¹ Nabila Farhana Yahya and Mek Wok Mahmud, "Antara Kewajiban Dan Keinginan Nafsu Berpoligami Dalam Membentuk Keluarga Bahagia," *Journal of Islam in Asia (E-ISSN 2289-8077)* 17, no. 3 (November 4, 2020): 240–67, <https://doi.org/10.31436/jia.v17i3.988>.

¹² Nur Kholis, Jumaiyah Jumaiyah, and Wahidullah Wahidullah, "Poligami Dan Ketidakadilan Gender Dalam Undang-Undang Perkawinan Di Indonesia," *Al-Ahkam* 27, no. 2 (October 12, 2017): 195–212, <https://doi.org/10.21580/ahkam.2017.27.2.1971>.

¹³ Alean Al-Krenawi, John R. Graham, and Vered Slonim-Nevo, "Mental Health of Women in Polygamous and Monogamous Marriages: The Case of Palestinian Women," *Journal of Social Psychology* 142, no. 5 (2002): 446–60, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00224540209603917>.

symptoms of psychoticism as well as "first wife" syndrome. This is further supported by studies by Nebiyu Mengistu et al.,¹⁴ L.D. Sheppard and Dashtiane et al.¹⁵ which confirmed the recurrence of symptoms such as depression, anxiety, and fear of losing one's husband's affection.

A recent study by Friday Christopher¹⁶ brings together the various dimensions of emotional, physical, and economic distress in the Ugandan context, thus showing that the issue of first wife's suffering is not limited to the Arab world or Southeast Asia, but also occurs globally in different cultures. Psychological distress due to feeling economically and emotionally neglected was also reported in cases in sharia courts as reported in the study of Analiansyah et al.¹⁷

From all these highlights, there is a strong continuity in terms of chronology and theme starting with the negative impact of polygamy, explanation of the wisdom of syarak, dynamics of alimony, trauma of the first wife, spiritual experience of acceptance, and analysis of male motivation to mental symptoms.

However, one major gap has not been given due attention, which is the narrative of the positive experience of the first wife. Existing studies focus a lot on suffering but do not elevate the experience of women who are able to rise through spiritual approaches, social support, and self-empowerment.

Methodology is the method and technique of knowledge related to social phenomena obtained. This process involves designing, collecting data,

¹⁴ Nebiyu Mengistu et al., "Stressful Life Experience of the First Married Women in Polygamous Families in Gedeo Zone, South Ethiopia: A Qualitative Study, 2021," *BMC Psychology* 10 (February 22, 2022): 40, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-022-00753-4>.

¹⁵ L. D. Shepard, "The Impact of Polygamy on Women's Mental Health: A Systematic Review," *Epidemiology and Psychiatric Sciences* 22, no. 1 (March 2013): 47-62, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S2045796012000121>.

¹⁶ Friday Christopher, "The Pain That First Wives Go Through In Polygamous Families," February 1, 2023, 327-28, <https://doi.org/10.1177/002076401038>.

¹⁷ Analiansyah et al., "Polygamy and Women's Rights: An Examination of Divorce Litigation in Sharia Court Rulings Pertaining to Revisions in Indonesian Matrimonial Legislation," *Al-Istinbath: Jurnal Hukum Islam* 9, no. 2 (November 30, 2024): 761-86, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jhi.v9i2.10833>.

and analyzing the data.¹⁸ This study chose a qualitative method based on the need for opt-in by informants to identify the experience of the first wife in polygamy. Direct engagement with informants is believed to provide more accurate findings and insights than quantitative design. There are events that cannot be explained using quantitative data; instead, qualitative data need to be used to collect data through interviews or careful observation.¹⁹ This method is an effort to obtain quality information by focusing on a small sample.²⁰ This study is suitable for the design of a case study because this study takes into account women's views on polygamy, which is a matter that is quite sensitive for some women. If this study is carried out referring to quantitative data, many external and internal elements are intangible, such as feelings and emotions. The real point of qualitative research is to observe people in their environment interacting and try to understand informants about their views and ways of thinking.²¹

In terms of data collection, this study used semi-structured interview data and document analysis. A semi-structured interview method was carried out to find out the experiences of the first wives and the positive effects of polygamy. The study was conducted on five first wives. The five informants were chosen from among the first wives because by nature, the first wife was affected by polygamy and because the first wife was the first person to marry and establish a household. From the aspect of sample selection, the study is based on targeted sampling and the method of searching for informants is carried out through the snowball technique. Targeted sampling is sampling in which a group of subjects with certain characteristics is selected as study informants. Meanwhile, the snowball technique refers to a sampling procedure where the study informant is asked to suggest other subjects that have suitable

¹⁸ Chua Yan Piaw, *Kaedah Penyelidikan*, 4th ed. (Kuala Lumpur: McGraw-Hill Education (Malaysia) Sdn. Bhd, 2021).

¹⁹ Chua Yan Piaw.

²⁰ Azizah Hamzah, "Kaedah Kualitatif Dalam Penyelidikan Sosiobudaya," *Jurnal Pengajian Media Malaysia* 6, no. 1 (2004): 1-10.

