The Marital Life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH): Monogamy versus Polygamy

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Abstract

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)'s life including his marital life have always become a reference for his followers (ummah). His monogamous life is longer than his polygamous life. However, in many occasions, his monogamy life is less paid attention than the polygamous one. As a result, many people including non-Muslim assume that polygamy is an Islamic teaching. Historically those assumption is not always true. There are many aspects that need to be considered and explored when talking about the issue of polygamy practiced by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). This paper examines the marital life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) relating to the issue of monogamy versus polygamy. This research employs a hermeneutic method and a historical study by giving an explanation of the notion of an experience about the past with critical analysis. Some question includes: What is concept of polygamy as revealed in the Qur'an and Hadith? How is the marital life of the Prophet Muhammad's life both in Makki and Madani era?

This study found several themes in the literature about polygamy in Islam. First, polygamy is not only practiced in the Islamic community but also in other cultures. Additionally, early polygamy texts were designed to deal with social problems, to uplift the status of widows, to allow widows to remarry, and to limit the practice of polygamy. Polygamists must be just or *'adl* for all wives, not only physically and economically but also psychologically. In current Islamic culture, polygamy is no longer seen as an effective social justice institution to deal with the problems of women and children. Therefore, if there is no guarantee that polygamy can create a peaceful and just environment, particularly for women and children, and it may even create economic and psychological problems, then the idea of polygamy as a social justice institution should be examined again.

During the Makki era the Prophet Muhammad was a monogamist for twenty- five years and during and Madani Era he was a polygamist for eight years. However, although he was polygamist he did not allowed his son in law Ali bi Abi Tholib to marry another woman except Fatimah (his daughter) during Madani era. It means that basically he was reluctant and not happy with his polygamous marriage.

Key words: Polygamy, Monogamy, Prophet Muhammad

Introduction

Research on the practice of polygamy from the Islamic perspective is important for society, particularly for Muslims, because beliefs about and understanding of this topic impact the

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relationships between men and women and the achievement of gender equality. Studies on polygamy in Islam are also important because in the Islamic community there are different interpretations about the religious texts that relate to polygamy as well as the marital life of the prophet Muhammad. Some of interpretations lead to irrelevant attitude and behavior and as a result, the beliefs and practices surrounding polygamy create problems, particularly for women and children. Research on polygamy in Islam will hopefully make contributions to gender equality and help eliminate conditions that create discrimination, oppression, and violence against women and children.

Polygamy, or plural marriage, is the act of a man who is married to more than one wife, living with them at the same time. Historically, before Islam, in some religions and cultures polygamy was widely practiced and recognized as lawful sexual behavior because it was part of the cultural heritage. Atman and Ginat (1996) quoted Human Relations Area Files (HRAF) data showing that the number of world cultures practicing polygamy is 77% (193/250), monogamy 17% (43/250), and polyandry 1% (2/250). Therefore, polygamy does not only take place in Islamic societies but also in other cultures. For example, Khrisna in Hindu legends had several hundred wives (Engineer, 2002). Even in contemporary U.S. society there is a culture of polygamy in certain religious groups, for example the Mormon religion. This religion is relatively young because it was established in 1830 (Altman & Ginat, 1996).

In the Islamic community, polygamy is a controversial subject concerning women and one that encourages some debate and research among Islamic scholars. Some groups believe that polygamy is allowed in Islam because there is permission in the Qur'an. On the other hand, some groups argue that the verses relating to polygamy in the Qur'an are not instructions but limitations. Muslims who support polygamy generally view women as objects, while those against this interpretation view women as active subjects (Ilyas, 2002). Women as objects

means that women are passive and do not have the power to make decisions for themselves. In terms of polygamy, sometimes they become sexual objects of their husbands.

In modern society, whether in Islamic or non-Islamic countries, polygamy practice is not supported by all those who support women's rights. For an Islamic feminist, the issue of polygamy in Islam is one of many important topics because most polygamists cause women's problems, including domestic violence and economic violence. It is difficult to solve these problems, because most polygamists use theological justification from the Qur'an and Hadiths to legalize what they do. Because of this, Islamic feminists and other modern Islamic scholars try to analyze and reinterpret religious texts about polygamy in different ways, such as by using a hermeneutic method. Through hermeneutics, Muslim feminists and modernists tend to reread the texts by emphasizing the notions of equality and justice in men's and women's roles in the society, which are "complementary and egalitarian rather than hierarchal and unequal" (Afsaruddin, 1999, p. 23). This method enables researchers to establish original meanings in the historical context of the texts by looking for the relationship between the text and other texts and/or between the text and its context when the text was revealed.

