

**VOICES OF MUSLIM WOMEN IN POLYGAMOUS MARRIAGES IN DURBAN
AND SURROUNDING AREAS: A STUDY OF PARTICIPANTS' LIVED
EXPERIENCE**

By

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Declaration

I, Zohra Ismail Sooliman, declare that:

- The research reported in this dissertation, except where stated otherwise, is my original work;
- This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university;
- This thesis does not contain personal data that can make the research participants identifiable;
- This dissertation does not entail other people's work unless specifically attributed as such, in which case their words have been rephrased, cited and completely referenced. However, where their exact words have been used, these have been placed in quotation marks and referenced.

Signed:

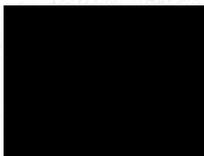


Date: 23 September, 2021

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I, Prof Augustine Nwoye, confirm that the work reported in this dissertation was carried out by Zohra Ismail Sooliman, under my supervision.

Signed:



Date: 23 September, 2021

Professor Augustine Nwoye

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Then which of the favours of your Lord will you deny?

(Quran Chapter 55)

Abstract

This study explored the experiences of a select group of Muslim women who are in polygamous marriages in Durban and surrounding areas. The aim was to determine the lived experiences of participating students who are either first or second wives in polygamous marriages. The study specifically investigated the participants' understanding of living with the consequences of a polygamous marriage and their view of the influence of religion, culture and society in the practice of polygamy in South Africa.

A qualitative research design was used to implement the study. A purposively selected sample of six participants from Durban and surrounding areas participated in this study of which four were first wives and two were second wives, and they were all Indian, Muslim South Africans. Data was collected using a semi-structured interview method. To analyse the data, Thematic Analysis was used. The goal was to reveal the core experiences of participants' borne out of either being a first or second wife in a polygamous marriage.

The findings of the study showed that Muslim women suffer specific consequences as a result of being in a polygamous marriage. Some of these consequences include: the husband being aloof from his first family after his subsequent marriage, husband's subsequent marriage having a negative impact emotionally and psychologically on the children of the first marriage, first wives feeling physically married but emotionally separated and the problem of the first wife's disempowering dependence on the husband's finances for sustenance and survival. Some of the unique experiences include: the first wives' experience of feeling betrayed by their husbands when they take on second wives, the first wives' experience of being physically married but feeling emotionally separated, the second wives' negative experiences of being seen as a spoiler of people's first marriages and a devil's advocate in the continued propagation of polygamous marriages and the complaint of the second wives about the stigma against them from the husband's family. Implications of these findings were examined and some recommendations were made to encourage further studies along the lines of the present study.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Polygamy is practiced in several countries around the world including many parts of Africa. Within the African tradition there are two forms of polygamy. The first is motivated by ‘affluence’ where a man takes on more than one wife to symbolize his wealth and status. The other ‘interventive’ which serves to remedy particular problems in the marriage such as, infertility in the wife, as a source of labour to work on the husband’s holdings thereby growing the family’s wealth and the desire for a male heir to continue the family line (Baloyi, 2013; Nwoye, 2007). Polygamy is commonly practiced in the Middle East, a region comprising of a majority Muslim population who subscribe to the religion of Islam; which permits a man to marry a maximum of four wives at any one time but specifies that he treats each of his wives equally (Al-Krenawi, 2013). The incentive for polygamy in Islam is closely aligned to the interventive form of polygamy similar to that of the African culture. Dorjahn (1959) proclaims that men are more susceptible to death than women as a result of wars and occupational risks; thus leaving more women and children destitute. Engineer (2001) explains this point when he makes reference to the social context and historical period in which the verses of polygamy were revealed. It was at a time soon after a crucial battle, “the battle of Uhud”, in which many males were martyred leaving women and orphans destitute. This revelation instructed the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, (PBUH) to marry and encourage the surviving men to marry the widowed women as an interventive measure to care for them and their orphaned children. Furthermore, it is important to note that the Quran (holy book), the Divine word of GOD, was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to reform the society of that era. Amidst allegorical verses and stories of previous communities, numerous verses were revealed to address social and justice issues pertinent to the time. One such issue was the practice of where men used to marry a countless number of women and treat them as chattels (Engineer, 2001). Hence the verses on polygamy, in addition to addressing the dilemma of widows and orphans after battle, expounded further to address the debasement of women. The foundational source, the Quran (holy book) revealed the verses on polygamy to serve a protective, socio-economic and social-justice function whereby the dignity and respect of the women and orphans were protected.

Despite the conditions stipulated in the religion of Islam, the practice of secretive polygamy as alluded to by Nnaemeka (1997) is disturbing where men marry multiple women spread

across different places. Nnaemeka (1997) expresses her concern about the increasing practice of polygamy motivated by affluence and not as per conditions of the African tradition. In affluent polygamy, men personally benefit from the privileges of this practice but neglect their familial responsibilities. Additionally, Isabel Phiri (a professor in theology at KwaZulu-Natal university) is concerned about the fact that conventionally, polygamy was practiced by the rich with land and money to sustain a large family but recently it is practiced by middle-class and poor men (Wunderink, 2009).

Muslim men substantiate their undisclosed marriages by stating that they are emulating a Prophetic practice permitted in the religion of Islam, thereby implying their obedience to GOD. Being schooled in Islam, I believe that Divine Wisdom would only permit a specific practice for the benefit of humanity. The actual practice of polygamy amongst Muslims in South Africa in present times portrays a different picture of the reality on the ground.

In my experience as a marriage counsellor, having engaged with countless women and children from polygamous marriages amongst Muslims in South Africa, the majority of them suffer untold physical, mental and emotional pain and financial and material injustice.

1.2. Problem Statement

The practice of polygamy amongst Muslims is a recognized institution in the religion of Islam according to the divine scriptures, the Holy Quran (holy book), yet women in polygamous marriages are experiencing challenges in many domains of their lives. Many of these challenges are not fully documented. The Quran being the divine word of GOD is immutable but, the interpretation of it is a subjective human endeavour (Engineer, 2001). This view is supported by Moosa (2009) who emphasizes that it is important to note that predominantly males have interpreted the Quran; and often it was done without taking into account the context, the important events and the period in history around the revelation. The reference to the subjectivity of human beings as interpreters and furthermore that they are predominantly male raises concerns as well as hints towards a patriarchal bias.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

This study aimed to explore the lived experiences of women in polygamous marriages in order to gain deep insight, subsequently bringing new understanding to the body of knowledge; but more importantly to generate data to inform and transform the practice of present-day polygamy

1.4. Objectives of this Study

Among the specific objectives of the study were:

1.4.1. To explore the lived reality of Muslim women in polygamous marriages in Durban and surrounding areas by allowing them to give voice to their physical, mental, psychological, emotional, social and spiritual experiences.

1.4.2. To explore the negative consequences associated with living in a polygamous marriage as related by the study participants and how they viewed it.

1.4.3. To explore the respective unique experiences of first and second wives in polygamous families?

1.5. Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1.5.1. What is the typical experience of Muslim women in South Africa who are in polygamous marriages?

1.5.2. What are the negative consequences of living in a polygamous marriage as a Muslim woman in South Africa?

1.5.3. What are the unique experiences of first and second wives, respectively, in polygamous families?

1.6. Significance of the Study

A preliminary reading of the literature alludes to majority of studies that highlight the negative impact of this phenomenon on women and children; yet it is rare to find studies that document the daily experiences of their real world. There is a definite gap in the literature that speaks to the lived experiences of women in polygamous marriages whether they are first or subsequent wives. Through gathering the voices of Muslim women in polygamous marriages in Durban and surrounding areas, affected women will be given the opportunity to articulate their lived realities of the world they live in. The significance of this study is to highlight their plight to Muslim men who carry or intend to carry out this practice, inform women advocacy groups who in turn will rally the cause, educate women on their rights and provide knowledge that will grant women the power to negotiate their own choices with regard to this phenomenon and to heighten the awareness of Muslim theologians who are key role players in the education of men as the mosque is used as a platform of education. It is

hoped that by turning the spotlight on this phenomenon under study, data would be garnered for organizing appropriate intervention aimed at mitigating the physical and psychological harm confronting some of these women.

1.7. Scope and Delimitations of the Study

This study included a purposively selected sample of six women in Durban and surrounding areas to explore the lived experience of women who are currently in polygamous marriages. Participants were limited to be either a first wife or subsequent wife and had to be residents of South Africa.

1.8. Operational Definition

For conceptual clarity it is important to define the term ‘polygamy’. Polygamy is the practice of marrying more than one spouse at a time in a marital relationship which is practiced in two ways namely Polyandry and Polygyny (Al-Sharfi, Pfeffer, & Miller, 2016). Polyandry, a less practiced form of polygamy, is when a woman marries multiple husbands in the same marriage; Polygyny, a more commonly practiced form of polygamy, refers to the case of when one man marries multiple wives in the same marriage (Al-Sharfi et al., 2016). This study identifies with the latter definition as it focuses on the practice of Muslim men who marry more than one woman at a time, up to a maximum of four, in the same marriage. In Islam it is referred to as polygyny; however, in order to avoid confusion amongst the readers, I elect to use the term polygamy throughout this dissertation.

1.9. Summary and Overview of the Study

Chapter one introduced the research problem, the objectives and purpose of undertaking this study. It highlights the significance of the study by investigating its manner of current practice. Chapter two provides a review of the related literature on polygamy as practiced globally, in Africa, and locally. It aims to offer a general picture of documented literature to give context to the present study. In chapter 3 the methodology for the study and the research paradigm are presented. This chapter aims to put into operation the concepts used in this study. Chapter four presents the findings of the study in themes and sub-themes supported by excerpts from participants found in the data collected. Chapter five entails a discussion of research findings in relation to the literature reviewed, conclusions from the findings and recommendations from this study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter introduces a review of literature on the practice of polygamy internationally, in Africa and locally. The review is focused on literature, in an attempt to cover prominent studies on this phenomenon. The aim of this chapter is to give a broad overview of the current thoughts and trends in the literature on the practice of polygamy.

2.2. Historical Background

The practice of polygamy dates back to old civilizations and remains widely practiced in Africa, Asia, Middle East, amidst the Mormons in the United States and the natives of Canada (Al-Krenawi, 2013). Studies by Al-Krenawi (2013) state that there is no data to substantiate the prevalence of polygamy in the Middle East, however it is a common practice in the region. The Middle East has a majority Muslim population who subscribe to the religion of Islam, which permits a man to marry up to four wives provided that he can treat each of his wives fairly. Their subscription to Islam possibly accounts for the practice of polygamy. In addition, the author makes reference to the prevalence of polygamy amongst several countries in Africa ranging between 8% and 35%. Another study by Doodoo (1998) reveals that the prevalence of polygamy in Africa ranges between 20% to 50% and is a reflection of the patriarchal society which is common to Africa. Although this practice has been banned in several African countries it is still prevalent in different forms such as where men marry one wife legally but form unofficial unions with other women. Al-Krenawi (2013) points to polygamy being on the increase in Europe and North America as a result of globalization. Malik (1994) asserts that less than 10% of marriages in Islamic countries are polygamous possibly due to financial reasons as it is known to be practiced more commonly amongst the wealthy. Moosa (2009) notes the census 2001 figures which indicate that polygamy affects 0.1% of the Muslim population in South Africa. It is important to note that these indicators are from surveys carried out nearly two decades before and more importantly, as Nnaemeka (1997) alluded to the secretive practice of polygamy implies that polygamous marriages are not recorded hence, the survey indicators cannot be taken as a true reflection. With the passage of time, it can reasonably be inferred that this indicator would be escalated. This phenomenon, though not common, is on the rise amongst South African Muslims wherein men continue to practice polygamy covertly whilst women and children

continue to bear the brunt. This impacts negatively on the lives of these women and children in terms of equality and fairness from a physical, financial, social, mental and emotional point of view.

2.3. Factors that Influence Polygamy Internationally and in Africa

Throughout history, the practice of polygamy is accounted for by many factors.

Anthropologists around the world have been trying to understand the reasoning behind this practice. According to many researchers the main reason offered is that men lack a sense of sexual satisfaction hence engage in the practice of polygamy (Gumani & Sodi, 2009). A study on polygamy in sub-Saharan Africa stated that plural wives lead to the multiplication of offspring, forms political alliances through the merging with in-laws and maximizes productivity in the field (Clignet, 1970; Jacoby, 1995).

Alternatively, Dorjahn (1959) alleged that men may have higher mortality rates than women as a result of disease, warfare, and the occupational dangers associated with hunting, ocean fishing, migrant labour, and other activities hence it can be inferred that the higher mortality rate amongst males may be responsible for an increase in polygamy.

The results of a study carried out amongst Bedouin Arabs in Israel reported that a man's status was based on the number of dependents; the higher the number of dependents the higher was his status (Lev-Wiesel & Al-Krenawi, 2000). Through growth in his financial and social status he is able to marry more than one wife thereby increasing his number of dependents.

A study of the Ngwa Igbo people in Nigeria recognized five basic reasons for their men to practice polygamy. The husband: (1) can have as many children as he likes; (2) enhance his prestige and lift his ego among his peers; (3) elevate his status amongst his community; (4) ensure adequate working hands to perform the necessary farm work and other labour; and (5) gratify his sexual urges (Al-Krenawi, 2013).

Another study undertaken in Tanzania among the Kaguru community reported that the women who delivered needed to nurse their babies for a period between one to three years and were forbidden to engage in sexual relations to prevent a subsequent pregnancy. The view proposed explains that the abstinence from sex by the lactating wife could be the reason that men from this community would practice polygamy (Meekers & Franklin, 1995).

In a Mozambican study the reasons advanced for the practice of polygamy was the need to develop kinship allegiances; ecological factors; the scarceness of men as a result of migration or war and as a strategy to increase wealth and production (White & Burton, 1988).

