

## A Quranic Approach towards Polygamy: An Analysis of Modern Age Dilemma towards Conjugal Rights and Responsibilities

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### Abstract

Islam does not support the plurality of wives nor put restrictions on the conduction of polygamy. In other words, Islam never prohibits them from making polygamy if certain conditions are fulfilled which mainly Quran asks for making priorities regarding polygamy widowed, and divorced women should be there to select. It could have been prohibited like other pre-Islamic practices, such as gambling, adultery, fornication, drinking, etc. However, as a way of life that takes apprehension of the natural impulse of humankind, This paper seeks to elucidate how Islam ensures that polygamy means protecting the rights and well-being of women, by making them proud of their union with a lawful husband. To avoid being in a relationship as a mistress or concubine, who is solely responsible for single parenthood, and to overcome the increasing number of divorces in some societies today, Islam ameliorates the plight of women as a result of disparity in the man-to-woman ratio by offering a solution that alleviates a woman's status from being a mere object or commodity in the hands of men. Several Quranic verses and Exegete's opinions are quoted and analyzed to identify the objective and wisdom behind the permissibility of polygamy. I have also discussed in detail the reasons that summarize men involved in the act of multiple marriages. All the sexual desires of both men and women are the same and both genders seek pleasure and convention,

yet the necessity, important benefits, and hazards have also been discussed. Moreover, here the evils that have crept into society through this act can be renowned and have also been suggested in this paper.

**Keywords:** Polygamy, Quran, Exegete, Widowed, Divorced, Women

**Introduction:**

The presence of polygamy's legitimacy has consistently been far from being a real issue, with numerous contending that polygamy is seen as the infringement of fundamental freedom of sex<sup>1</sup>. Muslim researchers persistently examine the upsides and downsides of managing polygamy as a hotly debated issue. A few researchers suggest polygamy as complying with Allah's order, and some may decline polygamy with certain arguments that consistently identify with sexual orientation imbalance<sup>2</sup>. As an interminable subject to discuss, polygamy is continually fascinating because it is an extraordinary theme to banter around the world. The act of polygamy in the context of the Quran is permitted. However, it additionally does not prescribe and commit individuals to do. It is allowed particular necessities should be done; one of them is that a spouse can carry on reasonably and similarly to his wife.<sup>3</sup>

Numerous individuals decrease polygamy since it separates women because of its unfairness and imbalance. Equity is a trademark that treats something precisely and decently by speaking to a person or thing as that individual or thing genuinely seems to be and offering rights to others who expected to acknowledge that even though others are their opponents.<sup>4</sup> This way, it will make a decent air for somebody to be mindful without abusing others' privileges. So equity with regards to polygamy ought to be given similarly by a spouse to his wives in all viewpoints, for example, material satisfaction, living spot, and family time sharing.<sup>5</sup>

**The Historical Background of Polygamy**

Polygamy has a long history. Various social requests and various old religions allowed polygamy. In Judaism, it was normal, and there were no limitations for a man to have many life partners at the same time. Church and governments all not simply allowed polygamy; to some degree, they practiced it too<sup>6</sup>. Polygamy was also rehearsed by the French lord<sup>7</sup>. Jews, Christians, Arabs on the whole, and undisputedly acknowledge and respect the Prophet

Ibrahim (AS). As shown by the Bible, the Prophet Ibrahim had three life partners: 1. Sara, 2. Hajira, and 3. Qatoora<sup>8</sup>. Additionally, Prophet Jacob had four wives at the same time<sup>9</sup>. As indicated by the Bible, Prophet Solomon had 1,000 ladies<sup>10</sup>. Also, the Prophet David wedded nineteen spouses<sup>11</sup>. In Hinduism, plural relationships are allowed, and there is no limitation on having various women's simultaneously<sup>12</sup>. So was the situation with Arabs; they wedded numerous spouses all at once<sup>13</sup>. From the above conversation, it tends to be inferred that Islam is not the innovator of polygamy, yet it was an old practice. However, Islam confined it to four spouses all at once. As it permitted numerous relationships, Islam likewise put men's commitment to giving different spouses very similar things first. Allah says: "Marry women's of your decision, Two or three or four; yet if ye dread that ye will not have the option to bargain legitimately (with them), at that point just one, yet a similar section says: if ye dread that ye will not have the option to bargain fairly (with them), at that point just one."<sup>14</sup>