In the context of modern Islam, when talking about an equality-based interpretation of the Qur'an, this can only be successful when "a complete reexamination of the primary sources of Islamic thought, praxis, and worldview is made that intentionally includes female perspectives on these sources and that validates female experiences" (Wadud, 2000, p. 20). According to Bleicher (1980), hermeneutics is a theory or philosophy of interpretation. It can be used as a method in human sciences by re-thinking or re-experiencing what the author had originally felt or thought. In other words, hermeneutics is a method "to transpose a meaning-complex created by someone else into our own understanding of ourselves and our world" (p. 1).

Placed in historical context, polygamy in early Islam was a progressive social institution that offered women important economic, legal, and social rights. Today, the problems that polygamy was supposed to solve by providing guardianship for widows and orphans, highlighting widows' status, and ending economic dependency, are open to other avenues of solution. In the current situation, women's position, particularly that of widows, is different from those who lived in the prophet Muhammad era. Women can remarry and are more independent economically and psychologically than before. Therefore, polygamy may not make their lives better. Polygamy is no longer an effective social justice institution to deal with women's and children's problems. Establishing a certain social justice institution that focuses on widows and orphans can replace polygamy as a social justice institution. What remains would be a commitment to principles of Islamic teaching.

According to Ilyas (2002) there are four principles of Islamic teaching that should be considered when talking about the relationship between men and women, including polygamy. These include equal status, sisterhood/brotherhood, freedom, and justice. Equal status means that men and women are the best creatures and have equal responsibility as worshippers and as leaders in the world (the Qur'an 96:4, 51:56, 2:30). Sisterhood/brotherhood means that human beings cannot live by themselves. They are members of a society that should work together and help each other. Because of that, men and women are like a sisters and brothers who do not hurt each other (the Qur'an 5:2).

The third principle is freedom, which means that humans beings, whether men or women, have the right to choose what they want. In the Qur'an, God asks the sky, mountain, and other creatures to lead the world, but they reject this responsibility (the Qur'an 33:72). Then when God offers this responsibility to human beings, they accept, though they must fulfill some requirements such as individual responsibility. It means that nobody is responsible for other people's behaviors (the Qur'an 6:164).

The last principle is justice. The Qur'an mentions that justice must be given to everybody anywhere (5:8), in the government (4:58), and in the family (4:3). Based on the Qur'anic explanation above, Muslims must treat other people equally, justly, and respectfully without regard to their sexes, races, ethnics, religions, and nationalities.

Texts about Polygamy in Islam

The two important religious texts in the Islamic community, the Qur'an and Hadith, will be discussed here as they provide moral and practical guidance on the topic of polygamy. The Qur'an discusses polygamy in the fourth chapter/Surah; *An nisa'*, verses 3, 20, and 129. (4:2, 20,129).

1. *An Nisa'*, verse 3

   Translation:
   And if you fear that you cannot act equitably towards orphans, then marry such women as seem good to you, two and three and four; but if you fear that you will not do justice (between them), then (marry) only one or what your right hands possess; this is more proper, that you may not deviate from the right course. (Shakir, 2005).

1. *An Nisa'*, verse 20

   Translation:
   And if you wish to have (one) wife in place of another and you have given one of them a heap of gold, then take not from it anything; would you take it by slandering (her) and (doing her) manifest wrong? (Shakir, 2005).

3. *An Nisa'*, verse 129

   Translation:
   Ye are never able to be fair and just as between women, even if it is your ardent desire: But turn not away (from a woman) altogether, so as to leave her (as it were) hanging (in the air). If ye come to a friendly understanding, and practice self-restraint, Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful (Ali, 2005).

An Nisa' 3 talks about the situational background regarding why the text about polygamy was revealed. This text also talks about the requirement of justice for a polygamist. *An Nisa'* *20* discusses the prohibition to take back the dowry from the current wife to pay for the cost of

marriage with another woman. And the last verse (An nisa' 129) talks about the impossibility of the polygamist doing justice to all his wives.