Irrespective of whatever form of polygamy is practiced it was always considered from the perspective of how it benefitted men and how discriminatory it was for women hence, monogamy is considered to be the ideal family structure (Sacks & Brodtkin, 1979). There is an assumption that polygamy when practiced is transitory before committing to a monogamous relationship.

Another study undertaken with women in Ghana revealed that men practiced polygamy to increase the possibility of having more children who would be an investment for the future when the parents reach old age whereby the children would offer labour, emotional support and security (Klomegah, 1997).

Studies undertaken in Africa reveal that the war and being unmarried are reasons forwarded to practice polygamy. To elaborate, during the war men die in large numbers leaving behind widows and being unmarried in certain African communities is considered a stigma (Ritchie, 2001).

Another reason advanced for why men engage in polygamy is religion and this is more common among men who practice Islam and subscribe to a traditional religion (Klomegah, 1997). The distribution among the different religious denominations amidst Ghanaian polygamous women show Muslim at 48%, Catholics 25%, Protestant 24% and non-religious affiliations at 39% (Klomegah, 1997). The data confirms the aforementioned trend.

The Mormons follow the traditional religion of Mormonism and their belief states that only married women will enter heaven and that the end of the world is near, hence polygamous marriages will help them to attain this goal (Haviland, Gordon, & Vivanco, 1996).

Traditionally and culturally arranged marriages are still a normative practice in society. Romantic love, desire for children, compatibility and sexual desire do not form the basis of these marriages. The main aim is to preserve kinship, property and status which is transferred from one generation to the next. These marriages exist mainly to satisfy the social and economic needs. Divorce is not a common occurrence in these marriages (Eshleman, 1997). Whilst divorce may not occur it does open the door to polygamy assuming that they follow the religion of Islam or a traditional religion. The husband can choose a wife more compatible to his needs and at the same time is acting within his religious rights. The author

states however, that with the exposure to western cultures and as a result of modernisation there is a growing tendency towards love or self-choice marriages (Eshleman, 1997). With regards to arranged marriages being the cause of breakdown in marriages, there is no evidence in the research to validate this claim.

All of the aforementioned studies internationally and on the African continent demonstrate culture, religion or personal status of the husband to be the reasons for the practice of polygamy.

2.4. Polygamy as Practiced in South Africa

Anecdotal evidence from my previous vocation as a marriage counsellor point to numerous cases of women who were in polygamous marriages without knowing, or learning about it after it had happened or even getting to know through third parties. There is the case of a daughter who found out through her peers at high school as rumours started to spread about her father's marriage to another woman whilst being married to her mum. Another case of a man in a polygamous union decided to disclose his second marriage to his first wife whilst being intimate with her in the early hours of the morning. Still another case of a man who married his first wife's best friend unbeknown to the first wife.

Further in a compilation of women's narratives "My Journey Through Polygamy" by Abdullah (2016) who is the administrator of a Face Book Page and deals with the trials and tribulations of polygamy, women relate their stories of how their monogamous marriages turned polygamous. To quote a few, in "my journey 6" the first wife re-counts that she never knew about polygamy and was not aware that Islam permitted it until her husband disclosed his second nikah (Islamic marriage) after returning from a supposed business trip of two weeks. He returned home early one morning under the guise of his business trip and told his wife that he needed to tell her something. He disclosed that he had been away for two weeks not because he was away on business but because he got married and spent the time with his second wife. In "my journey 7" a second wife re-counts her story of being married secretly to her husband as he told her that his first wife will not understand his needs nor accept his second marriage. The first wife discovered her husband's second marriage when he took his second wife and her two children to seek shelter at the first wife's home after their house burnt down and they became homeless. In "my journey 11" a second wife re-counts her story of only discovering that she was a second wife when she got married and that the first wife never got to know about this marriage at all. Apparently the first wife had threatened to leave

her husband and take their children with her if he ever chose to re-marry. The husband thought that he could live a double life without any problems, but the second wife bore the brunt as she barely saw her husband or enjoyed any quality time with him. It was a life of “hide and seek”. She contemplated approaching the first wife but thought that it could work against her making her look bad. She also begged her husband to inform his first wife of their marriage but he refused saying that he will do it in the future. The situation worsened over time and this affected the second wife. Her husband eventually ended their marriage as he could not solve the problem of giving his second wife more time. Being a foreigner, she had no support and was devastated only to return to her home country embarrassed and deeply hurt. In “my journey 4” a man re-counts his story of when he married his second wife how he lost his friends and family and that he had no idea about how difficult it would be. Initially his wife accepted but after the honeymoon with the second wife the reality of sharing her husband dawned upon her and she asked him to divorce his second wife. He said that he could not but life became miserable. His first wife grew distant, was sad most of the time, they did not even share the same bed and the children sensed the tension and became distant from him. His friends questioned whether his re-marriage to a second wife was worth the cost of hurting his first wife and children. After rumours of his re-marriage started to spread his second wife was subjected to substantial insults and was shown no respect as she was the “accursed second wife”. He could not take the injustice towards his second wife hence divorced her.

In addition to the above there are several websites where Muslims pose their questions to religious scholars to obtain the Islamic rulings on various matters. Amidst a host of other topics, the topic of marriage which includes polygamous marriages is frequently queried under the Q & A sections. Shaykh Muhammad Saalih-Al-Munajjid supervises an Islamic Question and Answer site:

https://islamqa.info/en/googlesearch?q=polygamy&search_engine=google, which has yielded 116 results up to 2016 on various aspects of Polygamy. Mufti Zakaria Makada launched his Mufti online site: <http://muftionline.co.za/taxonomy/term/269>, and has yielded 35 results on “Secret nikahs” (marriages) and 46 on “Equality between wives” to date. Ask Imam, Islamic Q & A with Mufti Ebrahim Desai:

http://www.askimam.org/public/cat_fatwa_details/54/page:4, is another site that published a substantial number of questions with regard to polygamy under the marriage category.

The anecdotal evidence from my work experience, drawn from a compilation of narratives of women's experiences and referring to websites that have responded to queries on polygamy indicates that firstly, polygamous marriages are ubiquitous and of these many take place in the 'quiet'. Hence disclosed or not the families, irrespective of whether they are the first or second wife, bear the brunt of having to share their husband, father and the resources let alone having to face the cultural attitudes associated with this practice. On the contrary it must be noted that whilst this is the experience of the majority of polygamous marriages, there are cases that are successful when entered into following an open, honest and transparent approach between all parties involved.

2.5. Polygamy in the Context of South African Law

South African family law follows the Western model of marriage and family which is based on individuals voluntarily consenting and entering into a monogamous union for the purpose of companionship to form a nuclear family (Kaganas & Murray, 1991). African marriages are concluded following African customary law that operates on the periphery of the civil law. Due to its polygamous nature, it is not accepted but tolerated and legitimized through the "Recognition of Customary Marriages Act" Number 120 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa, 1998). In South Africa Muslims find themselves at the crossroads of an Islamic belief system and a western value system and have been socialized towards the western ideal of monogamy so polygamy is not commonly accepted, hence not commonly practiced (Hendricks, 2004). Although majority of marriages are monogamous, they are not recognized by civil law due to its potentially polygamous nature (Kaganas & Murray, 1991; Moosa, 2009). This outright exclusion of Muslim marriages from the law fails to even recognize monogamous marriages among the Muslim population. This presents a huge challenge where no state protection is offered in the event of problems emanating from such unions (Kaganas & Murray, 1991).

Consequently, the last two decades has seen numerous attempts by proponents for justice and reform to recognize 'Muslim personal law' in South Africa in an attempt to regulate matters pertaining to gender inequality. Muslim theologians state that the law of the land (constitutional law) is in conflict with the 'Shariah' (Islamic law) in terms of rulings pertaining to divorce, marriage, polygamy, inheritance, custody and maintenance amongst others. This implies that as a Muslim, especially a Muslim woman, one is subject to two laws. The reality on the ground is that whilst all citizens enjoy equal rights, a Muslim woman would be subject to Shariah law which appears to privilege men over women (Moosa, 1998). The author cautions that it is important to note that there is no validation for this in the Quran

(Holy book) which promotes justice in its entirety, hence can only be attributed to the discriminatory practices of men.

Islamic law is extrapolated from the Quran as it is understood to be the direct word of GOD; although it is not a book of law by secular terms, almost 80 verses cover legal matters pertaining to family law hence it is used as the primary source for Muslim family law (Moosa, 1998). The patriarchs passed on the codes for commercial and criminal law to the secular legal system and feel secure to abide by it, but held on to the Muslim personal law system, which raises suspicion about their dichotomous approach.

The question could be raised why the need to officially recognize Muslim personal law in South Africa? The response is that without official recognition Muslim women are treated disparately as they are not regarded as equal in their marriages compared to couples whose marriages have civil recognition (Amien, 2019). Moreover, they are unable to benefit from their Islamic laws and challenge the discriminatory practices meted out against them by the Ulama (learned scholars) or Imams (religious leaders) in a South African court of law (Amien, 2019). The author elaborates that Muslim couples could benefit from the protection offered by the courts if their marriages are registered as civil unions but the mindset of the Muslim community is generally ‘anti-civil marriages’ which is further reinforced by the Imams (religious leaders) who consider it haram (forbidden). It is considered haram as a result of the matrimonial regime of Community of property as Muslims contract their marriages in the Anti-Nuptial Contract matrimonial regime. Amongst Muslims who understand the benefits of registering their marriages, few practice it whilst many are lax or do not foresee the possibility of disputes in the future of the marriage.

The current situation affects women in terms of not having a legal arm to enforce the law be it from an Islamic or civil perspective. This necessitates the need for another system whereby Muslim women can access protection wherein the Islamic and constitutional rulings are not in conflict with each other and are legally enforceable. Hence this started the process of drafting the Muslim Marriage Bill (MMB) and the Recognition of Religious Marriages Bill (RRMB) in 2003 and 2005 respectively.

2.6. The Muslim Marriage Bill (MMB)

In order to understand the need for a “Muslim Marriage Bill” in South Africa, it is necessary to discuss the origins of Muslims in South Africa. A large portion of the Muslim population in South Africa is not indigenous. During the seventeenth century their ancestors came as

indentured labourers, slaves or political prisoners from South Asia, South-East Asia and Africa (Amien & Leatt, 2014). They were not permitted to practice their religion under the colonial rule hence this was a private matter. This led to Muslim communities organizing themselves with the ulama (learned scholars) as leaders who presided over matters pertaining to Islam which included matters related to marriage and divorce (Amien & Leatt, 2014).

Much later, during the Apartheid rule, Muslims were permitted to practice their faith publicly but there was a non-recognition of their religious personal laws due to the potential for polygamy in their marriages which did not align with the Christian idea of marriage (Amien & Leatt, 2014). This led to the ulama (learned scholars) playing a ‘quasi-judicial’ role which holds moral credibility in the religion but is unenforceable according to the law of the state. This, amidst many other reasons, motivated the Muslim community to enter into discussion with the ministry of justice to recognize a code of Muslim personal law (MPL) which included a Muslim marriage bill (MMB) (Amien & Leatt, 2014). The ulama (learned scholars) themselves were eager to have Muslim personal law regulated by the state and amidst other motivations was the plea from gender activists to recognize Muslim marriages but more importantly to provide protection to Muslim women who become affected by this non-recognition (Amien & Leatt, 2014).

Post-apartheid South Africa adopts a secular approach that promotes the freedom of religion. This presented an opportunity to address issues of Muslim family law and gender inequality for Muslim women. Amien explored the idea of Muslim personal family law to be respected as the right of the South African Muslim minority; to enable the practice of family law according to their religious doctrines without compromising gender equality. The author explored “three approaches a) assimilation, b) accommodation and c) integration to manage the needs of diversity” (2010, pg. 361 - 396). The ‘Muslim Marriage Bill’ was drafted and scrutinized in relation to the aforementioned approaches but was found to be inadequate in terms of gender equality. The author proposed a “gender nuanced integration approach” which allows for the application of Muslim family law to the point where gender equality is not obstructed. The MMB recommends the incorporation of Muslim marriages by regulating them within an Islamic law and human rights framework. It is the result of two decades of discussions between the South African Law Reform Commission who were the ‘drafters’ along with numerous sections within the South African Muslim community, which culminated into a document that is without doubt a reasonable compromise between extreme positions on either side of the spectrum ranging from the opinions of members of the ulama

(learned scholars) to advocates for women's rights (Amien, 2019). To site an example, some quarters of the ulama suggested that the draft legislation offers a blanket recognition of polygamy while some women's rights groups argued for the eradication of polygamy. The drafters instead opted for the recognition of polygamy in a regulated manner to guarantee the protection of polygamous wives (Amien, 2019).

According to the MMB a husband has to apply to the court to enter into a polygamous marriage and submit a contract that regulates the future matrimonial property regime of that marriage which the court has to sanction (Amien, 2019). According to the MMB a court is obliged to grant the order provided that it is satisfied that the husband is capable of maintaining parity between his wives as is prescribed by the Quran (Amien, 2019). All interested parties, especially existing wives, must also be involved in the proceedings. Despite the Quranic concept of equality as per different scholarly interpretations and irrespective of whether the existing wife's consent is required to permit her husband to enter into a polygamous marriage, the MMB's provisions could still ensure the polygamous wives (co-wives) more protection than they currently have (Amien, 2019).

The situation currently is such that some members of the ulama (learned scholars) who solemnize polygamous Muslim marriages do not stipulate that men comply with their Islamic law obligations, specifically the obligation to ensure equality among the polygamous wives. There are many instances where men do not reveal their secret contracting of polygamous marriages; their wives don't even know about each other's existence. This is unfair to women because among others, they become contributors to the maintenance of more than one family without having consented to do so (Amien, 2019). The MMB will allow an existing wife the opportunity to be informed about the approaching marriage and she can inform the court about her views regarding that marriage. Irrespective of her disapproval of the marriage as the bill does not require her permission but it may encourage the husbands to be more accountable (Amien, 2019).