²¹ Kamarul Azmi Jasmi, "Metodologi Pengumpulan Data Dalam Penyelidikan Kualitatif.," in *Kursus Penyelidikan Kualitatif Siri 1 2012* (Kursus Penyelidikan Kualitatif Siri 1 2012, Johor: Faculty of Islamic Civilization, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, 2012).

characteristics for the study. The snowball technique is suitable for use in this study because it is difficult to get informants unless by naming other contacts. After the informant was interviewed, the informant was asked to name other subjects in the population who had similar characteristics.²² As it is quite difficult to identify individuals who are polygamous, this technique is seen to be used in this study for the selection of study informants.

The study did not set any specific location as the main focus. This is due to the objective of the study which focuses more on the emotional experiences and positive feelings experienced by the first wife in the context of polygamous practice. Thus, subjective elements such as meaning, emotions, and individual interpretations become the main basis of analysis compared to geographical factors or the background of the informant. This approach is in line with the view of Denzin and Lincoln (2011)²³ who assert that qualitative research involves "*the effort to understand or interpret phenomena based on the meaning given by the individuals involved*" and not simply rely on objective reality or physical context.

However, all the informants in this study who were marked as In1 to In5 (In refers to informants) came from various locations in Malaysia. In1 and In5 are from Negeri Sembilan and work as real estate agents and lecturers, respectively. In2 and In3 are housewives from Selangor and Perak, while In4 is an entrepreneur from Johor.

In addition, this study is exploratory in nature and aims to understand the subjective meanings formed through the experience of the first wife in the practice of polygamy. Not only does it not aim to make generalizations based on a specific population or region, but it also focuses on the depth of individual experience and personal perspective. This approach allows researchers to explore the themes in depth from the perspective of the participants, making the study more meaningful in terms of qualitative aspects than statistical or quantitative ones. The data collection process through interviews is carried out periodically over a period of one week, depending on the availability and

²² Chua Yan Piaw, *Research Methods*.

²³ Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2011).

schedule of the informant. This period provides ample space to understand each participant's experiences and perspectives, even for a short period of time. Interviews are conducted online at the convenience of the informant, as the issue of polygamy is a taboo or sensitive topic for some people. This approach allows informants to feel more comfortable and privacy-preserved, especially when they are talking about personal experiences that are emotional or sensitive.

In addition, document analysis is also used to obtain data to answer the objectives of the study, especially related to the benefits of polygamy. Each document content should be reviewed to see if it fits and matches the study questions.²⁴

Next, the data are analyzed by content analysis and thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a way to identify, analyze, and report on themes based on the information obtained.²⁵ In this study, data were analyzed through information obtained from interviews conducted. The transcription process is carried out by transcribing data from audio recordings of interviews with informants into text. Then, the data is sorted into specific sections, and the data is coded to the informant based on the interview transcript. The dialogue of the interview with the informant is coded with the date and time (hours, minutes, and seconds) of speech. These codes are developed in stages to ensure that they truly reflect the content and context of the informant's response. When the code assignment process is complete, the codes are then grouped into broader categories or themes. Themes are identified based on recurring patterns, important insights, and meaningful relationships in the data. Each theme is then explained in detail and supported by live excerpts from interviews to illustrate the findings of the study.

This analysis is carried out based on the following criteria: For example: In1040423/0:11:22. "In" refers to the informant. " 1" indicates the first informant. "040423" refers to dates, i.e. days, months, and years. "0:11:22" refers to time, specifically hours, minutes and seconds.

²⁴ Ghazali Darusalam and Sufean Hussin, *Metodologi Penyelidikan Dalam Pendidikan* (Kuala Lumpur: Universiti Malaya, 2016).

²⁵ Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology," *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, no. 2 (2006): 77–101.

Content analysis, on the other hand, complements thematic analysis by focusing on the frequency and distribution of certain words or phrases in the data. This helps to identify trends or changes in attitudes and perceptions over time. For example, the use of words related to positive experiences in polygamy can be traced to understand how these perceptions develop.

The Social and Thematic Contexts of First Wives' Acceptance in Polygamous Marriages

This study involved five female informants who were the first wives in polygamous marriages. The duration of their monogamous marriage before the husband remarries is between five and 25 years, while the life period in a polygamous situation ranges from three to seven years. The findings of the study show that some husbands openly express their desire to polygamy, while others marry quietly without the knowledge of the first wife. This has a direct impact on the form of emotional acceptance of the wife. The background of the informant's marriage is summarized as in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Background of the Informant's Marriage

Report	Marriage		Posts
	Monogami	Polygamy	
In1	6 years	6 years	The husband expressed his desire to marry but there was no candidate.
In2	25 years	6 years	The husband got married quietly in 2017 and it was revealed because the first wife saw her husband's <i>whatsapp</i> conversation with the word 'dear' in 2019.
In3	10 years	3 years	The husband expresses a desire to marry another.
In4	5 years	7 years	The husband expresses a desire to marry an acquaintance.
In5	16 years old	5 years	The husband married quietly in 2018 and was exposed for sending the wrong <i>whatsapp</i> .