When this request was uncovered, the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) stood up and pronounced that anyone should keep four of them and leave (separate) the rest if they have multiple spouses. Ghailan (R.A. one of the associates of the Prophet (S.A.W.) had ten spouses. The Prophet (S.A.W.) requested him to choose four of them and separate the rest. Another friend of the Prophet Qais canister Haris had eight spouses<sup>15</sup>. Essentially another buddy of the Prophet Nofal receptacle Ma'awiya had five spouses. Every one of them was requested to keep four spouses and separated the rest.<sup>16</sup> So, we can say that before Islam came, polygamy was a typical practice. Islam likewise permitted it, yet Islam put the limitation on the number four all at once and plainly said that you could wed more than one spouse till four; however, on the off chance that you dread that you may not make equity, at that point have just a single wife as Allah stated: if ye dread that ye will not have the option to bargain legitimately (with them), at that point just one.

Islam does not design polygamy; preferably, it has been demonstrated in the set of experiences in various social orders. It has been practiced in Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, and different religions of the world. Polygamy can be demonstrated through clinical science, Intellect, and social practice. It has

numerous benefits and has no negative marks. It is valuable for society and not a wrongdoing.

**Polygamy is a practice of hazards or blessings and a modern-age dilemma:**

One of the fundamental legends is to interface polygamy with Islam like it was introduced by Islam or is the norm as demonstrated by its exercises. While no substance in the Qur'an or Sunnah communicates that either monogamy or polygamy is the norm, a portion of data shows that monogamy is the norm, and polygamy is the specific case. In essentially all countries and around the world, the amounts of individuals are even, with women's numbers to some degree more than men's. In that limit, it is a sensible incomprehensibility to consider polygamy to be the norm since it acknowledges a section structure of at any rate 66% women and 33% folks. No Islamic "standard" relies upon a boundless assumption. Modern age dilemma is just to fulfill their lust so Quran never asks to fulfill the lust. It's the way to protect the rights of those women who are deprived in societies of their wellbeing. Quran discourages the individual desire and put the condition on having four. It's not freedom but it's an obligation to facilitate the needy ones. and when people will go to the true spirit of the Quran they will know that it's not an easy task to adopt such women.

**Quranic Wisdom in making Polygamy:**

The Battle of Uhud left many widows and orphans behind the martyrs. In this context, a Quranic passage was revealed in which polygamy was mentioned implicitly with restrictions on wives' number and equality required among them. This indicates that such an act is permissible following eventuality and individuals that vary according to the situation. In this way, the problems of widows and orphans can be resolved in a righteous, applicable, and humanist way as they are more insecure without a husband/father in terms of fulfilling requirements of them, including economic, associate, appropriate upbringing, and any else requirements.

On the off chance that you dread that you will not have the option to manage the vagrants, wed ladies of your decision a few or four, yet on the off chance that you dread that you will not have the option to deal legitimately (with them), at that point just one. (Qur'an 4:3)

**Exegete's opinions and polygamy**

**Muhammad Asad:** Permission of having more than one wife (maximum of four) is granted only with a condition, "if you have reason to fear that you might not be able to treat them with equal fairness, then marry one" this makes marriage with more than one woman allowed only in rare and extraordinary situations.<sup>17</sup>

Many of the antagonists raise questions like why not the same liberty is offered to women; this question's answer is straightforward. Nevertheless, the sacred factor of love between men and women has an impact on their relationship, and reproduction; the presence of sexual urge in both genders is the determinant biological explanation. A lady can conceive a kid from a solitary man and needs to carry it for a very long time before imagining from another, a man can deliver a kid at whatever point he sleeps with a lady. Hence, man's polygamous nature is justified by nature, but polygamous instinct in a woman would have rendered nature inefficient. So, the biological factor is one of the aspects of marital love but not the most crucial factor all the time.