The MMB and RRMB have yet to enter the parliamentary process, but one could reasonably assume that through accepting both pieces of draft legislation, the government has shown a commitment to the realization of the rights of minority religious groups in order to enjoy legal protection of their respective marriages. These pieces of draft legislation have the potential to enable the enforcement of civil and Islamic law benefits however, they purport to do it in different ways (Amien, 2019). A few successful cases have been fought despite these

unions falling out of the jurisdiction of civil law. The process might be long and convoluted but it does hold promise for a future where women can have faith in the law to protect them.

2.7. Stipulations of Polygamy in Islam

There is a general perception that Islam introduced polygamy however this is not true. Polygamy is known since human society and was widely practiced amongst the Israelites; for example, the prophets David and Solomon practiced polygamy in addition to having concubines (Shahzad, 2009). Several religions and communities that existed before practised unlimited polygamy. It was only upon the revelation of the Quran and the advent of Islam that restrictions were placed on the number of wives to be taken at one time and the conditions under which they may be taken.

It must be noted that men were allowed to practice polygamy, not women, and scholars state that the reason for this is to establish the paternity of the unborn child (Malik, 1994). Many Muslims quote the example of the Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him (PBUH) to justify their practice of polygamy. It is important to note that the Prophet's (PBUH) first marriage to Khadijah was monogamous and lasted twenty-five years. It was only after her death that he married the subsequent wives because they were widows, orphans or for political and economic reasons (Badawi, 1980; Malik, 1994). The revelation of polygamy needs to be understood in its correct context. It was at a time after the Prophet (PBUH) migrated from Mecca to Medina where the Muslim community was still new and few. Precisely after the battle of Uhud, this young Muslim community suffered the loss of many males thus leaving behind many widows and orphans. The revelation permitting restricted polygamy served to address the welfare of these widows and orphans as well as to restore their respect and dignity by preventing illicit sex and prostitution, hence maintaining moral and social stability (Engineer, 1992).

Asad (1986) suggests that to understand the practice of polygamy one needs to understand it from the perspective of how Muslims approach their religion. As subscribers to the religion of Islam they are primarily guided by the foundational texts, the Quran, from which the Shariah, Islamic law is extracted. According to the Shariah, polygamy is a legitimate practice among Muslims as authenticated in the Quran, which permits a man to marry more than one wife, up to a maximum of four at the same time, but is governed by strict conditions. The scholars advocate that this practice can only be effectively undertaken if the man exercises fairness and justice towards each of his wives (Al-Krenawi, 2013). The Holy Quran, Ch 4: V

3, states in this regard: “And if you fear that you cannot do justice to orphans, marry women of your choice; two, or three, or four; but if you fear that you shall not be able to treat them justly, then marry only one. That will be more suitable to prevent you from evil” (Ali, 1989). This verse is a divine instruction to men warning them that if they cannot treat each wife equally it is better for them to marry only one. It implies that men are under divine scrutiny and face divine chastisement. The Holy Quran further elaborates, in Ch 4: V 129, “You will never be able to deal justly between wives however much you desire to do so. But if you have more than one wife do not turn altogether away from one leaving her in suspense” (Ali, 1989). Helal (2000) points out that this verse refers to the nature of the human psyche that would naturally favour one wife over the other and lead to the neglect and ill treatment of either wife, hence the emphasis on equality as a prerequisite to polygamy.

The verse is explicit in stating that it is difficult if not impossible to exercise equality to all the wives at the same time as Doi (1990) alludes that this proviso of impartiality and justice would be humanly impossible. Despite this precondition many men enter into marriage with more than one wife regarding this institution as a privilege whilst not treating the wives equally (Mondal, 1997). In a polygamous marriage a husband has to divide his time equally and spend it with all wives giving no single wife a reason to feel jealous (Shad, 1998). He adds that the husband should not favour one wife over another in terms of provision of accommodation and basic needs and that he should provide for all his wives according to his means. He must have the financial means to attend to the needs of his wives but if he is unable to, Doi (1990) emphasizes that he should restrain himself to marrying one wife. Incidentally chapter four is called “Nisa’ an Arabic word for women. A whole chapter of the Quran is dedicated to women and matters related to them which are illustrative of the rank and respect bestowed on women according to the Shariah.

Mariama Bâ, a Senegalese writer who is well versed in the scriptures of the Quran, strikes out at the archaic traditions and customs that are not a real part of the practices of the religion thus making her part of the Islamic feminist movement (Cherekar, 2016). Bâ’s (1979) epistolary novel, *So Long a Letter*, entails one long letter in the form of a lengthy lamentation and contemplation of the pain, anger, and desolation of the heroine, Ramatoulaye, who suffers as a result of her husband’s desertion after his second marriage to his daughter’s friend. The letter is addressed to Aissatou, Ramatoulaye’s best friend, who recently divorced her husband when he also married a second wife (Ba, 1979). Bâ’s (1979) novel is written against this background which primarily forms a critique of polygamy wherein both women

are deprived of their husbands' emotional and financial support (Cherekar, 2016). Through Ba's (1979) *So Long a Letter*, she portrays polygamy in the modern Senegalese society of West Africa as the outcome of the clash between Islam and the practice of traditional societies. The contemporary, urban, African man manipulates these different even conflicting systems in order to enjoy the best of both worlds (Cherekar, 2016). She is of the opinion that traditional polygamy is in a state of decline as practiced in contemporary times. The impact of these deviations in almost all walks of life has subsequently resulted in the popularization of polygamy in its practice (Ba, 1979). Mariama Ba exposes the deliberate misrepresentation of the interpretation of the Quran by men who want to give their selfish, debased interests a sacred basis (Cherekar, 2016). Bâ (1979) elucidates the Islamic provisions that guide Muslims to practice the custom of polygamy as a cultural directive: The husband must be like an 'evenly balanced scale'; his compliments and reproaches must be of equal measure to all of his wives not exceeding four at the same time; he must give equally of himself; and he must be mindful of his actions and dispense everything fairly (Cherekar, 2016). These statements clearly mean that he has to maintain fairly balanced behaviour and equity in his married life. Nevertheless, as a result of interaction with other systems, the Islamic marriage institution has undergone drastic changes. Ultimately Islamic principles are completely distorted by some 'selfish and egotistical' males in the African context (Cherekar, 2016). Mariama Bâ presents this as an unusual feature of the African reality which can be likened to that in South Africa amongst the Muslims who practice polygamy. The women characters in Mariama Bâ's (1979), *So Long a Letter*, are the eventual victims of the institution of polygamy who suffer both psychological and physical torments which results in their subjugation by their husbands. Her novel also brings to the fore how various other elements in society such as race, class, ethnicity and caste result in the subjugation of women by women and society (Cherekar, 2016).

2.8. Understanding Polygamy According to Alternate Approaches to Interpretations of the Quran

In an empirical study carried out in Indonesia, the focus was on interpretations stemming from the understanding that interpretations were the main cause of controversy with regard to polygamy. Indonesian Muslims have three groupings of interpretations which are divided into the 'Textualists', 'Semi-Textualists' and 'Contextualists' (Nurmila, 2009). The first group operate from the belief that the man has a right to polygamy, the second operate from the position that monogamy is preferred over polygamy and would only be permissible under

strict circumstances to address challenges in the marriage such as infertility in the wife or illness that could prevent her from fulfilling her functional and wifely duties, the third group operate from the position that the just treatment of the wives is a prerequisite for polygamy and according to the Quran is unattainable (Nurmila, 2009).

The traditionalists and classical jurists interpret the verse on polygamy in the Quran to mean that a man is permitted to marry women of his choice not exceeding the limit of four wives at any one time in the same marriage (Serajuddin, 2001). On the contrary the modernists interpret the verse to mean that a man can practice polygamy expressly under certain circumstances. They claim that the prerequisite of equality is not confined to basic needs and accommodation but also includes equality in the sharing of love, affection and respect amongst all wives (Serajuddin, 2001). They quote the first portion of chapter 4 verse 129 to substantiate their claim that it is almost impossible to be equal in love, hence the prohibition of polygamy in the Quran (Serajuddin, 2001). The traditionalists oppose this view on justice as they believe that it applies to material needs only. They highlight the second portion of the same verse stating that there is a presumption of existing wives which implies that polygamy is accepted and permitted in Islam (Serajuddin, 2001). Irrespective of which view one subscribes to, the Shariah sanctions polygamy within limits and conditions which unambiguously stipulate the equal treatment of all wives. There is a saying of the Prophet (PBUH) that states: “A man who marries more than one woman and fails to deal justly with them will be resurrected on the day of judgement with half of his faculties paralyzed” (Serajuddin, 2001). This saying implies that the husband is morally obligated and accountable for his behaviour in a polygamous marriage. This is a matter not to be treated lightly.

2.9. Divine Revelation and Patriarchization

According to Engineer (2001) the ulama (learned scholars) assert that before the advent of Islam on the Arabian Peninsula, women were treated like mere articles of possession, hence one of the many aims of the Divine revelation was to reinstate the respect, dignity and honour of women. He further explains that this aim which was to reform and transform the state of affairs of women in that era and for the future was undone over the centuries by theologians through ‘patriarchization’. According to Hélie and Hoodfar (2012), Muslim communities around the world contend that predominantly traditional forces hold the dominion to religious rights based on their selective interpretations of Islam to oppose or restrain gender rights. Polygamy is strongly associated with patriarchy in the way it is practised wherein the subsequent wife is imposed on the first wife without her consent, the husband decides on

when and who he chooses to marry, he makes decisions about the division of time and resources hence the suppression of women is evident. All these decisions are taken by the husband but the consequences are born by the wife in every aspect of her life.

The above demonstrates that the due concern for women in polygamous marriages is legitimate but the disparities therein are linked to the patriarchal societies wherein it is widely practised (Jivan, 1997). Hence the social reality of women and matters relating to them is in dissonance with the ethical foundational principles as a result of patriarchization. Madhavan (2002) alleges that polygamy is strongly regarded as a mechanism of social control pervaded by a disproportion of power in favour of men. A study on polygamy in sub-Saharan Africa further emphasised this point by stating that men pride their lineages through women who are perceived as their 'wealth' in people compared to wealth in things (Caldwell, 1981). Additionally, from a power balance standpoint, polygamy places women under their husband's authority and lineage.

To reiterate, polygamy was enshrined in the Shariah for interventive purposes to effect positive social change. The practice however appears to benefit men who use this religious right to their benefit whilst disregarding their moral and ethical responsibilities which are harming their wives and children issued from the plural marriages as echoed by Nnaemeka earlier. A study undertaken by sociologists, state that polygamy is substantiated as a reproductive strategy wherein men increase their number of children whilst decreasing the amount of time and energy invested in them (White & Burton, 1988). It is important to note that whilst patriarchization forms a strong ethos of polygamy this does not imply that polygamy practiced according to the tenets of Islam is not to be found. It is merely to highlight the normative practice in society.

2.10. The Stigma Against Polygamy

Polygamy whilst practised is not the norm. Majority of marriages are monogamous. Malik (1994) alleged that in Islamic countries less than 10% of marriages are polygamous. In Africa, Nnaemeka alluded to the clandestine nature of polygamous marriages. In South Africa as mentioned earlier, polygamy is not commonly accepted, hence not commonly practiced (Hendricks, 2004). It is viewed with condemnation and seen as oppressive towards women. Whilst this might well be the case in polygamous marriages, Murray (1994) argues that women in monogamous marriages also get oppressed and find themselves in a worse position when the marriage dissolves. They often find themselves isolated and at an economic

disadvantage as single mothers. She elaborates that in much the same way as western monogamous marriages are unable to provide assurance of equality, so too it cannot be assumed that polygamous marriages definitely lead to oppression (Murray, 1994). Muslims in favour of polygamy argue that it grants economic protection to single and unemployed mothers, offers widows companionship and provides unmarried women with a prospect for marriage and a family life (Badawi, 1980). Furthermore, polygamy is seen as a mechanism to prevent illicit sex, adultery and extra-marital affairs.

In Islam the purpose of marriage is for the procreation of children and the gratification of sexual desires as the Quran explicitly forbids sex outside of a marital relationship (Maududi, 1991). The Hadith (sayings and practices of the Prophet (PBUH) demonstrates Islam's perspective on marriage: "You should marry, for that is the best way of saving yourself from casting evil eyes and of safeguarding against sexual immorality..." Al-Tirmizi (as cited in Engineer, 1992). In western society the norm is monogamy; however, extra-marital affairs are common which lead to one man having children in his nuclear family and outside of it. It is argued that the west lives in a show of pretence of monogamy yet practices polygamy with no responsibility (Chaudhry, 1991). This viewpoint emphasises that polygamy obliges a man to honour his responsibility to both the wife and children of a subsequent marriage as well as bestow legal status on the union and to the children born of it.

2.11. Impact of Polygamy

As stated, earlier polygamy is viewed by some as oppressive especially the feminists who view it as 'the exploitation of women' (Moghissi, 1999). Their researchers allude to the cultural, economic and psychological factors of polygamy and maintain that equality towards the wives is virtually impossible; elaborating that, if at all possible, feelings of betrayal, jealousy and anger amidst the wives is inherent in polygamous marriages (Ahmed, 1991). According to Richardson (1987) polygamy can be viewed negatively as it causes emotional turmoil for both wives where the first wife feels cheated, replaced and jealous whilst the other wife feels the pain of having to share a lover. Polygamy could be viewed as discriminatory in terms of choice or the lack thereof on the part of the first wife (Engineer, 2001). The subsequent wives may enter the polygamous marriage with full knowledge of the first and previous wives whilst the first wife is left without choice but to remain in the marriage reluctantly with such an imposition. Socio-economic factors such as being financially dependent on her husband may force her to stay in the marriage (Engineer, 2001).

A study conducted in the Middle East, where polygamy is commonly practiced, claimed that it was the possible cause for the poor mental health among masses of women in the region (Al-Krenawi, 2013). Results of studies in other countries in the Middle East indicate that this practice leads to competition and jealousy amongst the wives, bitterness amongst the families and unequal distribution of resources, whilst it also accounts for the high levels of psychological conditions such as depression and anxiety in the wives, namely first wives (Al-Krenawi, 2013).