There are several Hadiths that relate to polygamy. So far, there is no Hadith that instructs men to engage in polygamy, but in contrast there are Hadiths that describe limitations and restrictions on polygamy. The first Hadith says, "'Aisyah said that the Prophet did not marry again when he lived together with Khadijah until she died" (*Sahih Muslim* 2:371). The second Hadith states, "Ghailan bin Salamah Ath-Thaqafi converted to Islam and he had 10 wives; then Prophet Muhammad asked him to choose four" (*At Turmudzi* 3:435). Another Hadith also says that "Wahb al Asady said that I converted to Islam and I had 8 wives then I talked to the Prophet, then he said that I have to choose four of them" (Abu Daud 2:248-249). The last Hadith that indicates limitations on polygamy is:

> …Miswar bin Makhramah told that he heard the Prophet Muhammad said at the podium that Hisyam bin al-Mughirah asked me permission to marry his daughter to Ali bin Abi thalib (the Prophet Muhammad's son in law). Then I said to him that I did not give permission. I did not give permission. I give not permission. Except Ali will divorce my daughter, Fatimah, and then marry to Hasyim's daughter. My daughter is my flesh, her difficulty is my difficulty, and her sadness is my sadness too (Muslim, II: 376, Bukhari, III: 265, Turmudzi, V: 565, Ibnu Majah I: 643-644).

To explore the meaning of these texts more comprehensively, this research will analyze the Prophet Muhammad's autobiography relating to his marital life both in Mekkah and Madinah lives. These analyses are discussed in more detail in the following section.

The Prophet Muhammad: Monogamy versus Polygamy

When talking about the Prophet Muhammad marital life, it can be explored his seerah both in the Makki and Madani Era. During the Makki era he was a monogamist for twenty- five years and during and Madani Era he was a polygamist for eight years. He married Khadijah (forty years old), his first wife, when he was twenty-five years old, and Khadijah died when he was fifty years old. Around five years after Khadijah died, he started to become a polygamist

and remained so until he died when he was sixty-three years old. However, although he was polygamist he did not allowed his son in law Ali bi Abi Tholib to marry another woman except Fatimah during Madani era. It means that basically he was reluctant and not happy with his polygamous marriage.

It is important to note why he did not marry other women during his first marriage. One, the Hadith says, " 'Aisyah said that the Prophet did not marry again when he lived together with Khadijah until she died" (Sahih Muslim 2:371). Actually during that time he was honorable and had a chance to become a polygamist, but he did not. According to Najwah (2002), there are four reasons that the Prophet Muhammad was allowed to have another wife. First, his age was younger than Khadijah. It meant that he was still attractive. Second, polygamy was very common at that time and almost all men practiced polygamy. Third, he was from a high social class, Quraisy, for which it was very respectable to have more than one wife. Lastly, he did not have a son. At that time, Arabic culture did not respect women. So, actually, the Prophet Muhammad could marry other women to have a son. These conditions create some important arguments why the Prophet Muhammad was a polygamist.

One of the particularly important reasons that polygamy could be used for solving a social problem was to deal with the crisis of orphans and widows. The Prophet Muhammad himself practiced polygamy in part because he wanted to provide a good example for his followers that Muslims must protect the minority and vulnerable groups as well as guard against social stratification (Faruqi, 1986). Although he married eight women after the death of Khadijah, he chose almost all of them for different reasons but none of them for sexual or for reproductive reasons. For example, Hafsah was a widowed daughter of Umar bin Khatab. She and her father were very poor. They were vulnerable because they were homeless and unprotected. Nobody took her as a wife, so to uplift them and teach the other Muslims, he married her (Faruqi, 1986). Arabic customs at that time made the widows hopeless because they could not remarry even if

still young. Because of that, by marrying a widow, he tried to break down the Arabic custom that marginalized women (Faruqi, 1986).

Another example is the youngest wife, 'Aisyiyah, a daughter of his closest friend, Abu Bakar. Because she was still young and had intellectual capability, she recorded many Hadiths. She was actually the most productive women in terms of recording the Hadiths. For Muslims, the Prophet Muhammad's life is very important because he is an ideal model whom Muslims should follow. To know more closely the Prophet Muhammad's life, it was advantageous if Muslims asked his wives.

Sawdah, one of the Prophet Muhammmad's wives, had different problems. After converting to Islam, her family alienated her. After her husband died, she was suffering, but then to protect her and to teach a lesson to the Muslims, he married her (Carmody, 1989). Political and missionary reasons also became some of the reasons why the Prophet Muhammad practiced polygamy. This happened in the selection of his wife Juwayriyyah.