Source: Interview with the informant

Next, the thematic analysis from the in-depth interview has identified three main themes related to the acceptance of the first wife towards polygamy,

namely: (i) increased dependence on Allah SWT, (ii) the complementary relationship between wives and (iii) the attitude of the husband who performs his responsibilities as a sign of qualification for polygamy.

Table 2. Classification of Transcriptions by Key Themes

Bill.	Factors	Transkripsi	Hours/Minutes	Theme
1	Intrinsic	"I think the more I love my husband, the more I love him. Because if we put our trust in Allah, Allah is the Most Merciful, Allah is the Most Merciful. He can just give you that love."	In2/300323/1:36:20	Complete dependence only on Allah SWT.
		"We should not put our dependence on humans, on husbands. When we put our dependence on humans, that's what we don't want to let go of."	In4/020423/0:20:40	
		"If we follow the force, it's not strong, but when we depend on it, when we look for it... Seek God."	In5/050423/0:14:40	
2		"Aaa... This is a polygamous life. Among them are complementary polygamous households. How do you complement each other? Like, aaa... I want to say that the second wife complements the first wife like that. For example, the first wife also has shortcomings, like the second, third, and fourth wives, there are their shortcomings and advantages. So, from that point on, we complement each other."	In3/310323/0:17:22	They complement each other.

3	Extrinsic	"Slow, slow husband shows that he does not ignore his responsibilities until now. Even the children, all are awake. Everything, everything, children have schooling. It's all complete."	In1/040423/0:10:30	The attitude of the responsible husband, a sign of his suitability to polygamy.
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Source: Interview with the informant

Complementary Relationships Among Co-Wives and the Husband's Responsibility in Achieving Polygamous Marital Harmony

The second theme identified is the complementary relationship between wives in polygamous marriages. The shortcomings of each should not be contentious, but rather they should be the basis for harmonious cooperation in managing the household. According to In3:

"I am the first wife, and I have a shortcoming, my honey is the same. That's where we complement each other." In3/310323/0:17:22)

Feelings of respect, tolerance, and mutual help are seen as important elements in building domestic harmony, even if the husband's love is shared. These emotional attitudes serve as adaptive strategies for wives to maintain equilibrium in the face of complex emotional dynamics inherent in polygamous settings. Rather than engaging in rivalry or competition, the wives—particularly the first wives—emphasize the importance of mutual understanding and support to sustain peace within the family unit. This mutual respect enables them to recognize each other's strengths and limitations, which in turn fosters cooperation in managing household responsibilities and child-rearing. Tolerance becomes a key mechanism for navigating differences in personality, treatment, and emotional expectations, while mutual help reinforces the sense of shared purpose and solidarity. In this way, the wives are not only coping with the emotional challenges of polygamy but are actively participating in shaping a model of coexistence rooted in Islamic ethics and emotional maturity. These findings challenge the dominant narratives that portray polygamy exclusively as a source of conflict, revealing instead that under the right relational and spiritual conditions, polygamous marriages can operate on principles of harmony, equity, and mutual care.

The third theme identified is the responsibility of the husband as a sign of eligibility for polygamy. The responsibility carried out by the husband is the main factor in the first wife's acceptance of polygamy. The informant rated fairness, ability to provide for their children, and attention to children as evidence of their husband's true ability. One informant stated:

"Husband shows responsibility, children, maintenance, schooling, everything he takes care of." (In1/040423/0:10:30)

Thus, the acceptance or rejection of polygamy depends on both parties, namely the husband and wife. The role of the husband in showing the responsibility and spiritual strength of the wife in dealing with emotional changes is the main determinant in forming domestic harmony in the context of polygamy. The notion that no woman can afford to accept polygamy willingly turns out to contradict the findings of this study, which suggests that acceptance can exist when there is clarity of individual roles, fairness, and inner strengths. Thus, generalizations that are not based on evidence are often only based on perception and not reality. This study opens up an alternative narrative in the polygamy discourse that is often monopolized by negative views.

Philosophy of polygamy

Before empirically evaluating the findings of this study, it is important to understand the underlying philosophy behind the study of polygamy in Islam. In the Islamic context, polygamy specifically refers to a form of polygyny, which is a situation in which a man has more than one wife at the same time. This term differs from modern relationship concepts such as *polyamory* or open marriage.²⁶ Although polygamy has been practiced since ancient times, Islam institutionalizes this practice with a normative approach that sets certain conditions. The main goal is to maintain the dignity of women.²⁷

The basis of polygamy is guided by Surah al-Nisa' verse 3 which gives permission to men to marry up to four wives, but with the main condition:

²⁶ Holden, Shaha Marie, "The Polygamy Paradox: A Feminist Re-Understanding of Polygamy, Human Movement and HumanRights" (London, King's College School of Law London, 2017).