A Turkish study revealed similar results where senior wives from polygamous families reported more psychological distress. Further studies suggest low levels of self-esteem, reduced satisfaction in the marriage, reduced life satisfaction and functional ability in family life among women in polygamous marriages (Al-Krenawi, 2013). In another study by the same author, results showed that as a result of the pain experienced by first wives or 'senior wives' there was a lack of affection shown towards the husband thus leading to decreased satisfaction in the marriage (Al-Krenawi, Graham, & Al-Krenawi, 1997). He further elaborates that disharmony stems from the idea that love, affection and intimacy is unequal between the wives. Commonly in polygamous marriages the subsequent wife is younger which affects the first wife tremendously as she feels that she is unable to please her husband any longer, feels embarrassed, feels that the younger wife is more beautiful and sexually alluring which affects her self-esteem (Al-Krenawi et al., 1997). The marital relationship will inevitably be disrupted and strained if there is knowledge of an additional wife and it could be viewed as adultery and a breach of trust and commitment between the original couple (Overall, 1998). Polygamy at its essence should alleviate pain and not be the cause of it as Badawi (1995) emphatically states that for a man to substitute his older wife with a younger wife in the name of practicing polygamy is an outright abuse of GOD's law.

In African culture polygamy is widely practiced and there is a level of amiability towards this practice as women work in the fields. More wives would mean that the workload is shared hence this is a convenient arrangement (Gwanfogbe, Schumm, Smith, & Furrow, 1997). This practice is more acceptable among traditional, rural women as compared to educated, westernized, urban women and in the African culture it is the first wife's right to select the second or subsequent wife and she has to give consent for her husband to marry a subsequent wife. This right given to the first wife could prevent the pain caused when a husband marries another woman in secret and the first wife has no knowledge of the marriage nor does she know the other wife. Some writers hold the view that due to the social norms held about love,

intimacy and marriages, the first wife feels betrayed when her husband marries a subsequent wife, implying that if society did not place an emphasis on monogamy as the ideal marriage, then the wife or wives would not experience the pain (Overall, 1998).

2.12. The Casualty of Polygamous Marriages

Whilst the focus of this study was not the children of polygamous marriages, it would be an oversight to ignore the fact that they bear the brunt of the parents' damaged relationship as a result of polygamy as practiced currently. One could say that though not intended they become the collateral damage from the polygamous marriage. They suffer emotionally, psychologically, socially and academically. A study on the polygamous family structure suggests that a number of family variables linked to polygamous marriages such as marital conflict, marital distress, absence of the father, the happiness or distress of the wives in polygamous marriages and financial stress could account for the children's threatened developmental outcomes (Elbedour, Onwuegbuzie, Caridine, & Abu-Saad, 2002). Another study found that family cohesion and violence in the home correlated with increased mental health factors amongst adolescents (Elbedour, Bart, & Hektner, 2007). Several other studies emphasized that a complete family with two biological parents provides the ideal developmental environment for children (David, Demo, and Acock, 1996) and is pivotal in reducing psychological distress in children (Wenk, Hardesty, Morgan, & Blair, 1994).

2.13. Women's Perception on Polygamy

Several studies on polygamy point to varying degrees of agreeability on the part of women towards this practice based on a variety of reasons. A Tanzanian study carried out by Meekers and Franklin (1995) on the Kaguru women's strategies on fertility found that they perceived polygamy to be beneficial as it facilitated the sharing of household chores, household food production and the rearing of the children. However, they disapproved of polygamous relationships and wondered if it would ever cease as part of the Kaguru society.

A northern Ghanaian study by Bawah, Akweongo, Simmons, and Phillips (1999) which explored women's fears and men's anxieties around family planning found that the husbands were fearful of the women not fulfilling their reproductive responsibility as a result of contraceptive use. The wives were fearful of the husband withholding love, affection or sex and the possible favouritism of another wife as a result of his disapproval of the use of contraception by a particular wife. Whilst this study focused on the women's coping styles regarding family planning it did not explore their coping mechanisms regarding polygamy.

A West African study in Mali by Madhavan (2002) explored the feelings of co-wives from two separate tribes the Fulbe and Bamanan. These studies showed varying attitudes based on culture and personal beliefs. Amongst the Fulbe jealousy was accepted as part of polygamy whereas amongst the Bamanan culture it was an expectation to work together and cooperate as it elevated their status in society.

Awusabo-Asare and Anarfi (1997) carried out a study exploring Ghanaian couple's views on abstention from sex on the part of the woman after the delivery of a child. The women found polygamy beneficial as a co-wife facilitated the continuation of intercourse with the husband during the post-partum period hence prevented the incidence of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases (STD's).

A study in Northern Ghana by Adongo, Phillips, Kajihara, Fayorsey, Debpuur, and Binka (1997) investigated the cultural aspects which imposed restrictions on family planning among the Kassena-Nankana people. It was found that through polygamy the emotional relationship between couples were decreased, the trust was weakened and women were excluded from critical decisions involving themselves and their families. This study omitted to explore their coping and sentiments towards their patriarchal society.

A study by Al-Krenawi (2013) carried out in the Middle East amongst monogamous and polygamous couples to determine the level of agreeability to polygamy revealed that the majority from both groups of women are not agreeable with the practice. A small number agree with the practice based on certain circumstances. About 4.6% of the women who are in polygamous marriages are agreeable to the practice as compared to 0% of those women in monogamous marriages. The former appears to substantiate their practice of polygamy as a solution to their life circumstances. Amongst the Arab culture the idea of self-sacrifice for the sake of the children is very strong hence serves as a factor for the women to remain in the polygamous marriage.

These studies show that amiability to the practice of polygamy is culturally and socially defined. Documented studies show that the majority of women involved in polygamous marriages object to such unions (Al-Krenawi & Lightman, 2000; Madhavan, 2002).

Polygamy is known to cause problems as in the case where the husband treats the younger wife favourably, this might negatively impact the relationship between the first wife and her husband (Madhavan, 2002). The commonly occurring themes of jealousy, stress, unhappiness

and abuse could negatively impact the lives of the wives and children (Slonim- Nevo & Al-Krenawi, 2006).

2.14. Conclusion

Reviewed studies have focused on the historical background of polygamy, the influences of religion, politics and culture on the practice. It has also focused on strategies and technicalities within the practice. However, there is a need to understand from the women's personal perspective, to listen to their reflections and experiences according to their lived reality which formed the objective of this study. In addition, strategies of intervention would be proposed to address the challenges of this practice.

2.15. Theoretical Approach

Five-factor interventive theory of polygamy

In an article published in 2007, a “five-factor interventive theory of polygamy” was proposed by Nwoye (2007) to highlight the factors and forces influencing the practice of polygamy in past and present Africa. The theory distinguished between two kinds of polygamy practiced in Africa: Affluent polygamy and interventive polygamy. The theory argues that the polygamy of affluence is not the most popular type of polygamy in contemporary Africa, and outlines the conditions under which interventive polygamy can take place. Among these conditions include the crises of childlessness or son lessness.

Nwoye (2007) encourages the interventive form of polygamy as a means to remedy difficult marital situations; a perspective that is aligned with and captures the spirit of the Quran. The difference between African cultural polygamy and Islamic polygamy is that the Quran as the foundational text explicitly spells out the terms and requirements for a Muslim to enter such a marriage if he wishes to.

Nwoye's (2007) theory further states that African marriages are ‘teleological’, meaning that it is designed for specific pre-ordained goals such as the formation of a complimentary partnership which is permanent, peaceful and creative and for the procreation of children. Similarly, in chapter 30 verse 21 of the holy Quran it states: “And among HIS signs is this, that HE created for you mates, from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquillity with them” (Ali, 1989). Additionally, according to Nwoye (2007), African marriages are based on a framework of order in which the arrival of children is expected to follow the consummation of marriage. With this, the parents focus their energies into childrearing. The children are viewed as a social investment for when the parents reach old age as they will return the

favour of being cared for by the parents. The children will take care of their parents when they are feeble, fulfil their rights upon death and thereafter, take responsibility for family matters and continue the family name (Nwoye, 2007). Similarly, the Quran in chapter 17 verses 23 and 24 state: "...And that you be dutiful to your parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of disrespect, nor shout at them but address them with honour and say My Lord have mercy on them as they cared for me when I was small" (Ali, 1989). Nwoye's (2007) theory asserts that African marriage is influenced by the buffering principle that is aimed at enabling marital partners to achieve a surplus that will help them to sustain and improve the stability of the marriage in the eyes of the community. When the marriage is challenged with childlessness after being medically confirmed that the wife is unable to bear children this opens up the door for interventive polygamy (Nwoye, 2007). Similarly, in Islam this practice is offered as a solution for the same problem instead of the husband remaining childless and heirless or divorcing his wife. It is inclined to follow the lesser of two evils hence will prefer polygamy over the aforementioned outcomes.

Under these circumstances, interventive polygamy, according to Nwoye's (2007) theory, is resorted to as the last option to resolve and heal rather than to cause difficulty to the first wife. Nwoye (2007) notes that African marriages are influenced by the principle of 'equifinality' meaning that one will use several means to attain one's goal. In this regard, interventive polygamy helps a given marital pair to attain that goal but also strengthens it and offers it stability through variability and adaptability (Nwoye, 2007). Hence, it can be seen that polygamy could be viewed as a metaphorical form of 'solution focused therapy'. The African culture views marital problems as challenges can be resolved through human intervention. African psychology views marriage as a part of the bigger scheme of things hence will not be held hostage to life's trials, namely childlessness or sonless-ness, but will instead use human agency, such as interventive polygamy, to conquer it (Nwoye, 2007).

This theory combined with verses from the Quran constitutes the major theoretical framework of the study and will assist in understanding the empirical studies from the literature reviewed. The theory would also form the basis of my study as I listen to the reflections and experiences of the study participants, in this case Muslim women in polygamous marriages from Durban and surrounding areas, and try to understand to what extent the conditions as laid down by the Quran with regard to the practice of polygamy are being adhered to and the degree to which the lives of women and their families have been implicated.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3. Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology used to implement the present study. It highlights the research paradigm, the research design, the study sample, sample description, sampling strategy and recruitment, data collection instruments and data analysis procedure.

3.1 Methodological Approach

3.1.1. Research Paradigm

This study was viewed through a feminist lens as it involves an issue that concerns women. The title of the study is: *Voices of Muslim Women in Polygamous Marriages in Durban and Surrounding Areas: A Study of Participants' Lived Experience*.

In using a feminist perspective, the aim was to look at practices that discriminate against women in society and to allow them the opportunity to speak from their own vantage point. Moreover, the feminist perspective adopts a remedial stance on behalf of women with regard to issues related to them by allowing them to express their experiences of the domineering, patriarchal and discriminating practices in families and society (Lindsey, 1997).

Muslim women find themselves between a just ethical Islam as espoused in the Quran (holy book) and a social reality of oppression and marginalization in various contexts of their lives due to patriarchization (Shaikh, 2003). This situation more often than not leaves women voiceless and powerless. Against this backdrop a feminist paradigm is most suitable to give voice to Muslim women who are in polygamous marriages from the perspective of their lived experiences.

According to Badran (2001), a feminist in Islam is a devout believer who uses the Quran (holy book) as the primary source in addition to 'Ijtihad' known as independent discretion to confront institutional malpractices that are incorrectly claimed to be Islam and to explain gender equality according to the Quran (holy book). This provides a platform for participants to express their intersubjective realities that are experienced as a result of the institutionalized practice of polygamy. The researcher operating within the feminist frame serves as an advocate to expose such anomalies, to conscientize and educate influential figures, stakeholders and society with the aim to appeal to their sense of justice to bring about reformatory processes. Also, importantly to highlight these, bring it to the awareness of the

target population that it affects and to educate around the issue. As such, the study aimed to empower the women as well as attempt to remedy the problem in a particular social institution (Thompson, 1992).

3.2. Qualitative Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative research design. Qualitative research designs include the written or spoken word which is directed towards interpreting “meaning and experiences” (Crowe, Inder, & Porter, 2015, p. 616). Human beings are unique individuals and vary in their responses to different situations. The qualitative design was considered more appropriate for studies that aim to gain an understanding of these unique experiences of participants in relation to the phenomenon under study, hence it was considered the best fit to capture their thoughts, feelings and experiences (Terre Blanche, 2006).

The aim of this study was to gain insight into the experiences of Muslim women who are in polygamous marriages in Durban and surrounding areas. Furthermore, to gain a deep and rich understanding of how the individual made sense of the experience as well as what meaning she attached to it (Smith, 2004). Using exploratory questions through interviews, focus groups and semi-structured interviews that are carried out face to face, this approach was seen as the most appropriate medium to elicit essential details of the phenomenon under study (Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). According to Smith & Shinebourne (2012) qualitative designs are theoretically committed to the participant as a cognitive, affective and physical being, and undertakes a chain of linking peoples’ talk, thinking and emotional states thus allowing the researcher to understand the participants’ world and describe their multidimensional views of what it feels like to be in a polygamous marriage. The study is concerned with the thorough examination of peoples’ lived experiences (Eatough & Smith, 2008) thereby granting the researcher a window into their world. This design allows for the exploration of feelings of the women who are in polygamous marriages to speak from their own “worldview”.

The majority of previous studies focused on the consequential effects of this practice and were mainly undertaken from a positivist stance thus negating the exploration of the personal experience of those who live in polygamous marriages. As mentioned earlier the aim to undertake this study was to gain insight and understanding into the lived experiences of this particular population and to use the knowledge to conscientize and educate influential figures and society to bring about reformatory processes. Qualitative designs select participants who

are directly involved with the phenomenon under study hence are most knowledgeable and considered experts on the research topic thereby giving the researcher entry into their world.