> Juwayriyyah was a widow who came to Muhammad as booty in war. He freed her for the sake of her father, a tribal chief Muhammad wished to please, and offered to marry her. The father left choice to her, and she agreed to marry Muhammad and embrace Islam, thereby preserving her honor. Within a few months of her marriage to Muhammad she had converted her entire family to Islam (Carmody, 1989, p.190).

Some examples of the Prophet Muhhammad's wives' backgrounds demonstrate that there are significant reasons why he practiced polygamy, such as to deal with social problems, to expand Islam, and to maintain and record the Hadiths. Politically, he built a more democratic system by marrying the vulnerable women who represented all minorities who had suffered discrimination from Arabic society (Carmody, 1989).

Historical, Social, and Cultural Backgrounds

To understand the original or correct meanings of the religious texts, the Qur'an and Hadith, also the Prophet Muhammad's life, it is important to analyze them in their historical, social,

and cultural contexts when the texts and the practice were revealed. The first verse about polygamy, *An nisa'*: 3, was revealed after the Ohud battle in the fourth Hijri calendar or 625 A.D. Before the Ohud battle, the number of male Muslims was 700. During the battle, 70 male Muslims died (Jawad, 1998). This number is significant because it was 10% of all male Muslims at that time. Because of that, there were many orphans and widows who needed protection or guardians because at that time, the Arabic cultures were strict patriarchs. Men were responsible to fulfill their family's needs and to protect them.

Another historical background is that at that time, there was a significant change in Arabic society from a rural society to an urban/business society because a new trade route was established from Yemen to Syria. This condition impacted the transition of social life from communal to individual. Due to this fact, orphans and widows needed someone to protect them. Based on this background, it can be concluded that polygamy was revealed for solving a social issue. According to Ilyas (2002), polygamy could only be applied in emergency situations. The Ohud battle was considered an emergency situation, and so it required special treatment. Again, although polygamy could be practiced in emergency situation, polygamists were commanded to pay attention to all wives justly.

One more historical fact is that in pre-Islamic culture polygamy was very common. A man even was allowed to marry an unlimited number of women without any prohibition (Jawad, 1998). This fact can be seen from the Hadiths mentioned earlier: "Ghailan bin Salamah Ath-Thaqafi converted to Islam and he had ten wives, then Prophet Muhammad asked him to choose four" (At Turmudzi, 3:435). Another Hadith also says that, "Wahb al Asady said that I converted to Islam and I had eight wives than I talked to the Prophet, then he said that I have to choose four of them" (Abu Daud, 2:248-249). Based on these Hadiths, it is clear that polygamy texts revealed a new limitation on the number of wives; they were not instructing men to practice polygamy. Islam even introduced an ideal monogamous marriage because the

last sentence from *An nisa'* 3 says that if you are fearful or worried you cannot be just to all wives, don't practice polygamy, but choose to be monogamous.

Language Analysis

Although polygamy is allowed in order to deal with social problems in certain conditions, it is very important to see an important requirement which is justice or *'Adl*. Justice is the central and significant requirement for polygamists. There are several Hadiths about this requirement. "...Abu Hurairah said that the Prophet Muhammad said that whoever has two wives then he prefers to one of them, in the day of judgment he will come with unbalanced shoulder" (Ibnu Majah, 1:633). Another Hadith also says, "...'Aisyah said that the Prophet comes to his wives justly" (Ibnu Majah, 1:633).

'Adl or justice is an abstract concept, and it does not only relate to quantity but also quality. It means that a polygamist has to treat his wives justly whether economically, psychologically, or physically. For the economic and physic aspects, men might show justice by visiting each of the wives the same amount of time and giving the same amount of money. But psychologically, it might be difficult to feel the same love. Usually a polygamist would pay more attention to and feel more love for the younger wife than others. So, if a polygamist loves one of his wives more than other wives, he cannot fulfill the requirements for practicing polygamy.

Actually the Prophet Muhammad himself could not treat his wives justly. *An nisa':*129 says that he could not love his wives equally although he really wanted to: "[You]…are never able to be fair and just as between women, even if it is your ardent desire" (Ali, 2005). Therefore, if in fact a man cannot be just or fair among his wives, he cannot be a polygamist. To be a just person is not easy. It seems the Qur'an is reluctant to permit polygamy because although the Qur'an allows a man to have more than one wife, these are hard

requirement that may be impossible to do. Nevertheless, justice to all wives is very central in polygamy texts. Polygamy as an unhappy solution to social problems can also be seen from this Hadith.