Nevertheless, it is a primary factor in marital love and fateful in the foundation of marriage. Islamic law allows men to have more than one wife but does not allow women to have so take human nature and the protection of marriage's socio-biological function into account. Then again, marriage's holy issue isn't ponderable and out of the circle of law and is left to the accomplices' freedom. In Islam, marriage is at last an issue identified with regular folks, so regardless, the resort to separate is available to any of the two accomplices.

**Abdullah Yusuf Ali:** In introducing the laws and rules about marriage, conditional clauses about orphans are also given. This highlights the event that occurred about referred to which this verse was announced. It is about Uhud's battle, after which martyrs left many orphans and widows behind along with imprisons of war. They were to be dealt with the most significant values of humanity and fairness. This event is in history, but the values are valid throughout the present. It is guided that one should marry orphans only if they are sure that in this way, they can indeed be able to protect all their assets and interest justifiably. Nevertheless, if they are not sure that they can do so, they should not marry them and go for other options. Before the

advent of Islam, it was the dark ages when people could have an unlimited number of wives, but now this number is only four<sup>18</sup>.

**Abdul Majid Daryabadi:** Before the Muhammadan times, polygamy was exercised among the people of the East. However, when a considerable number of women are seen on the West's streets in awful conditions, Europe should pay a little attention to its condition rather than pointing out others. Polygamy is a noble deed against social atrocity, and monogamy is ideal.<sup>19</sup>

**Seyyed Hossein Nasr:** This implements that a man can marry the only woman he can support and fulfill all her marriage rights. All the commentators have declared that this verse is not any new permit for polygamy, nor does it promote polygamy. Rather than this, the verse has constricted the exercise of having unlimited wives or polygamy in pre-Islamic Arab and allowed only the maximum number of 4 wives at a single time. That, too, is a condition of fulfilling the rights of all. If one cannot do so, then he should marry only one woman.

Islam has given both parties options and liberty: to seek divorce/khul'(divestiture) or reject the marriage proposal if asked to be the second wife or asked to allow and could not accept a polygynous husband.<sup>20</sup>

#### **Polygamy v/s Polyandry:**

Another major issue debated is whether the Quran permitted polygamy but not polyandry with more than one husband and why women are not allowed to have several men at a single time. Islamic teachings offer useful things to the people and forbid whatever is harmful to civil society's wellbeing.

According to social sciences, the phenomena of polyandry are uncommon. The challenging issue of matrilineal recognition of children occurs due to polyandry. Moreover, polyandry is contradictory to the feminine quality of women.

#### **Allegations against Polygamy in the United Nations**

Polygamy causes several harms for the people in polygamous marriages that should be controlled. Adding to this, several opinions suggest that polygamy should not be restricted. These opinions revolve around the delicacy and the physical harms of polygamous marriages and gender equality worldwide.

The U.N. committee has run a consistent campaign against the phenomena of polygamy by implementing the "UN CEDAW1981 (Convention on

Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women)”. An overall proposal was given thereafter in 1992 that expressed, "Polygamous marriage repudiates a woman's right to correspondence with men, and can have such genuine passionate and monetary ramifications for her and her wards that such relationships should be debilitated and denied. The Committee notes with worry that some state parties, whose constitutions ensure equivalent rights, license polygamous marriage in understanding."

The pact is violated on the basic level due to polygamy which depicts the power imbalances between the partners and is related to the frequent absence of permissions. There is no concept of marital property in several conventional systems, while polygamy is a crucial aspect of property authorizations. There is still a gap in establishing rights for women in property related to marriage, including death and divorce scenarios.<sup>21</sup> The Islamic system does not conceptualize the division of marital property and offers equal inheritance to all the wives with an allocated percentage of the total to be shared with the children and other immediate relatives.<sup>22</sup>

#### **Critical Approaches towards Polygamy**

Justice and equality are of significant importance in Islam. It is evident from the mentioned terms in the Quran about polygamy that justice must not be overlooked in any case. The aims of Sharia include bringing justice and equality to the people. On polygamy, Sharia puts stress upon justice in all aspects, including psychological, sociological, legal, and Fiqh justice.<sup>23</sup>