3.3. Sample Description

The sample consisted of a small number of Muslim women who are in polygamous marriages as only they could give an in-depth experiential account of their lived reality. This small sample of six women was considered sufficient as the detailed process of transcription from audio recordings and analysis of transcripts being a time-consuming task was taken into account (Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). In addition, Smith and Shinebourne (2012) recommend that a sample size of six participants allows for “sufficient in-depth engagement with each individual case, a detailed examination of similarities and differences, convergence and divergence”, with respect to the data gathering process. Qualitative studies use smaller samples as the goal is to obtain depth of understanding as compared to quantitative studies that focus on covering the breath of a phenomenon (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). Similarly, Fusch and Ness (2015) support this small sample size in a qualitative study as long as data saturation is achieved. Also, in qualitative research representativeness is considered secondary to the participant’s ability to provide information about themselves and their settings (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008).

3.4. Sample Strategy: inclusion and exclusion criteria

A non-random, purposive and snowball sampling approach was used in this study to access a specific group of individuals who have experience about the phenomenon under study, in this case, Muslim women who are in polygamous marriages as only they could speak from their experience (Terre Blanche, 2006). The inclusion criteria sought women who were either a first or subsequent wife. The rationale behind purposive sampling was to select a small group of information-rich cases from which insider information about the core issues of the phenomenon under study could be obtained (Patton, 1990). Since this sample was not easily accessible, a snowball sampling and ‘word of mouth’ or ‘the friend of a friend’ approach was used with the understanding that people who have similar experiences tend to know or know of each other (Terre Blanche, 2006). It was decided that had a substantial number of participants belonging to this population under study not been reached then the researcher would ask each individual participant that was interviewed to recommend other women who are in polygamous marriages. Once the researcher reached a point where she found that the themes and patterns of information about the phenomenon under study was being repeated over, and that no more new information was forthcoming she terminated the process of

looking for more participants which is a technique referred to as ‘sampling to redundancy’ (Terre Blanche, 2006).

3.5. Recruitment

Once ethical approval (protocol reference number: HSS/0264/019M) (Appendix 1) for the study was obtained, the researcher e-mailed the administrator of two social media forum support groups for women who are in polygamous marriages in Durban and surrounding areas and requested permission to undertake this study with members of her social media forum. The members of this group typically met the criteria of the phenomenon under study hence were considered as perfect candidates to give an in-depth understanding of their experiences of living in polygamous Muslim marriages. Being part of a support group made access to them convenient hence permission to undertake the study from the administrator (gatekeeper) (Appendix 3.2) was requested (Terre Blanche, 2006). Information about the research and an invitation to members to participate (Appendix 3.1) was also e-mailed to her. The administrator for both support groups is the same person. She posted it on their forums to recruit volunteers after which the volunteers responded directly to the researcher so that the privacy and confidentiality of each respondent could be protected from the gatekeeper and other participants.

One of the two forums is a support group for first wives and the other for second and subsequent wives. The researcher intended that by listening to the voices of first and subsequent wives of polygamous marriages she would be able to come by a balanced perspective in the data to be collected. When a sufficient number of participants were not obtained from the support groups, additional participants were recruited using the snowball, ‘word of mouth’ and ‘friend of a friend’ approach in which case respondents recommended other women who are in polygamous Muslim marriages.

The initial response to the invitation by the gatekeeper to the two support groups was low with only one respondent contacting the researcher. The researcher beckoned the administrator to send out a second reminder a month later with the assurance that identity and confidentiality would be protected. This yielded three more respondents from the support group who provided contact numbers for other women who were likely candidates. These women were not from the support group. This brought the total number of respondents to eight. However, at the last minute one participant withdrew and the other did not respond to telephone calls and messages that were made in order to make interview arrangements. That

brought the total number of participants drawn into the study sample to six. On reflection, the likely reason for the low response was that women were being careful especially the second wives. The topic was sensitive and not much talked about. For many women trust was an issue. The second wives feared that their husbands would get to know if they participated.

3.6. Data Collection

Data was collected using a semi-structured interview schedule that included some key points and open-ended questions (Appendix 2). Terre Blanche (2006) states that interviews are a part of the qualitative research design and are a natural way to engage people personally rather than using measuring instruments such as tests or questionnaires. Smith and Shinebourne (2012) propose that semi-structured interviews are one of the popular ways in which the researcher and participant enter into an open-ended dialogue. This approach to collect data offered the researcher the flexibility to modify the interview questions and navigate new areas as they came up.

The interview schedule was developed after viewing other studies in order to identify appropriate questions that had the power to elicit relevant information to answer the research questions. The interviews were conducted individually with each participant, face-to-face, for the duration of approximately one hour. This was carried out in environments familiar to participants to prevent them from feeling intimidated as alluded to by (Terre Blanche, 2006), who observes that in order to understand a particular phenomenon it should be studied in its natural environment whilst extending empathy and open mindedness towards the participants. Each participant chose a neutral venue to allow them the privacy from their family and where they were comfortable. This was also important in terms of the balance of power between the participant and researcher which allowed the participant the confidence to be herself in her own territory. The researcher was aware of the possibility that participants could experience strong emotions in the recounting of their experiences of living in polygamous marriages. To prepare for this, free counselling was arranged. Free telephone counselling was accessible from IMA Baytul Nur (Appendix 4.2) in Durban or their offices could be contacted to book a face-to-face appointment. In Pietermaritzburg they could book appointments with the UKZN Child and Family Centre based on the Pietermaritzburg campus, (Appendix 4.1) or alternately free telephone and face-to-face counselling was available through the Gift of the Givers Careline (Appendix 4.3).

At the time of the interviews most of the participants were contained despite becoming emotional and tearing at times; however, only one was recommended to seek counselling as she reported that it was her first opportunity to talk about her situation and she was visibly distraught.

Before the commencement of the interviews, the researcher explained the information regarding the study and the conditions of voluntary participation with the participants (Appendix 3.2), after which they were asked to sign the forms for consent for participation (Appendix 3.6) and consent to record the interviews (Appendix 3.7). Fortunately, all the six participants consented to being audio recorded. The interviews were recorded using the audio recorder function on the researcher's cell phone. The audio-recordings were transferred to the researcher's laptop computer which is password protected after which they were erased from the researcher's phone. The audio-recordings for each participant were transcribed using a computer software programme called TEMI. This programme is 80% accurate hence the researcher listened to the audio recording of each participant and did the corrections of the transcriptions verbatim to get it to 100% accuracy. The transcription convention that was used was Jefferson convention. The audio-recordings were helpful to cross check the oral narratives with the transcripts which enabled the researcher to stay close to the participant's original version (Eatough & Smith, 2008).

3.7. Data Analysis

The data analysis procedure used in this study was Thematic Analysis (TA) which originated from Braun & Clarke (2006). A feminist informed thematic analysis, consistent with a qualitative design, was conducted to provide an in-depth understanding about this phenomenon in a way that will ring true for someone in a familiar situation whilst simultaneously allowing them to view it from a fresh perspective (Terre Blanche, 2006). TA is well known for its flexibility, straightforwardness and accessibility as well as its theoretical application to different frameworks (McLeod, 2014). It can be used to identify patterns within and across data in relation to participants' lived experience which seeks to understand what participants think, feel and do (Clarke & Braun, 2018) by drawing on data from interviews (Hunt, 2014).

The interviews which were audio-recorded were transcribed as explained in the section above. After this process the researcher immersed herself in the data and went over it numerous times to become familiar with it whilst also making notes on the side (Terre

Blanche, 2006). This iterative process allowed the researcher to establish a pattern in her mind about how information was distributed as well as the location of relevant information. This led to the next phase of coding and categorizing.

The researcher was not keen to use the software package NVivo, as learning this programme would have been time consuming, considering the limited time for submission of this dissertation. Instead, the researcher used MS-Word as a means to categorize and organize the codes and form a thematic framework.

Having become familiar with the transcripts, the researcher began extracting units of meaning (codes) from the texts by looking at underlying key words, phrases, ideas and descriptions (Blaxter, 2010). A table with two columns was used to insert the unit meanings (codes) beside the transcribed data. This was done for each data unit i.e., individual interview transcript. These units of meanings (codes) were labelled the same according to their similarity and differences, first in individual data unit and then across the whole data set i.e., the total number of interview transcripts to ensure consistency of codes.

During this process tentative themes were developed. Thereafter, all the units of meanings (codes) were listed and categorized under the appropriate themes. Themes are more meaningful to the research question and aims than individual units of meaning (codes). This procedure of drawing out themes and categorizing of units of meanings (codes) was repeated to ensure that nothing was left out by the researcher (Terre Blanche, 2006). Data that was not as relevant was demarcated but not rejected (Blaxter, 2010).

Eventually the researcher worked less with the transcripts and focused more on the extracted codes and themes, doing an across-case analysis to look for converging themes (Eatough & Smith, 2008). This culminated in a descriptive narrative write-up of the findings using specific extracts from participants' shared stories to maintain individual stances as well as portray a general picture of the phenomenon being studied (Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). This interpretive process was further refined during the discussion phase.

3.8. Validity, Reliability and Rigor

It is stated that the validity of qualitative research can be likened to a prism using the metaphor of a crystal; through which the exterior reflection and interior refraction portrays a multidirectional array of colours and designs (Creswell & Miller, 1997). Despite its multidimensional angles it still retains its original form. In much the same way each of the participants were given the opportunity to speak their unique truth about their own

experiences of living in a polygamous marriage. Qualitative research is considered scientifically rigorous when it meets the requirements of dependability, credibility and transferability (Babbie, 2020). The effort made by the present researcher to promote these qualities in implementing this study were clarified below.

3.8.1. Credibility

In qualitative research the term credibility is used as a substitute for validity which is used in quantitative research (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). A study is credible when the researcher produces an accurate account of a human experience that can be recognized by other people who experience the same (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). To enhance the credibility of the present study, cross checks between the recordings, transcripts and process notes were done and the data was scrutinized during the write up stage by the researcher. The write-up was an expression of the participant's own words which ensured that the researcher remained faithful to what they had shared which maintained the credibility of the study (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011).

3.8.2. Dependability

In qualitative studies the term reliability is replaced with the term dependability (Creswell, 1997). To promote the dependability of the present study, the researcher used an audit trail to note every aspect of the research process starting from data collection to the final write-up stage; description of the sample, substantiation for sample selection, description of the data collection process, discussion of how the data was transformed from an audio to text version for analysis purposes, discussion of the interpretation of the study and methods that were used to achieve credibility (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). In the same way, the researcher used the same interview schedule for every participant which enhanced dependability. Audio interviews, transcripts and process notes were stored as evidence of the research study and would be made accessible for reference in the event of the need to cross check data collection material with the report. Such a detailed documented description of the entire research process ensured the dependability of this study.

3.8.3. Transferability

In qualitative research transferability is used to stand for the term generalizability. Purposive sampling as opposed to random sampling was used instead and concerned with collecting in depth information about a specific phenomenon from a small number of individuals who served as key carriers of information relevant to the study (Babbie, 2020). The purposive

sample of Muslim women in polygamous marriages in Durban and surrounding areas rendered them the most suitable to provide an insider perspective of their lived experiences of this specified field of inquiry. In the present study, transferability was deemed achieved when the reader was able to recognize common characteristics about the phenomenon reported on as a result of the researcher's rich and thick description of participants and their context in another similar context or individuals experiencing the same (Creswell & Miller, 1997). This point was corroborated by Johnson (1997) when he asked readers interrogating the findings to determine whether these resonate with their experiences of the studied phenomenon or whether it needs to be re-evaluated.

3.8.4. Self-Reflexivity

A fundamental component of qualitative research is the researcher's reflexivity. Hence, according to Jootun, McGhee, and Marland (2009) including a reflexive account enriches the research process and moreover enhances its rigor. Reflexivity is “a dynamic process of interaction within and between ourselves and our participants, and the data that informs decisions, actions and interpretations at all stages” (Etherington, 2004, p. 81). This implies that as a researcher one has to function on multiple levels at the same time, for example on the affective, cognitive and behavioural domains, whilst concurrently being present with the participant and actively listening to their story (Palaganas, Sanchez, Molintas, & Caricativo, 2017). The media used for qualitative research to elicit information is very personal hence one's positionality (i.e., position based on class, sex, ethnicity, race, etc.) and who one is as a person (shaped by the socio-economic and political environment) plays a fundamental role in the research process, starting from research design to the final text (Palaganas et al., 2017).

In the light of the above, I would like to declare my motivations, experiences and ontological positioning in order to highlight personal, social and intellectual influences on this study. As stated earlier in this chapter, Shaikh (2003) states that Muslim women's experiences of Islam within varying social, economic and cultural settings fall somewhere between a just ethical Islam and an expression of Islam that marginalizes and oppresses. Hence my experience as a middle class, South African Muslim female of Indian descent, has been one of discord between an ethics of justice and equality which I read in the Quran (holy book of guidance) and my experience of a patriarchal, communal Islam characterised by gender conservatism and exclusion. This has led to my disapproval of the patriarchal normative movements and a search for a more inclusive Islam. In keeping with the Feminist principle, my study has the dual objective of adding to the body of knowledge and in the longer term, contributing to

social change (Palaganas et al., 2017). Social justice is my motivation to “give voice” to a group of people, who are rarely allowed to speak or be heard (Terry, Hayfield, Clarke, & Braun, 2017). Shaikh describes feminism in Islam as “one of the most engaged contemporary responses to the core Quranic injunction for social justice of our time” (2003, p. 159).

The “Voices of Muslim women in polygamous marriages” is not just a research topic but a phenomenon that affects women in the Muslim community. It is a phenomenon that deeply influences me as a researcher. I declare that I am a woman who is in a polygamous marriage for fourteen years and I am a first wife. I am also a marriage counsellor by profession and currently an academic. In doing this research, I do not remain a passive observer; instead, I am also an active participant who tries to gain insight into this problem. The aim of this study was to give voice to all women in polygamous marriages which meant both first and subsequent wives.