²⁷ Zaini Nasohah, *Poligami: Hak Keistimewaan Menurut Syariat Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: Utusan Publications Sdn. Bhd, 2000).

justice. Wahbah al-Zuhaili explains that the use of the word *فانكحوا* indicates the nature of obligation, not absolute encouragement.²⁸ It is only for those who are truly able to meet the requirements of polygamy.²⁹

The Prophet PBUH only started polygamy after the death of Khadijah RA. Each marriage carries a strategic and da'wah purpose, including rescuing the widow of a companion and strengthening the relationship between the tribes. For example, the marriage to Saudah bint Zam'ah was meant to save her from social pressure and societal tyranny.³⁰ This proves that His Majesty's polygamy is not based on lust, but for the benefit of the ummah.

Within the framework of *maqasid sharia*, the legalization of polygamy plays a role in maintaining dignity (*hifz al-'ird*), heredity (*hifz al-nasl*), and social stability of the community. Hotnidah et al.³¹ emphasizing that justice in polygamy is not only related to *zahir* aspects such as rotation and maintenance, but also inner justice such as attention and love. The practice of polygamy that does not comply with *maqasid* can lead to tyranny, and this is contrary to the spirit of the sharia itself.

According to Faisal et al.,³² polygamy is considered one of the sharia solutions that is strictly regulated through legislation. It requires official permission from the sharia courts to ensure that women's rights are preserved and there is no abuse or oppression in the institution of marriage. This proves that Islam does not allow polygamy freely, but rather establishes legal discipline for the benefit of all parties.

Islam also establishes the role of men as leaders and protectors of the family, while women are given the position of complementary companions in

²⁸ Al-Zuhaili W., *Tafsir al-Munir* (Jld Ed. A.Y. Ichsan et al., vol. 2 (Jakarta: Gema Insani, 1991).

²⁹ A.A. Philips and J. Jones, *Polygamy in Islaam* (Tawheed Publications, 2005).

³⁰ Raihanah Abdullah, "Poligami Di Malaysia," *Jurnal Syariah* 5, no. 2 (1997): 167-86, <https://ejournal.um.edu.my/index.php/JS/article/view/22975>.

³¹ Hotnidah Nasution, Windy Triana, and Ahmad Rifqi Muchtar, "Ensuring Children's Rights After Divorce in Indonesia: Religious Court Decisions on Nafkah Madiyah," *Al-Ahwal: Journal of Islamic Family Law* 17, no. 1 (June 1, 2024): 41-57, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ahwal.2024.17103>.

³² Faisal, Moh. Mukri, and Asriani, "Criticism Against Feminist's Thinking About Husband's and Wife's Rights and Obligations," *AL'IS* 16, no. 2 (December 27, 2019): 331-54, <https://doi.org/10.24042/adalah.v16i2.5801>.

the household.³³ This is in line with the words of Allah in Surah an-Nisa' verse 34 and Surah ar-Rum verse 21.

As emphasized in Surah Ali Imran verse 191, all of Allah's creations are not in vain, including the preaching of polygamy which holds a lot of wisdom. If it is simply to satisfy the instinct of couples, then monogamous marriage is enough. Why, though, does God allow polygamy? The necessity of polygamy is difficult for some people to absorb due to various factors. Marriage in addition to legally preserving the human lineage, it also contains lessons that are largely undiscovered. If a person does not want to seek it, then wisdom cannot be found at any time.

Comparison of the Findings of Previous Studies

Most of the previous studies described deep negative experiences among first wives, particularly from psychological and emotional aspects. For example, Alean Al-Krenawi³⁴ found that women in polygamous marriages experience low levels of self-confidence, lack of marital and life satisfaction, and show more mental health symptoms than monogamous women. Symptoms such as somatization, depression and psychoticism are also associated with what is called "first wife syndrome".

In the same vein, Nebiyu Mengistu et al.³⁵ reported that wives in polygamous families often experienced psychological distress, including anger, loneliness, emptiness, and intimacy disorders. L.D. Sheppard³⁶ noted higher rates of mental disorders and imbalances in family functioning among polygamous women.

³³ Philips and Jones, *Polygamy in Islaam*.

³⁴ Alean Al-Krenawi, John R. Graham, and Slonim-Nevo, "Mental Health of Women in Polygamous and Monogamous Marriages: The Case of Palestinian Women."

³⁵ Nebiyu Mengistu et al., "Stressful Life Experience of the First Married Women in Polygamous Families in Gedeo Zone, South Ethiopia: A Qualitative Study, 2021," *BMC Psychology* 10 (February 22, 2022): 40, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-022-00753-4>.

³⁶ L. D. Shepard, "The Impact of Polygamy on Women's Mental Health: A Systematic Review," *Epidemiology and Psychiatric Sciences* 22, no. 1 (March 2013): 47-62, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S2045796012000121>.

The study of Muhammad Ajib et al.^{37,38} adding that the first wife in particular suffers from psychological trauma and psychosomatic symptoms, as well as disorders such as phobias and paranoia, in addition to feeling left out and underappreciated. This situation increases the risk of divorce. Meanwhile, Mariam Sultan Abdulla Al-Shamsi and Leon C. Fulcher³⁹ show that the psychological distress of the first wife stems from jealousy, lack of attention from the husband and domestic communication disorders. This stress is the main cause of relationship fractures.