#### **Complexities within Polygamy**

Islam suggests that every individual modifies his potency of bringing justice to each wife because, naturally, seeing one's husband with another woman hurts. That happens in any of the ways; (1) By Discouraging the wife's genuine affection for the husband as she loves him from the depth of her heart with no space left for any other man, (2) This gets the wife captivated by inferiority complex of not being able to satisfy his man and this complicated increases with increasing pressure from the family, (3) Polygamy initiates various kinds of conflicts in a single-family that can arise in either among wives, or between stepchildren and mothers, between wives, or even among children from different mothers. Competition between wives starts naturally due to unpleasant feelings.<sup>24</sup>

The competition happens when the husband fails to keep justice between the wives and pays more attention to the new wife than the others. For the time being, the husband breaks up with the elderly wife, and several social issues are born with this act. Riyandi conducted a study that describes that Islam allows polygamy on strict terms and conditions of justice and equality to be fulfilled among wives and their children in all aspects, including mental and physical. The permission is not granted easily as Islam stresses equality and justice in the family. This also refers to the self-respect of wives having all rights over their husbands, who should fulfill all these rights to prevent indiscriminate disheartenment and ill-treatment.<sup>25</sup>

A study by Zuhrah explains that the fundamental law for polygamy is justice. As if things like clothes, food, home, affection, and social interaction cannot be shared between wives and children legally, the husband should also take care of himself despite overburdening any of the wives.<sup>26</sup>

Furthermore, Fadri describes that in today's era, people are seeking only worldly satisfaction for which they adopt polygamy and, as a result, fail to practice justice.<sup>27</sup> Arifah, Sholehah, & Hardianto concluded in a study that polygamy itself is thought to be an unfair phenomenon in a relationship by some people.<sup>28</sup> They think that polygamy objectifies women they should enjoy equal rights as men. So, polygamy hurts women in all cases whether she accepts it or not. It hurts even more if not asked for permission before. She feels deprived of fundamental women's rights. Heath, Braimoh & Gouweloos conclude that polygamy is far from justice because, in one way or the other, it will harm or hurt the women, children, and ultimately society.<sup>29</sup>

#### **The necessity of Polygamy in Modern Age**

Along with all the negative impacts of polygamy, there do exist positive impacts of polygamy as well. Sayyid Ahmad described that only actual necessity could justify the act of polygamy. This necessity refers to the continuation of one's kind or progeny. If the women in marriage fail to accomplish her natural obligation because of any reason, Allah has offered a remedy for this condition in the form of polygamy.<sup>30</sup>

Sometimes, it is an unavoidable need for a man to have polygamy. Examples of such situations are given below;

1. If a woman is infertile and medical science has also failed to get children from her. Having children is a necessity for every man as they are the successor of their parents.
2. Sometimes a woman is not able to get pregnant because of an infectious disease. Then there can be two ways; divorce or polygamy.
3. When there is a need for providing social security to a young widow.
4. To save oneself from evil deeds, it is better to acquire the status of polygamous.
5. Man is sexually more desperate and stronger. That is why he either dwells in wrong relations or adopts the more legit way to fulfill his needs. So, it is better to practice polygamy instead of being involved in unfair practices. Allah says, "Nor come nigh to adultery: for it is a shameful (deed) and an evil, opening the road (to other evils)." It isn't unexpected to see that deaths are more in men than in women because they are more vulnerable to such dangerous conditions.

### Conclusion

This paper concludes beautifully with Quranic ideology toward women's rights. And it removes all accusations about the right to marry with her own will, the right to take a divorce, right to make another knot. It makes a woman free from all financial affairs and there is no burden on her to work and earn a livelihood for her child. Marriage in Islam is to protect women financially, emotionally, and psychologically. Islam introduces the term Polygamy its not for any type of enjoyment but it bounds a man to protect the divorced, widowed, needy women of his society to provide a good life. Quran introduces a heavy-duty towards a man and makes him one degree above the women just for protecting women's rights if he is unable then he will be questioned. S we can say Quran beautifies the society by introducing polygamy conditionally, if needful is there, Indeed to save women's rights.

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