Initially I was concerned about whether I would be biased in favour of first wives during my interviews. Being a marriage counsellor and an academic, I was fully aware of my ethical obligation to be objective though I accept as (Jootun et al., 2009, p. 45) acknowledges that it is difficult not to influence and be influenced by the research participants (2009, p. 45). When participants shared their tender stories with me, my early experience of being in a polygamous marriage resonated in part with those especially first wives. These emotions were manifested through the countertransference dynamics during the interview and thereafter when engaging with the interview recordings and transcripts, hence I made a deliberate attempt to record these thoughts and emotions in a reflective diary which was an essential means of articulation and a source for future reflection when developing interpretation and meaning from the data.

As mentioned earlier I identified more with first wives than subsequent wives as the stories of the former were similar to each other and to mine, but as I listened to the stories of the latter with an open mind, I was able to see through their eyes, and my prejudices were challenged, and my respect for them grew. Reflexivity necessitates self-awareness and as a process is introspection on the role of subjectivity in the research process (Lambert, Jomeen, & McSherry, 2010).

On occasions I felt that the participants were my clients especially if they became tearful. I felt that I was playing a dual role of counsellor and researcher. Although it is imperative to listen to the feelings of the participants, I had to be mindful not to dwell on them to prevent

myself from getting trapped in emotionally driven discussions, as this could lead to biases which could hinder the “objectivity” of the process (Palaganas et al., 2017). In qualitative studies the researcher should gauge the impact of sympathy towards participants.

Reflexivity and credibility require that the qualitative researcher maintains academic distance in order to not get carried away by elicited emotions and still be capable to see through participants’ narratives and preserve the ability to identify inconsistencies and issues in participants’ responses (Palaganas et al., 2017). As a result of reflexivity, I was enabled to be critical about what I heard, wrote and interpreted; and the extent to which I can interpret other people’s lives and experiences. As a reflexive researcher, I had to listen beyond the daily processes and conversations in order to give more voice to the participants, stay close enough to what they are saying and how they portray themselves (Palaganas et al., 2017).

Their various perspectives and voices created a synergistic and expanded understanding of polygamy. I was conscientized during the process of reflexivity which was certainly an opportunity of unlearning and re-learning (Palaganas et al., 2017).

3.8.5. Ethical Considerations

In terms of beneficence, study participants did not benefit directly; however, they were informed that their experience would contribute to a body of knowledge that could possibly lead to further research at a later stage. A summarized, simplified electronic version of the completed research was promised to be made available to participants upon request. This study should have social value as it is hoped that the findings would conscientize important role players who have influence in this field of study to be able to implement the changes required for polygamy as a practice. With regard to the ethical principle of non-maleficence; no harm was done during any stage of the study starting from recruitment to write up stage. All conditions for voluntary participation were re-emphasized at the beginning of the interviews. Every caution was taken to protect the identity and privacy of the participants.

Although they were addressed by their names during the recording of interviews, they were informed that they would be assigned pseudonyms in the transcripts and write up of the thesis. They were assured that any identifying information and interviews were going to be kept confidential to all except the researcher and her thesis supervisor. Recorded interviews, transcripts, process notes and the consent forms were to be safely stored and would be preserved for up to a five-year period. Participants were informed at the end of their interview that they could contact the researcher if they wished to withdraw or modify any information

that was volunteered during the interview. They were informed that they could withdraw at any time without any consequence and that any information regarding them personally would not have been used in the study. All participants were reminded at the end of the interview that they could use the provisions made available for counselling if they required it.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The presentation is organised according to the research questions investigated and the themes that emerged from the data collected which bear directly on these questions. It is to be recalled that the study went out to explore answers to the following key questions:

1. What is the typical experience of Muslim women in South Africa who are in polygamous marriages?
2. What are the negative consequences of living in a polygamous marriage as a Muslim woman in South Africa?
3. What are the unique experiences of first and second wives, respectively, in polygamous families?

Before presenting the findings, bearing on these questions an attempt will first be made to describe the psychosocial characteristics of the study participants.

4.2. Brief Description of the Participants

Brief background characteristics of the participants are provided below. There were six study participants made up of four first wives and two second wives. Pseudonyms have been allocated to protect the identity of the participants.

Table 1. Information about participants

Participant and Pseudonyms	Background
Participant 1: Nisha	Nisha is a 57-year-old first wife, married for 38 years and in the polygamous marriage for 13 years. Her highest level of education is matric and she has been handling the accounts in her husband's business since she got married.
Participant 2: Attiya	Attiya is a 43-year-old first wife, married for 24 years and in the polygamous

	<p>marriage for two years. Her highest level of education is matric and she helped her husband in the business for the first six years.</p>
Participant 3: Fahmeeda	<p>Fahmeeda is a 44-year-old first wife, married for 18 years. Her husband divorced her after he engaged in the polygamous marriage which was two years at the time of the interview. Her highest level of education is matric and she ran the business with her husband until he engaged in the polygamous marriage.</p>
Participant 4: Hannah	<p>Hannah is a 54-year-old first wife married for 38 years and in the polygamous marriage for five years. Her highest level of education is matric. She has been a religious school teacher for the past 30 years.</p>
Participant 5: Shabnum	<p>Shabnum is a 48-year-old second wife, was married for 17 years then got divorced. She is in a polygamous marriage for three years at the time of the interview. She said that her reason for becoming a second wife was that she was looking for financial respite and a father figure for her boys.</p>
Participant 6: Heena	<p>Heena is a 45-year-old second wife, in a polygamous marriage for 20 years. This was her only marriage. She says that she only agreed to become a second wife when her husband's first wife told her that her marriage is over and that she is staying in it for financial security. Heena's husband passed away five years before at the time of</p>

	the interview. Her highest level of education was several beauty courses post matric. She ran her own signage business and her beauty clinic.
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4.3. Themes emerging from the research questions investigated:

Table 2. List of themes in relation to the research questions

Research Question	Themes
1. What is the typical experience of Muslim women in South Africa who are in polygamous marriages?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The feeling of being betrayed by a husband one has invested in for so long • The problem of subjugation of the first wife • The pain of abandonment suffered by the first wife following husband's focus of attention on the second wife • Participants being adversely affected emotionally and psychologically • The notion of women subjugating women in Muslim polygamous marriages • The women's anger against and resistance to perversion of the system of polygamy imposed on them
2. What are the negative consequences of living in a polygamous marriage as a Muslim woman in South Africa?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Husband being aloof from his first family after his subsequent marriage • Husband's subsequent marriage having a negative impact emotionally and

	<p>psychologically on the children of the first marriage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First wives feeling physically married but emotionally separated • Problem of first wife’s disempowering dependence on husband’s finances for sustenance and survival
<p>3. What are the unique experiences of first and second wives, respectively, in polygamous families?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first wives’ experience of feeling betrayed by their husbands when they take on second wives • The first wives’ experience of being physically married but feeling emotionally separated • The second wives’ negative experience of being seen as devil’s advocates in the promotion of the practice of polygamy in Muslim marriages • The complaint of the second wives about the stigma against them from the husband’s family

The above-mentioned themes are arranged in written descriptions with excerpts from the participants’ interviews which are intended to support them. The excerpts are representative of both the first and second wives’ experience where relevant. Thus, the general themes identified in the present study are unpacked as follows:

4.3.1. Research Question One:

What is the typical experience of Muslim women in South Africa who are in polygamous marriages?

4.3.1.1. Theme one: First wives' feeling betrayed by husbands they have invested in for so long

Most of the participants that were first wives had already been married for two to nearly four decades when their husbands married second wives in secret. They asserted that they did not know about their husbands' second marriages until much later. They said that the husband's secretive behaviour and lies damaged the trust of their marriages. Their sentiments are echoed in the extracts below. For example, when asked the question when they got to know about the second marriage, Nisha said:

"Six months later. He was already into the marriage."

Nisha added:

"I somehow just suspected it, you know, because I could see from the, for the six months before that, his behaviour was, he was like on edge. He was always fighting with me. He always wanted to get away from me and I realize something's wrong. ... When I would be there for long hours and I could see, you know, he wasn't comfortable because there was something not right."

In response to the same question, Attiya said:

"He didn't tell me about it and he just got married to her and he went ahead with it. Yeah."

Likewise, Hannah added:

"No and I had not even known that he was married cause, he gave me no indication of his being married because he didn't move out the house then. So, I don't know how long and up until this day he's never given me a date of the actual nikah (marriage) and how long or whenever, whatever, which he said is not my business."

The problem of the secrecy of the second marriage and lies led to a damaged marriage relationship as exclaimed by Hannah:

"Yeah, and that was my whole, um, my trust issue has disappeared now completely because I won't be able to re-trust him even if he says let's start from the beginning."

Hannah further added:

“But I'm going to really be honest in this interview that how can I be married to someone who is very secretive.” ...The, the, the whole marriage, um, foundation has crushed because of lies.”

4.3.1.2. Theme two: The problem of subjugation of the wives

The first wives felt subjugated by their husbands as the husbands used the laws of the religion as a loophole to enter their second marriages. All four first wives alleged that as a result of the fact that polygamy is permitted in the religion though under certain circumstances, their husbands used it to their advantage. Also, according to the religion, a man does not require the permission of his first wife to enter into a polygamous marriage hence the first wives alleged that their husbands believe that they are acting within the law of the religion and not doing anything wrong. Both first and second wives said that the husbands do not follow the rules in the Quran and shariah in terms of the treatment of the wives which stipulates fairness and justice through the distribution of time, privileges and resources. Their sentiments are expressed through the extracts below. When asked the question about whether polygamy is allowed in the religion of Islam and if so, what were the stipulations, Nisha said:

“It's supposed to have been conditional. But that's not what they do. Men just because of lust they use this as a, as a way of, uh, you know sorting out their lust... Yes, a way of sorting their life out.”

Attiya responded with a strong opinion:

“Halaal prostitution because you're paying somebody, you looking after somebody with no, no attachments, no responsibilities. What are you doing her for sex? Maaf (excuse me), I mean you asked us to be honest. That's what you pay them for.... Huhm? So, you made it legal by Nikah (religious marriage) and then you call it for honestly for me, I call it halaal prostitution.”

Likewise, Fahmeeda said:

“I don't see it as Islamic thing personally. Maybe every other person as a Muslim they'll say it's an Islamic thing, but I think it's just for men to do nonsense and get away.”

Fahmeeda further added:

“They're using it and they using it in such a way we talking how can you do this to another human being. How can you hurt someone so badly? [CRYING] Now look at me... I'm like a train wreck.”

Moreover, she said:

“We were not exposed to that kind of thing. And then he goes and has an affair and turns it into a nikah (religious marriage).”

With regard to consent of the first wife not required to marry a second wife, Fahmeeda related what her husband said:

“He told me is, he didn't ask my consent. He said, you know what, I don't have to ask your consent. I'm telling you that I'm going to be doing this?”

Hannah also related what her husband said:

“So, I like for him to like sit me down and tell me that which of those boxes of being the wife and the mother and the lady of the house that I went wrong in. So, I can maybe correct myself and be better for myself, but um, he says to me, no I've got no boxes to tick or whatever... That I've got nothing to say against you. I just got married.”

Shabnam a second wife had this to say:

“She wasn't even told that we getting married. Um, he found out from the Jamiat (religious judicial body), at the Jamiat (religious judicial body), they had told him that he did doesn't need to tell the first wife. Um, so we went ahead and did it quietly, very quietly.”

The wives felt subjugated when the husbands did not follow the rules of the Quran (Holy book) in relation to treatment of the multiple wives which stipulates fairness and equality through the division of time, privileges and resources. In this regard Attiya said:

“So, he's it's so demeaning. He's done this in front of my eyes. Right. Like, like, like purchasing her thing and, and, and it's like, it's so unfair. Like when it's, when we were going on holiday, if my children ask him, okay, you need to buy for mummy this, he'll tell them straight. No, coz I need to buy the other side.”

Hannah asserted:

“...But when all my um, my expenses were falling, it's because everything financially was going down and I couldn't take it. It's because I felt now you are not doing what you're supposed to do for me. So how am I going to move forward?”

Shabnam a second wife said:

“He made me sign a document stating that if he dies. I have been no part of his estate, um, that everything would belong to his first wife and his children.”

Shabnam added:

“I mean he just went away for a holiday with her. Now, you know, on my birthday his taking her overseas for another holiday. So, I mean where between that holiday and this holiday. Did I have holiday? You know, it's supposed to be fair, Islamically, you one for her, one for me, one for her, one for me. Not only do for one and not do for the other one. So, when you marry, you got to marry you with that mind of what Allah (GOD) wants.”

Shabnam also added:

“It's not equal on both sides. They get five days a week. I get two days a week. Um, unless he's fighting with her, then I get the little bit more time. Uh, so I don't see it. The fairness is in that... And, uh, you know, Islamically he set his barrier to what he wants and he does just what he wants.”

4.3.1.3. Theme three: The pain of abandonment suffered by the first wife following the husband's focus of attention on the second wife

Attiya said:

“So, he's it's so demeaning. He's done this in front of my eyes. Right. Like, like, like purchasing her thing and, and, and it's like, it's so unfair. Like when it's, when we were going on holiday, if my children ask him, okay, you need to buy for mummy this, he'll tell them straight. No, because I need to buy the other side.”

Hannah asserted:

“...But when all my um, my expenses were falling, it's because everything financially was going down and I couldn't take it. It's because I felt now you are not doing what you're supposed to do for me. So how am I going to move forward?”

Fahmeeda added:

“And he's not like he does anything for me. He doesn't give me any money or anything like that. I'm telling you what I have to, how I earn a living, so it's not like.”

4.3.1.4. Theme four: Participants are adversely affected emotionally and psychologically after the polygamous marriage

The first wives reported that their husband's subsequent marriage had a negative impact on them emotionally and psychologically. The second wives also reported that the treatment from their husbands and husbands' families adversely affected them. In response to the question: How did you react when you learnt about your husband's subsequent marriage? Nisha asserted:

“Yes, yes. I was just in shock. But then the next day it really, it really hit me badly. And then I think, uh, I would say, uh, for the next, uh, six months thereafter, I was a really, not myself, I think I must've lost about 10 kgs in weight at that time. Uh, well I continued to lose weight before he actually broke the news that six months before when he was married to her, he was making my life miserable and I was losing weight anyway. I couldn't eat, I couldn't put food down. And I love food.”