In the economic aspect, Nina Nurmila,⁴⁰ found that polygamous women lost access to financial resources and property, which weakened their position in the household. Friday Christopher's contribution,⁴¹ on the other hand, highlights the double burden borne by the first wife in Uganda, including depression, dissatisfaction, physical and emotional abuse, as well as the economic responsibility of the husband's failure to provide support. In a similar vein, Soode Dashtiane et al.⁴² reported that symptoms of mental disorders such as panic, OCD and paranoia stemmed from feelings of being threatened by the husband's affection.

³⁷ Herlina Fitriana and Novia Suhastini, "Dinamika Psikologis Istri Pertama Yang Dipoligami (studi Kasus Pada Suku Sasak Nusa Tenggara Barat)," *Qawwam: Journal for Gender Mainstreaming* 15, no. 2 (2021): 21-38, <https://doi.org/10.20414/qawwam.v15i2.4153>.

³⁸ Muhammad Ajib Abd Razak, Intan Hashimah Mohd Hashim, and Syazwani Drani, "Polygamy and Its Impact on the Mental Health of Family Members: Implications for Counseling Practice," *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation* 24, no. 4 (February 28, 2020): 4092-4102, <https://doi.org/10.37200/IJPR/V24I4/PR201521>.

³⁹ Mariam Sultan Abdulla Al-Shamsi and Leon C. Fulcher, "The Impact of Polygamy on United Arab Emirates' First Wives and Their Children."

⁴⁰ Nina Nurmila, "Polygamous Marriages in Indonesia and Their Impacts on Women's Access to Income and Property," *AlJami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 54, no. 2 (December 14, 2016): 427-46, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2016.542.427-446>.

⁴¹ Friday Christopher, "The Pain That First Wives Go Through In Polygamous Families," *International Journal of Academic Multidisciplinary Research (IJAMR)* 7, no. 2 (2023): 327-328., <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020764010387063>.

⁴² Soode Dashtiane et al., "Polygamy and Its Psychosocial Outcomes for Women (an Evolutionary Bio-Psychological Systematic Review)," *Shenakht Journal of Psychology and Psychiatry* 8, no. 5 (November 27, 2021): 39-55, <https://doi.org/10.32598/shenakht.8.5.39>.

A study by Misbahul Munir Makka and Tuti Herawati⁴³ specifically examined the views of first wives on polygamy carried out without their consent. The findings showed that these wives experienced emotional shock, feelings of betrayal, frustration and anger when they found out the second marriage was taking place in secret. They reject the actions of husbands who use religious reasons without considering feelings and justice. In fact, family relationships become strained, and some wives show signs of depression, sleep disturbances, and withdrawal from social interactions. All of this illustrates that the absence of the consent of the first wife in polygamy has a profound negative impact on the emotions and stability of the household.

A study by Ebrahim et al.⁴⁴ On the other hand, it was found that women in polygynous marriages have different experiences depending on the context of their marriage. The study also identified **negative effects** such as emotional distress, unfair treatment, conflict between honey, as well as lack of communication and responsibility from their husbands. In conclusion, happiness in polygamy depends on the level of faith, communication, honesty and justice of the husband towards his wives. Not only that, the findings of the study by Herlina Fitriana and Novia Suhastini⁴⁵ reveal that there are findings that show that polygamous wives tend to commit suicide.

However, the findings of this study refute this generalization. On the other hand, it shows that in the context of Malay Muslims, not all first wives experience deep stress. In fact, most of the informants showed a high level of adaptation through a religious approach, dependence on Allah SWT and a positive perception of the new family structure.

While many past studies have emphasized negative impacts, there are several contemporary studies that align with the findings of this study and recognise the ability of first wives to adapt constructively.

⁴³ Misbahul Munir Makka and Tuti Fajriati Ratundelang, "Polygamy without First Wife's Permission and Its Impact on the Family," *Al-Mujtahid: Journal of Islamic Family Law* 2, no. 1 (June 30, 2022): 34, <https://doi.org/10.30984/ajifl.v2i1.1937>.

⁴⁴ Armia U Ebrahim et al., "Women in Polygynous Marriages: Their Perceptions and Experiences," *Philippine Journal of Psychology* 50, no. 1 (2017): 27-45.

⁴⁵ Herlina Fitriana and Novia Suhastini, "Dinamika Psikologis Istri Pertama Yang Dipoligami (studi Kasus Pada Suku Sasak Nusa Tenggara Barat)."

For example, Sabila Naseer et al.⁴⁶ shows that the first wife who receives the presence of honey is able to build a cooperative relationship in childcare and household affairs. In fact, they earn appreciation from their husbands and society. Her findings coincide with the findings of this study which show that there is family synergy when the first wife is willing to accept the new structure with an open heart.

This adaptation is also supported by Nini Muliani⁴⁷ who found that the first wife initially experienced emotional shocks such as anger and frustration but eventually reached a level of self-acceptance through awareness of responsibility towards children, religious values, and local culture. This development is in line with the narrative of the informants of this study, who associate acceptance with religious demands and the role of motherhood.