> "…Miswar bin Makhramah told that he heard the Prophet Muhammad said at the podium that Hisyam bin al-Mughirah asked me permission to marry his daughter to Ali bin Abi thalib (the Prophet Muhammad's son in law). Then I said to him that I did not give permission. I did not give permission. I give not permission. Except Ali will divorce my daughter, Fatimah, and then marry to Hasyim's daughter. My daughter is my flesh, her difficulty is my difficulty, and her sadness is my sadness too (Muslim, II: 376, Bukhari, III: 265, Turmudzi, V: 565, Ibnu Majah, I: 643-644).

By saying that "My daughter is my flesh, her difficulty is my difficulty, and her sadness is my sadness"(Muslim, II: 376, Bukhari, III: 265, Turmudzi, V: 565, Ibnu Majah, I: 643-644) the Prophet means that women who have a polygamist husband are not happy. The Prophet Muhammad even said that to hurt Fatimah means to hurt him too. This Hadith indicates that polygamy is violence against a woman and also her family.

That Hadith also indicates a prohibition because the Prophet Muhammad said, "I did not give permission" three times followed by this statement: "Except Ali will divorce my daughter, Fatimah, and then marry to Hasyim's daughter" (Muslim, II: 376, Bukhari, III: 265, Turmudzi, V: 565, Ibnu Majah, I: 643-644). This repetition means that the message is very important. It implies that he did not wish polygamy for his daughter, Fatimah, because polygamy would make her unhappy. He even asked his son in law, Ali bin Abi thalib, to divorce Fatimah if Ali would marry Hasyim's daughter. It seems to be better to get a divorce than become the second wife.

By analyzing these two verses *An nisa'*: 3 and *An nisa'*: 129 and also these Hadiths comprehensively, it is clear that polygamy was allowed to respond to pre-Islamic culture gradually, and also to deal with the need for guardians for orphans and widows, then in the end polygamy was banned. Because *An nisa'*:129 was revealed after *An Nisa'*:3, according to Abduh (Jawad, 1998), the ability to achieve justice is a prerequisite to practice polygamy. So

if this condition means absolute justice, banning polygamy will prevent any injustice toward wives.

Another language analysis can be explained by the analogy of the requirements for choosing the potential wife, which are wealth, beauty, lineage and religious commitment. Although the religious commitment is the last one, it is the most important one. This can also be implemented on the issue of polygamy which is "marry such women as seem good to you, two and three and four; but if you fear that you will not do justice (between them), then (marry) only one" (An Nisa:3). Although the number "only one" is the last one, it is the important one.

Polygamy and Violence Against Women

After the Prophet Muhammad died, many Muslims still continued to practice polygamy, but their numbers have become fewer, and polygamy in the Muslim community has become less unacceptable. Nina Nurmila (2009) argues that "polygamy has been a source of injustice towards women and children, that this is against Islamic teaching, and that a just Islamic law would need to call for the abolition of polygamy". Nowadays, many members of polygamous families, particularly kids and wives, are not proud of having a polygamous family. One participant in a seminar on polygamy stated that her farther was a polygamist, but he did not agree with his daughters having polygamous husbands because it is hard to have a polygamous family (Asikin, 2003). Most Muslims even attach negative stigma to polygamists because most polygamists practice polygamy for sexual reasons and in the process create many family problems. In fact, most polygamists do not marry widows, and the second or third wife is younger than the first wife. Sometimes, the first wife's son may be older than his father's second wife.

Because of the many problems that are caused by the practice of polygamy, in Turkey, Druze Lebanon, and Tunisia, polygamy is illegal. Turkey is the first Muslim country that

banned polygamy, based on the Turkish Civil Code of 1926. Druze Lebanon's prohibition of polygamy is based on the 1948 Law of Shabat, and Tunisia has the Code Personal Status No 66 of 1956 (Nasution, 2002). Based on these facts, the practice of polygamy in Muslim communities does not always have a positive meaning as in the original meaning in the Qur'an or as it did for the Prophet Muhammad.

I attended a discussion with a known polygamist in Indonesia, Puspo Wardoyo, in 2002. He declared himself to be the "president" of polygamy in Indonesia, and when he presented about polygamy in an Islamic University, he introduced his fourth wife in sexual ways. He said that, "she is my fourth wife, and right now she is still bleeding after delivering a baby, but it doesn't matter because I still have three wives." From this introduction, it can be seen the way he treats his wives as a sexual object rather than as wives.