Attiya added:

“Anger, tears, emotion, upset, all the normal emotions that you go through. I cried a lot. A lot a lot a lot. And I prayed a lot.”

Through the participants stories it could be deduced that their self-esteem was also negatively affected as a result of the subsequent marriage.

Fahmeeda had this to say:

“She (second wife) doesn't want to acknowledge that she's broken my home in her eyes... So, when she looks at me, she's, I become like the side chick. She is like a, what can I say? She's the main person.”

Fahmeeda further added:

“Right through. people look at you as dirt, you know, when you have this kind of thing. They just say oh maybe she, something was wrong with her, maybe she, he did that because of some reason. I don't know what reason they sum up in their heads but um, people are very, very bad.”

Fahmeeda finally said:

*“How can you do this to another human being. How can you hurt someone so badly?
[CRYING] Now look at me... I'm like a train wreck.”*

The second wives reported that the unfair treatment from their husbands and husbands' families adversely affected them. In this regard, Shabnam asserted:

“Every day I see as time goes on, I see more and more unfair things, you know, and it affects me emotionally.”

Shabnam added:

“So, I just keep quiet.....although I feel bitter inside, you know.”

Moreover, Shabnam said:

“I feel very low sometimes. Um, I feel like I'm worthless. He makes me feel like that, you know, because he puts the first wife first. Do you know, at a higher pedestal all the time? So, I feel I'm, I'm just there. I feel sometimes I feel like I'm being used. I feel Mmm. He knows. He, um, you know, sometimes I feel I'm not good enough.”

Heena attested:

“His mother. The day he passed away. She says, oh, you don't put your foot back in this house again. And from the time that you've been in and out of the house or looking after him or watching him, and she used to see everything I do for him. And she was the one she's the hen that roosts over there. So, if she says, don't talk to her, nobody will talk to her. If she says, don't do this for her, nobody will do this for her. And, uh, she, she made the scene that you not allowed to come here anymore more only your son's welcome here. And, uh, yeah. So, it was like, it, it took me six months to confront till, because I couldn't believe someone could say something like that [tearing].”

4.3.1.5. Theme five: The notion of women subjugating women in Muslim polygamous marriages

The second wives related their experiences of being subjugated by the first wife and the family of the husband, namely the mother-in-law. Through the excerpts below Shabnam, a second wife, explains her experience wherein the first wife was vindictive towards her. She had this to say:

“The first wife has done a lot of wrong things to me and you know, I, I've fought, but I overlooked it as well. And I, she went and bad, mouthed me and bad, named me everywhere, you know, picked and found, bad things about my past and, you know, publicized that and she, you know, she, she does things deliberately to hurt me, you know? Um, she just does it out of and he, allows it. That's the sad part.”

Shabnam added:

“She put a doubt in his head about me and about other men and whatever...So she made him feel like, Oh, I'm running around with other men. So, she made him talaq (divorce) me.”

Continuing, Shabnam said:

“So, she's tried everything. She even went to Maulanas (religious leaders) to break the marriage up. Uh, then I found out from my one friend, which Maulana she went to, and that Maulana (religious leader) actually, uh, you know, uh, you know, he basically like said, okay, no, it's okay. You know, he'll undo whatever he's done to break the marriage.”

Shabnam finally said:

“She's basically poisoned his mind, the first wife as to doing anything for me because you feel she feels, Oh, I'm not going to be around for too long. Um, you know, I'll leave him I'm using him for his money.”

On the other hand, Heena relates her experience with her mother-in-law and her husband's family:

“His mother. The day he passed away. She says, oh, you don't put your foot back in this house again. ...And she was the one she's the hen that roosts over there. So, if she says, don't talk to her, nobody will talk to her. If she says, don't do this for her, nobody will do this for her. And, uh, she, she made the scene that you not allowed to come here anymore more only your son's welcome here [tearing].”

Heena further added:

“It was okay for me to look after him. It was okay for me to do everything while he was sick, then I was a very good person. Um, but it wasn't okay after he passed away for me to be part of that family, it wasn't okay [tearing]. Like, I'm not regarded as his wife now. I'm, I'm like, I tell people I was just their (kaamvari) worker. Okay. You know, like I was just a maid. That's what they needed. That's what they got.”

4.3.1.6. *Theme six: The women's anger against and resistance to perversion of the system of polygamy imposed on them*

Both the first and second wives expressed their anger and resistance to the perverted way in which polygamy is practiced. The excerpts below demonstrate the participants' sentiments. When posed with the question about their view on polygamy, Nisha said:

"Umm. The thing is in South Africa, I think it's, as much as it is being practiced, I still think is not accepted as normal like it is in a lot of the Islamic countries and stuff like that. So, I think we've got a lot of, Western influence ingrained in us, you know, so I don't know whether it will ever change though."

In a similar vein Fahmeeda said:

"As I said, the Arabs, it's their culture. The women there they know ay you know what I can pick a wife for my husband, because I know this girl and I will get along...That's their culture. You can't expose us to something that we will never be. You know It's not part of us."

In her own case, Attiya exclaims:

"I wasn't for it. I wasn't for it. Obviously, I knew the hurt it does to women and how it breaks them and the injustice you see that certain women go through and I still feel the same."

Shabnam as a second wife expressed her sentiments:

"Uh, firstly, if anybody comes to me and asked me, you know, somebody wants to marry me, they already married, I'll tell them, please just walk away rather, you know, it's, it's very heart-breaking. Uh, not only for the first wife for the second wife as well. You know, you're going to see things and hear things and do things and you know, you're going to see him doing things for his first wife, for second wife things. It's gonna upset you all the time and do you really want to be hurt and upset all the time. Um, so, you know, at the end of the day, I mean, if I feel, uh, I just, I wouldn't condone it really. I know. I think one wife one husband, I think it's enough."

Heena also a second wife added:

"I never, but now it's like, you got to think twice before you want to be someone's second wife or someone's third wife. And my, this thing, like sometimes when I talk to aunty Ray, I'll tell her anyone wants to get married again to someone that's got kids, keep them far away from you don't even, it doesn't matter how nice you are. You'll still become the bad person."

4.3.2. Research Question Two:

What are the negative consequences of living in a polygamous marriage as a Muslim woman in South Africa?

This question generated themes that outlined the consequences of living in a polygamous marriage as a Muslim woman in South Africa as perceived by the participants who were in polygamous marriages. These themes are presented below.

4.3.2.1. Theme one: Husband aloof from first family after subsequent marriage

In response to the question about whether their husbands spend quality time with them Nisha exclaimed:

“God, he like he just come in, he's in this house. All he does, he's sits with his phone on his WhatsApp. Or he's sitting with his laptop, with his work, he does nothing with us.”

Additionally, Nisha said:

“Uh, now, uh, he just comes and tells us what he's decided and what he's doing. And there's sometimes he doesn't even tell us and does things anyway without us even knowing about it. So, he's, he, he, he's not that close to us anymore. He's not as much a part of our family as he was, you know, so that's, I think a disappointment as a husband, if I could call it that.”

Similarly, Attiya said:

“Uh, for them if he comes home what is he coming home for? His on his phone. There's no interaction. He doesn't want to take us anywhere. He doesn't look happy. He's finding fault with us. Why didn't you just stay there?”

Hannah said:

“Uh the kids and him, uh, the kids are big now so it's difficult for them to want to just be with their father because they said it's not the same and that he avoids, um, being uh, well he mostly works when he comes. He works in his office.”

4.3.2.2. Theme two: Husband's subsequent marriage having a negative impact emotionally and psychologically on the children of the first marriage

In response to the question whether they have observed any notable changes in their children after the husband's subsequent marriage, the first wives reported that the children have been

affected emotionally and psychologically which has manifested in their behavior. Nisha alleged:

“My third child, he, uh, he claims he's, um, he's doing drugs because of that. But you know, I don't totally believe that you know. But it does and it has affected him and it does trouble him when he sees me all alone, which is very often. And I think it does totally. You know that. And I tell him, look, I'm fine. He's always asking me, you want something? You know, can I watch a movie with you know, you want some company... But as for my, my, uh, my Nabeel (pseudonym), my baby, he's, he's basically taken it very badly, I think, I think it really affected him because he's, because, because before he actually made the nikah, he used to fight a lot with me and Nabeel used to, you know, being five years old, uh, he used to close his ears and say, daddy you hurting my ear, my ears are paining, stop shouting, stop screaming, you know, his to be like that. So, it really troubled him, I think”.

Attiya asserted:

“So, they each rebel in their own way. Like I said, I have an 18-year-old son who started smoking, listening to music that irritated the hell out of me. Nobody wants to listen to me. I mean literally I was always a single parent and I've become more of a single parent now.

The interviewer inquired whether this change in behaviour was due to the influences of the teenage phase or as a direct result of her husband's subsequent marriage?”

Attiya responded:

“I would say that it's as a result definitely, I would say that it's as a result of what their father did. Because like I said, initially every kid no matter what, they love their father and they have a good relationship with their father and what have you. My son is the only son. So, he had an amazing relationship with his father. They bonded on a lot of things. So, till now, if this woman has to use his father's car, whatever gets very upset about it. My older daughter, um, my youngest one, which is 14, really, she doesn't care. She is so rebellious. It's unbelievable. When it comes to him, she won't care.”

Attiya's experience implies that the children are angry at their father for marrying another woman as is evident below:

“Because they know that at this stage I still do for their father and they feel I shouldn't be doing for him. As much as I still do for him, they feel he's done whatever he's done to me. I

shouldn't be, I shouldn't be scared of him or I shouldn't be trying to please him or I shouldn't try to meet his needs to his best of his abilities anymore. I should just let it be.”

Hannah noted:

“The boy, he never spoke and up until this day he doesn't speak, but it has taken an effect on him where he felt that, my dad and I were really close and because of this other woman it changed.”

4.3.2.3. Theme three: First wives feeling physically married but emotionally separated

The first wives expressed that after their husbands' subsequent marriage they feel a distance in their relationship with their husbands. Excerpts below from the first wives allude to how the subsequent marriage caused an interference in their original marriage. In response to the question about whether the relationship between the couple has changed in any way after the subsequent marriage as perceived by the first wives, Nisha said:

“But recently I think this thing is, uh, too strong with he and I, I just, you know, I, I kind of, you know, believe it is a, there's a, there's a wall between us, right?”

To the same issue, Attiya exclaimed:

“My overall experience I have become the maid now. There's no emotional attachment between us. There's no marriage between us. So literally I do everything for him, but his heart is attached to her. I've accepted that...And I've learned to accept it except that I can't be always giving and not receiving. So, I've also I've also shut myself out, I've really shut myself out.”

In her own case, Hannah noted:

“Yes, an agreement for closure that your life is your life and just pay my rent and let me stay here and keep your distance. So, we in the same house, separate rooms, but he can go when he pleases and come when he pleases, his room is still there.”

4.3.2.4. Theme four: Problem of first wife's disempowering dependence on husband's finances for sustenance and survival

The participants confessed that one of the factors that bonded them to the marriage is financial dependence. The excerpts below attest to the above experiences of the participants. In response to the question whether they contribute financially, Attiya said:

“Um, if I was independent, I wouldn't have to be quite honest, I wouldn't have subjected myself to this if I had a job, if had a career and I would be able to look after look after myself...So I could look after myself and then be independent. I would have not, I would have really not stayed in this situation because I feel it's, it's a very unjust thing that has happened.”

The interviewer asked Attiya if finances were the thing that is holding her back, she responded:

“It's my finances. Yes, because it's, that's the only thing. There's no other attachment as we see it. There's no, other than that, the only attachment is the finances and he knows that.”

On the same issue, Hannah stated:

“I'm speaking for myself, which he says that if I have to want to go um, can willingly go, but then I have to find my own means of a shelter, which I'm not on that bracket of, uh, being able to pay a rent even in a room and a kitchen. So, I'm like stuck in this marriage.”

4.3.3. Research Question Three:

What are the respective unique experiences of first and second wives in polygamous families?

The themes that were developed to respond to the above research question highlighted the unique experiences of first and second wives respectively who are in polygamous marriages as perceived by the participants. The themes of the first wives' unique experiences are presented first followed by the themes of the second wives' unique experiences.

The first wives' unique experiences:

4.3.3.1. Theme one: The first wives' experience of feeling betrayed by their husbands when they took on second wives

The participants revealed their experience of feeling betrayed by their husbands after their husbands took on second wives. When asked about how they felt when they learnt about their husbands' second marriages Nisha explained:

“Gosh, he always knew that I would never accept it. He knew that because I said that throughout our marriage that I would never accept another woman in our lives and, and uh, therefore he never asked me. So yeah, that's uh, that's why, I mean he never, he never gave. Never gave me a chance to see this.”

Nisha added:

“At that time, I was like shocked. I was shocked. It didn't even really hit me really.”

On the same theme, Attiya's response was:

“Never. Never, ever. Yes, we had our ups and downs, but it never ever occurred to me that he would do it. Never! Till obviously this woman came into his life and that day.”

Similarly, Fahmeeda said:

“I never had the choice because he told me he was doing it and uh, I didn't think he would do it. I didn't think he had it in him to do it. But he just did it.” ... “I was crying and being hysterical. It didn't make any difference to him.”

Fahmeeda further added that the men are using the law of the religion as a loophole to enter polygamous marriages when she said:

“They're using it and they using it in such a way we talking how can you do this to another human being. How can you hurt someone so badly?” [CRYING]

Finally, Fahmeeda said:

“I couldn't get over the fact how these two human beings are just carrying on with their life with just hurting me”.

Hannah related:

“He also, um, uh, went along to say that it wasn't the time for me to tell you that I had married and made nikah with somebody else and when the time was going to be right, I was going to tell you, but I found out, so this is like made me feel that I don't know for how long I knew it with you in the same room and then you had this big secret.”