Sukiati and Roslan's contribution⁴⁸ added that the psychological adaptation of the first wife occurs through a religious approach, including coping strategies such as patience, silence and looking at the situation positively. The situation confirms that spirituality and faith become important mechanisms in helping women adapt in polygamous marriages.

This finding is further strengthened by the study of Tri Yunita Sari⁴⁹ which links positive perceptions of polygamy to the strength of religious identity. In her study, informants who showed high adaptability also associated love for their husbands with belief in the mercy and love of Allah SWT. This shows that a mature religious outlook helps to form a stable emotional

⁴⁶ Sabila Naseer et al., "Positive Evidences of Polygamous Family Structures: A Qualitative Analysis through Interpretive Phenomenological Approach," *Pakistan Journal of Psychological Research* 39, no. 2 (June 30, 2024): 267-81, <https://doi.org/10.33824/PJPR.2024.39.2.16>.

⁴⁷ Nini Muliani, "Gambaran Self-Acceptance Pada Istri Pertama Dalam Pernikahan Poligami Di Desa Sungai Rawa," *Fakultas Psikologi, Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau* (Skripsi, Riau, Indonesia, Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Ali, 2023).

⁴⁸ Sukiati and Mohd Nor. Mohd Roslan, "Adaptation of Polygamous Couples: The Experiences of Living Indonesian Women," *DBPIA-Nurimedia* 39, no. 4 (2023): 59-77, <https://doi.org/10.14431/aw.2023.12.39.4.59>.

⁴⁹ Trie Yunita Sari, "Between Religious Controversy and Commodification: A Study of Dauroh Poligami Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Religion and Society* 5, no. 1 (June 30, 2023): 47-57, <https://doi.org/10.36256/ijrs.v5i1.316>.

adjustment. The coping strategy in this regard leads to *religious coping* (religious) and *acceptance* (acceptance of reality).⁵⁰

The findings of this study are also supported by Fathurrahman Azhari⁵¹ who asserts that harmony in polygamous marriages can be achieved through the consent of the first wife, effective communication, and love between all parties. In certain cases, the close cooperation between the first and second wives reflected a mature acceptance and stable psychological balance, a picture consistent with the informants in this study.

It is clear that religious consciousness does in fact play an important role in the acceptance of polygamy. A study by Irma Maryani⁵² shows that some first wives are able to experience marital satisfaction in the context of polygamy when there are factors of self-adaptation and support of family institutions. Among the positive experiences recorded include acceptance of the position of first wife based on religious awareness and the value of subsidy, harmonious relationships with other wives, as well as increased commitment and responsibility in the household. In fact, husbands who show fairness, are emotionally and financially responsible, and maintain communication with their wives also encourage a sense of satisfaction in marriage. Although some informants stated that love has faded, they continue to live a married life on the basis of commitment and responsibility towards their children and religion.

This coincides with the first theme, which is dependence on Allah SWT. At the beginning of the marriage, In2, In4 and In5, revealed that it was as if they had lost their place of dependence, and they realized that the dependence should be placed on Allah SWT, not on the husband. For In2, polygamy is a test and rebuke from Allah SWT not to put dependence on

⁵⁰ Charles S. Carver, Michael F. Scheier, and Jagdish K. Weintraub, "Assessing Coping Strategies: A Theoretically Based Approach.," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 56, no. 2 (1989): 267–83, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.56.2.267>.

⁵¹ Fathurrahman Azhari, "The Habibs' Polygamy Lives with Ahwal Women (a Case Study in Banjar Regency, South Kalimantan, Indonesia)," *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences* 42, no. 1 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.34044/j.kjss.2021.42.1.25>.

⁵² Irma Maryani, "A Picture of Love and Marriage Satisfaction in the First Polygamous Wife," *Psychoborneo: Scientific Journal of Psychology* 6, no. 3 (2018): 359–67, https://ejournals.unmul.ac.id/index.php/psikoneo/article/view/4650?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

humans. When the informant is polygamous, the informant is confident in his dependence on Allah SWT without being completely dependent on the husband. Because Allah SWT holds the hearts of humans. The informant is of the opinion that the husband is also a loan from Allah SWT and the husband should be released little by little because the husband has other responsibilities. In2 also thinks that a feeling of calm will exist if a person begins to calm down and surrender to Allah. He stated:

When we leave everything close to Allah, Allah will present a sense of calm. If I talk to people, like now people who are bored, the first wife asks, how are you, my husband wants to get married again. I said, just let it go. The soul mate is held by Allah. If Allah says to marry, marry. But if we let go, God will give us a sense of peace there. (In2/300323/0:50:09)

This in-depth attitude is very much in line with the words of Allah in surah at-Taubah which means, "Say (O Muhammad): Nothing will ever happen to us except what Allah has ordained for us. He is the Protector who saves us, and (with that belief) the believers should also put their trust in Allah" (At-Taubah: 51).