In Indonesia, Puspo Wardoyo, the owner of thirty-four restaurants, is part of an interesting polygamy case. In 2003 he held a big event, a polygamy award ceremony in a luxurious hotel in the capital city of Indonesia, Jakarta. For women activists this event presented a backward step for the feminist movement in Indonesia because historically women activists had already started to work against polygamy. For example, a national heroine and feminist, Kartini, started to protest polygamy in 1911. Then, the protest was continued by the first women's congress in 1928. The disagreement about polygamy happened again in 1930 and 1954 (Arivia, 2003). The government responded to the protest by applying the family and marriage law No 1, 1974. The law states that polygamy is allowed only in certain conditions such as if the wife cannot have a baby, the wife is chronically sick or disabled, or if the wife cannot fulfill her obligation as a wife, such as having sex with her husband. This law also mentions that polygamy can be done if there is consent from the wife, and a guarantee that the husband can fulfill economical needs and will treat all wives and children justly. The law seems to protect women from discrimination in terms of polygamy, but it still has gender bias and ignores women's rights

because the law only considers polygamy as a possibility for men and looks at problems only in connection with the wife. The law does not mention what should happen if the husband is disabled, unfertile, or cannot fulfill his obligation as a husband. Therefore, it seems as if polygamy is allowed because of women's faults. According to Rohmaniyah (2002), although the law mentions that polygamy only can be done with the wife's consent, it does not mean that the wife has real autonomy to do that. In Indonesian culture most women economically depend on their husbands. So, if they choose to get a divorce they will suffer economically. In addition, divorce carries negative connotations in the society. As a result, the wife consents to her husband having another wife because there is no real choice.

Aid Institute of Justice for Indonesian Women (LBH-APIK) Jakarta conducted research by analyzing cases of violence against women. This research found seventy cases of violence against women related to polygamy. The victims reported that their husbands wanted to have another wife, did not fulfill economic needs, and did physical and psychological violence (Reyneta, 2003). These findings are very important and indicate that polygamy relates to discrimination, violence, and oppression against women. Because of that, if there is no guarantee that polygamy can create a peaceful and just environment, particularly for women and children, then the idea of polygamy as a social justice institution should be examined again.

In the Qur'an (*Ar Room* 30:21) the concept of marriage must be based on *sakinah*, *mauwadah*, and *warohmah* (love, happiness, mercy, and blessing). Therefore, if a man gets married but the impact of his marriage does not create love, happiness, mercy, and blessings to family members, he must be aware that his marriage is not following the Islamic way. If the problem results from the practice of polygamy, he must re-evaluate whether he is following the original meaning or the Prophet Muhammad's example. In other words, if a man cannot guarantee happiness and justice for all family members, particularly his wives and his children, it is better not to practice polygamy. Again, the motive of getting married in Islam is not only

to legalize sexual acts and for procreation but also to establish peace, justice, and happiness for all.

Conclusion

In summary, analysis of these polygamy texts, whether from the Qur'an or Hadith, shows that polygamy is not only practiced in the Islamic community but also in other cultures. Polygamy texts were revealed to deal with social problems, particularly to protect orphans and widows after the Ohud battle, to uplift the status of widows, and to break down the Arabic custom that widows could not marry again. Another point is that polygamy texts were revealed for limiting the practice of polygamy because, before Islam, polygamists had more than four wives or even unlimited numbers without any restrictions. Polygamists must be just or *'adl* for all wives not only physically and economically but also psychologically. Based on *An nisa'*:129 to become a just husband to all wives is psychologically impossible.

By looking at the Prophet Muhammad's life as it relates to polygamy, it can be concluded that all the Prophet Muhammad's wives were vulnerable women and represented minorities that had suffered discrimination from Arabic society. Therefore, he was a polygamist to create a democratic society, to expand Islam as a new religion at that time, and to maintain and record the Hadith as the second important source in Islamic tradition.

In current situations, the situation of women, particularly widows, is different from those who lived in the prophet Muhammad's era. For example, today widows can remarry and be more independent economically and psychologically than before. Therefore, by polygamizing them, it may not make their lives better. It means that polygamy is no longer an effective social justice institution to deal with women's and children's problems. Establishing a certain social justice institution that focuses on widows and orphans may be more helpful and less risky than applying polygamy to deal with these problems

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