According to Hamka, 1984 in Tafsir al-Azhar (p. 252) states that:

As we know, the meaning of tawakkal is surrender. Tawakkal is the culmination of Faith, as we have learned from previous interpretations. And in the steps taken by the Prophet PBUH, it appears that tawakkal grows by itself, in line with the effort. Everything is prepared, all efforts, just the energy that exists in humans, everything is complete. Nothing is done indifferently, always ready and ready. And the final decision is up to God. A believer is always tawakkal, and his tawakkal is only to God. He is not tawakkal to others.⁵³

The second theme is the complementarity between the first wife and the second wife. In3 is of the opinion that if he has a deficiency, then the second wife will cover the deficiency and vice versa. This opinion clearly proves that polygamy has a beneficial effect on the household. In addition to achieving harmony, polygamy also needs to be evaluated from a positive perspective so that there is no misperception of the practice of polygamy.

On the other hand, stated that his attitude changed after being mated. The attitude meant here is that a woman's ego is quite high, declining because

⁵³ Hamka, *Tafsir al-Azhar* (Surabaya: Penerbit Yayasan Latimojong, 1984).

she wants to do the best for her husband. This can affect the household, where couples will understand each other better. In revealed his feelings by saying:

The wisdom of polygamy that I think is the most great is to make me a woman who lowers my ego. I can handle it too. For example, if I say I have a fight with my husband, I want A, A too. He is also the type if A, A. If A, A and A, A, it will not have a solution. It's going to be a fighter. So, it (polygamy) made me another woman. (In4/020423/0:23:00)

In turn, it leads to an increase in affection and love in the household that is built. This is not the case as described which states that affection is diminishing because there are no longer two.

However, In3 stated the opposite, and even denied that the thought was an old one. Examining In3's view, it can be understood that what he thinks is just perception. The proof is that what is perceived is the opposite. Perhaps this is the essence of the doubts mentioned by Allah SWT regarding the interference of the devil in humans. If it is resisted, then the wisdom and truth will be revealed. He explained:

In my opinion, the polygamy life is the reality out there that I myself experienced. What we used to feel unloved will be less affectionate. Aaa.. I feel like I'm homeless, I don't have a husband, I don't have a family, I don't have a family, I don't have a family, I don't have a family, I don't have a family, In fact, it's just the minds of our parents, minds that don't... It doesn't even make sense. (In3/310323/0:16:50)

In addition, In4 polygamous life takes time to adjust. She who lives with her honey stated that family affairs at home are helped a lot by her honey and tasks are shared together. He runs a restaurant business, while his honey finishes the chores at home. This helped him and his honey to some extent in living a life of polygamy. He considered that the polygamy that was established was to complement each other and cooperate with each other. Here is his statement:

If this polygamy and we are in the same house, we help each other. Like me, I have 3 daughters. So many are small. So my husband will put me in the store. He would tell me to take care of the shop. When I returned, I looked like a messy house, to what, I helped. And at the house of my sister, honey, cook for my husband, tidy up the house. We help each other. (In4/020423/0:22:22)

Based on the information on the period of monogamous and polygamous marriages, all informants showed that the five informants were not included in the 'newlyweds' group. All the informants have been married for more than five years of marriage and some have been polygamous after 25 years of marriage. However, after being polygamous, the informant as the first wife still needs to go through the acceptance phase and this phase is a difficult phase for the first wives. The proof is that In3 who has been married for 10 years monogamously and has no children stated that:

At first, like my husband, he didn't marry in secret, he told me. And he told that before he got married, He told him he was pleased to be close to someone. Aaa... She wanted to be his wife. We as a woman, right, she said something like that, ishko ko ni. Emotions are a bit fluctuating, for a moment it's okay not for a moment. At that time, my husband said, don't worry, there is a soulmate, there is no soulmate. He said that. But we as a woman, that feeling really can't run. Kira will indeed be up and down all sorts of things. Even small things can be big then. So at that point, it was pretty bad too. It's emotional. There are many phases that are passed, the phase of accepting, the phase does not subside. Various phases. In the condition of receiving it, there are also various others. There are many tests that come when we want to accept. When we say we have received but in fact we receive it through the mouth but the heart is not. (In3/310323/0:04:51)

However, in the end he accepted the life of polygamy:

"I am also the first wife, there are also shortcomings, like the second, third, fourth wives, there are their shortcomings and advantages. So, from there, we complement each other." (In3/310323/0:17:22)

Based on In3's statement above, it can be seen that even if the informant has established a household for a long time, it still needs to go through the acceptance phase. This phase is a difficult phase because the wives have to fight and fight with emotions. Nevertheless, as time goes by, polygamous wives will reach a phase of calming down with an open heart. These two themes can be categorized as intrinsic or internal factors of a person.⁵⁴

In addition to intrinsic factors, these positive effects exist due to extrinsic factors. Extrinsic, on the other hand, means originating or acting from

⁵⁴ Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, *Dewan Bahasa Dan Pustaka Edisi Keempat* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka (DBP), 2010).

the outside.⁵⁵ This factor can be seen in In1 who stated that her husband does not neglect his responsibilities as a husband and father and this is the third theme found from the positive effects of the first wife in polygamy. Husbands are among the people who shape their perspective on polygamy.

The fact is, a husband needs to serve his wife well and always take care of his wife's emotions perfectly. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "The best among you is the one who is most kind to his wives" (HR Ibn Majah: 1978, sahih). Therefore, the husband's responsibility also plays a big role in forming a positive perception of polygamy and thus expressing the positive effects of polygamy.

The view of In2 is quite interesting. He who has been married for 31 years states:

There must be a reason, and Allah for something is not in vain. What Allah gives is the best and not in vain. On the other hand, there is something that God wants from us. So, I took that responsibility. When we practice polygamy with a good one, we are actually showing the image of polygamy itself. We build a good sunnah of the prophet. We don't need to talk, we don't need to tell people. The way we carry ourselves. For example, some people say, you know, her husband is married to someone else. What are you going to say? Eh, yes? Look at him, it's okay. It doesn't look like she's married to someone else. Because of public perception. Or if I'm down, I'm just skinny. People will say, ooo.. I think he's a bit of a jerk when it comes to talking to people. (In2/300323/1:26:20)

This clearly shows that the negative perception and impression of society about polygamy also stems from polygamous husbands and polygamous wives. If a wife who lives in a harmonious polygamy and has a feeling of calmness, then the image of polygamy will be seen as beautiful and beautiful through the way a wife carries herself. This is because, society will judge the practice of polygamy based on what is seen, especially what happens to polygamous wives. The better the image of polygamy brought, the more positive the perspective and perception of society about polygamy. He further stated:

When we talk outside the polygamous group, a monogamous person will not understand, he cannot understand. But when I talk to another first wife, she can get it, she thinks. (In2/300323/1:36:45)

⁵⁵ Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

In2's views are also supported by In1:

Usually people who don't understand polygamy, they think polygamy is negative. (In1/040423/0:10:20)

The above statement shows that people who do not live in the world of polygamy and do not face this world should stop giving a bad perception about polygamy. This is because the opinions expressed by those who have never practiced polygamy are considered inappropriate unless they have gone through the polygamy process themselves.

Thus, based on the experiences shared by the informants throughout their lives of polygamy, it can be clearly seen that the benefits of polygamy have been embedded with the hatred of some of the society. They do not accept polygamy because they consider polygamy to be a negative practice. As Muslims who obey the commands and commands of Allah SWT, it is necessary for a person to instill an attitude to accept and view from a positive point of view something that has been required by Allah SWT because of course there is more wisdom than harm. As Allah SWT says in surah al-Baqarah verse 216 which means, "... Maybe you hate something, even though it's very good for you...". The same is true of the practice of polygamy which contains many positive sides and this can be proven in this study.

Moreover, not everything can be understood through reason alone. Likewise with what is sharia by Allah SWT in religion. This is because there are certain things that need to be believed in first because the intellect is also limited and is not able to understand all things, especially when it involves commands and rebukes from Allah SWT. This coincides with a hadith narrated from Saidina Ali r.a regarding the law of sweeping khuf shows how the intellect is not able to understand certain things in religion. His mafhum: *"If the religion (Islam) were based on the result of thought, then sweeping the bottom of the khuf would be more suitable to be swept than the top, and indeed I saw the Prophet PBUH rubbing the top of the two khuf"* (HR Abu Daud:162). Imam Al-'Asqalani stated that this hadith in terms of its sanad is authentic.⁵⁶ Therefore, every Muslim individual

⁵⁶ Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, *Talkhis Al-Habir Fi Takhrif Ahadith al-Rafi' al-Kabir*, vol. 1 (Muasasah Qurtubah, 1995).

should not think about polygamy using reason alone because the wisdom and goodness given by Allah SWT cannot be fully understood by the logic of reason.

Conclusion

Polygamy has a positive side that cannot be seen with a hateful heart. However, not everyone has the same understanding of polygamy. There are a few who hate polygamy and some who accept polygamy. Some of the society is served with negative issues related to polygamy and some have trauma to polygamy. The three main themes of the positive effects of polygamy are based on the experience of the first wife, namely for dependence on Allah SWT, which complements the husband's attitude of responsibility as a sign of his qualification for polygamy. The findings of the five informants are quite meaningful that polygamy contains positive values not as portrayed by society. Appropriate coping strategy. Polygamy is just a perception not reality. If it is a reality, then it is due to the husband's mistake in handling the household or the attitude of the wife who does not want to open her heart to accept his wisdom. There are things that, if accepted first rather than rejected, will produce unexpected wisdom. The truth about polygamy will only be closed when the parties involved strive to provide appreciation for polygamy with the help of appropriate coping strategies. Undoubtedly, attitudes help encourage polygamy to be hated by society. Further studies, especially the consolidation from a legal point of view, especially the coping strategy for the first wife, need to be pursued immediately so that oppression and injustice in polygamy can be overcome as best as possible. The study also suggests that the cultural myths built around polygamy should be further analysed through semiotic approaches and cultural discourse. Further study with the framework of Roland Barthes may be able to unravel the symbolic elements that contribute to the passive acceptance of polygamy among Muslim women.

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