Hannah added:

“I had not even known that he was married because he gave me no indication of his being married because he didn't move out the house then. So, I don't know how long and up until this day he's never given me a date of the actual nikah and how long or whenever, whatever, which he said is not my business”.

Finally, Hannah said:

“And then eventually he got married and never told me. So, for me, that's where the trust has, I've lost the trust”.

4.3.3.2. Theme two: The first wives' experience of being physically married but feeling emotionally separated

When posed with the question about their relationship with their husbands, the first wives described their experience as that of still being married but feeling emotionally disconnected. The excerpts below demonstrate this.

Hannah said:

“But when all my um, my expenses were falling, it's because everything financially was going down and I couldn't take it. It's because I felt now you are not doing what you're supposed to do for me. So how am I going to move forward? So that's what really moved me away from him.”

Hannah added:

“First it was the bed and then it was the room. So, we in the same house, separate rooms, but he can go when he pleases and come when he pleases, his room is still there.”

Attiya asserted:

“My overall experience I have become the maid now. There's no emotional attachment between us. There's no marriage between us. So literally I do everything for him, but his heart is attached to her. I've accepted that.”

Attiya also said:

“And I've learned to accept it except that I can't be always giving and not receiving. So, if also I've also shut myself out, I've really shut myself out.”

In a similar vein Nisha said:

“But recently I think this thing is, uh, too strong with he and I, I just, you know, I, I kind of, you know, believe it is a, there's a, there's a wall between us, right?”

Nisha further added:

“Thought I'd become distant. Uh, but yeah, I think there's, we just don't have the connection. We, we don't, we don't fight or anything of that sort. It's just like there's a, there's a, there's a, there's a mask on. So, we pretend that everything is fine and smile and, and, and, and greet each other like everything is absolutely normal, but, uh, inside, you know, I'm not a happy person.”

The second wives' unique experiences:

4.3.3.3. Theme three: The second wives' negative experience of being regarded as devil's advocates in the promotion of the practice of polygamy in Muslim marriages.

When asked the question whether their view on polygamy had changed from before they got married to after living in a polygamous marriage Heena's response was:

“I never, but now it's like, you got to think twice before you want to be someone's second wife or someone's third wife. And my, this thing, like sometimes when I talk to aunty Ray, I'll tell her anyone wants to get married again to someone that's got kids, keep them far away from you don't even. It doesn't matter what you can do for them or how you can bend down backwards. You still become the bad person. Like I speak a lot to aunty Ray and I always tell her, I said, you know, I would never, and what not, I would never get married again.”

Heena further added:

“But at this age, the only person we'd meet is someone that's divorced or someone that's widowed. And I said, I won't get married. I don't care what Islam says that you have to make nikah and stuff like that. I said, I don't think I want to get married again... I said, I know what I've been through. I said, I've been through too much of shit and nobody appreciates anything. Nobody. So, I'm not even going to put myself through that again.”

Shabnam had this to say:

“If I had to choose again? I wouldn't have been wanted to be a second wife at all. I would definitely not want to be, if a man doesn't want me as a first wife, then he doesn't need to have me as a second wife. And I just feel that because of the unfairness and the inequality and the,

you know, the, the way I was, you know, emotionally battered and the way he tells me off and, you know, he doesn't understand how I feel. I would have never; I would never do it again.”

4.3.3.4. Theme four: The complaint of the second wives about the stigma against them from the husband's family

Heena had this to say:

“You know I'm not justifying what I'm saying right now. It's we Muslims. In our religion men are allowed four wives. We are brought up that Allah has written everything for us pre-written. It's not like it's written every day, but it's pre-written from the time we were born, so I didn't ask to be someone's second wife. There must have been a plan for Allah (GOD) that HE put me in this man's life that he got sick. And I had to see to him and had to do all these things for him and looking at everything, would his first wife be able to do all that. She wouldn't because she's sick herself would have did for him. So, I just like tell myself that, you know why this, this was all pre-written.”

Heena further exclaimed:

“But the stigma and the things that go with it, it's a, I would say not acceptable [Tearing]. Not. I mean, after being married for 20 years, it's like in the last five years, I feel I wasted my twenty years. Not on him on the rest of the family. I should have never given in so much to him to say, okay, fine. No problem. Take my son there. Um, the family's there be nice to the family, you know, like mingle with them and stuff. I should have just kept my distance because it wasn't worth it.”

The interviewer inquired why she felt that way and she responded by saying that after her husband's passing, she meant nothing to her in-laws.

Heena said:

“Nothing. Nothing, nothing, nothing. It's like, she did this. She did that. Now the story is she forced him to get married to her and Oh GOD it's unbelievable.”

Another stigma faced by the second wives is that the first wives and family feel that they are in the second marriage for nothing else but to use the husband to have a good time and to spend his money.

Heena had this to say:

“Putting it bluntly the first wife feels that, you know what, um, the second wife is only there for a good time and spending my husband's money or using everything up. And, uh, you know, that that's, that's what I know of first wife. And then the girls, the children feel that way as well, that, you know what, she's just, they're spending my father's money or whatever. But what they don't realize is that sometimes the second wife has her own thing going for herself. She's not there for the money. She's not there to just, uh, want everything for nothing. And in my marriage, they got everything first before I got anything in my house, which I was fine with it.”

Shabnam exclaimed:

“Um she's basically poisoned his mind, the first wife as to doing anything for me because you feel she feels, Oh, I'm not going to be around for too long. Um, you know, I'll leave him I'm using him for his money. She got a friend the other day to phone him and say, Oh, her friend married this old man and she, the friend, the friend left the old man and the friend and her were having a good laugh about how they used the old man for his money.”

Shabnam added:

“So, she keeps putting that doubt in his head. You know about me. Which Islamically is wrong, you know, she keeps doing that and she always finds people to come and tell him oh you know, your second wife is just a user and you know, she's, she'll just use you and she'll throw you away.”

Shabnam said:

“You know, and he is he so gullible that he just listens to her.”

The interviewer inquired whether the doubt that she will use his money and eventually leave one day is the reason that her husband is holding back on spending on her home security needs and getting her a descent car and she responded:

“I'm going to leave one, I'm gonna leave him using his money.”

4.4. Summary

This chapter is a presentation of the findings that highlighted a number of issues that are experienced by the study participants who are in polygamous marriages. It commenced with an outline of the background of each participant prior to discussing the findings of the data

collected. This was to give the reader a context and background in order to interpret the data collected. The chapter then outlined the themes that were generated from the data set that were related to the main research questions. The findings of this chapter will be further discussed and interpreted in the next chapter in relation to the theory and the literature reviewed.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1. Introduction

This qualitative study explored the lived experiences of Muslim women in polygamous marriages in Durban and surrounding areas. The aim was to gain a better understanding of the experiences of Muslim women in polygamous marriages. This chapter presents a discussion and interpretation of the research findings and conclusions extracted from it, as well as recommendations for research and practice. This final chapter aims to link the findings to the study objectives and the literature reviewed. In doing this, it will unpack the core experience of women in polygamous marriages as well as the consequences that Muslim women have to live with as a result of being in polygamous marriages. The summary of the study will be presented followed by the conclusions arising from the study. The chapter ends with the limitations of the current study and recommendations for future research.

5.2. Discussion of findings according to the research questions and the objectives of the study

The findings of this study have been discussed linking them, not only to the research questions investigated but also to the objectives of the study. The first objective was to explore the lived reality of Muslim women in polygamous marriages in Durban and surrounding areas by allowing them to give voice to their physical, mental, psychological, emotional, social and spiritual experiences. Objective two was to explore the negative consequences associated with living in a polygamous marriage as related by the study participants and how they viewed it. Objective three was to explore what the unique experiences of first and second wives are in polygamous families? The findings are presented and discussion below, research question by research question, starting with research question One:

5.2.1. Research question one: What is the typical experience of Muslim women in South Africa who are in polygamous marriages?

The participants of this study, women in polygamous marriages, made up of first and second wives shared unhesitatingly their specific experiences of being in such marriages. The first theme of these experiences particularly as highlighted by the first wives speaks to the first wives' feeling of being betrayed by a husband one has invested in for so long. All participants related that the thought of polygamy had not crossed their minds until they found out much later on in their married life that their marriages had turned polygamous. All of

them had already been married for over two to nearly four decades. These polygamous marriages were reported to have been conducted in secret without the knowledge of the first wives who narrated that they learnt about their polygamous marriages much later which made them feel disconcerted. Commenting in this regard, Nisha noted that her husband married on the sly and only revealed his subsequent marriage to her six months later. Another participant, Attiya, echoed the same sentiments. Commenting in the same regard, Hannah narrated that she had no idea that her husband was in a polygamous marriage as he continued to stay with her and he told her that he would have disclosed to her when he believed the time was right. The finding of the problem of secrecy of the polygamous marriage from this study corresponds with what Nnaemeka (1997) referred to as the clandestine nature of polygamous marriages in Africa. Hannah avers that arising from the secrecy and lies surrounding such marriages, the trust she had in her husband was damaged and with that the foundation of her marriage was destroyed. The betrayal, lies and deception experienced by the women in this study is akin to that of the main character in Mariama Ba's (1979) epistolary novel, *So Long a Letter*, where she describes her experience as the "ultimate betrayal of her trust and a brutal rejection of their long life together" (Cherekar, 2016, p.27). It can therefore be concluded that the participants of this study felt betrayed by their husbands for marrying a second wife after a long marriage together.

The second theme that emerged under this first research question was the problem of the husband subjugating his wives in polygamous marriages. This problem according to the participants came to the fore when the first wives approached the husbands about their subsequent marriages and the husbands responded by saying that they (the husbands) had not faulted in any way as men in Islam are allowed to marry subsequent wives up to a total of four at the same time. The participants related that their husbands did not enter polygamous marriages due to their devotion to the religion. They believed that their husbands used the clause on polygamy in the religion as a loophole for personal benefit. This finding in the study corroborates with the view held by Nnaemeka (1997) who expressed her concern about the increasing practice of polygamy in Africa motivated by affluence and not as per conditions of the African tradition, whereby men personally benefit from the privileges of this practice. Majority of the participants narrated that their husbands married subsequent wives to satisfy their 'lust'. For example, Nisha stated that Islam does permit polygamy under certain conditions but they use it for lust. One participant, Attiya, coined the term 'halaal prostitution' (legal prostitution) stating that her husband is engaged in prostitution which he

made permissible by performing a nikah (Muslim marriage). Fahmeeda stated that her husband exploited the fact that he did not need her consent to enter a polygamous marriage hence, went ahead. She further added that she does not view it as an Islamic act as she believes that men use this right to get away with their ‘nonsense’. She agreed with Attiya’s view when she said that her husband had an affair and then turned it into a nikah (Muslim marriage). Another participant Hannah thought that she may have been at fault in the marriage and was happy to change her ways but her husband said that he found no fault with her. He just wanted to get married to another woman. The findings of this study concur with studies by Gumani and Sodi (2009) and Al-Krenawi (2013) who state that according to many researchers the main reason offered for polygamy is that men lack a sense of sexual satisfaction. Through the experience of these participants, it is evident that the husbands engaged in polygamy as a given right in the religion of Islam thereby justifying their infidelity and philandering. The fact that the religion allows it and that the husbands do not need the consent of the wives to enter into polygamous marriages, they exploited the opportunity for personal benefit hence subjugating the rights of the wife.

Feeling already defeated as a result of the above, the wives both the first and second mentioned that their husbands were unfair towards them and did not divide their time, resources and privileges equally between the wives as per stipulation in the Quran (holy book). In this regard Attiya, a first wife, mentioned how her husband spends on the second wife while neglecting her needs. He does it overtly which is demeaning and hurtful for her. Hannah, also a first wife, stated that her husband stopped maintaining the house and the family financially which is his religious obligation. Shabnam, a second wife, painfully explained how her husband forced her to sign over her rights of inheritance exclusively to his first family. She also stated that her husband takes his first wife on repeated holidays without giving her a turn. She further complained that he is rather unfair in his division of nights spent with her. The original family gets five nights per week and she gets two nights per week. She stated that her husband sets his own rules and goes by that. Yet, the literature suggests that in a polygamous marriage a husband must be like an ‘evenly balanced scale’, he has to divide his time equally and spend it with all wives giving no single wife a reason to feel jealous (Shad, 1998). The same author, (Shad, 1998) further declares that the husband should not favour one wife over another in terms of provision of accommodation and basic needs and that he should provide for all his wives according to his means. It is clear from the evidence of the above, that the experiences of the participants demonstrate that their husbands

default in their day-to-day actions with regards to the treatment of their wives. The blatant disregard for their wives' which is harming them is proof of their subjugation. This study brought out the irony of the situation which is when the men are approached about their subsequent marriage, they use the religion to defend their actions yet do not apply the same rules for when they are unfair and unjust. This is a deviation from the primary text and unlawful from an Islamic perspective. The Quran (holy book) which is the guiding criterion and primary text for Muslims explicitly states in Ch 4: V 3: "*And if you fear that you cannot do justice to orphans, marry women of your choice; two, or three, or four; but if you fear that you shall not be able to treat them justly, then marry only one. That will be more suitable to prevent you from evil*" (Ali, 1989). The scholars advocate that polygamy can only be effectively undertaken if the husband exercises fairness and justice towards each of his wives (Al-Krenawi, 2013). Despite this precondition many men enter into marriage with more than one wife regarding this institution as a privilege whilst not treating the wives equally (Mondal, 1997) which corresponds with the findings of this study.

The third theme also emerging from the first research question relates to the pain of abandonment suffered by the first wife following the husband's focus of attention on the second wife. This is a problem that was very much emphasized by Ba (1979), in her novel, *So long a letter*. The first wives in this study related their experience of feeling abandoned by their husbands after their subsequent marriages. The feeling of abandonment is related to the fact that the husbands stopped spending on the first wives and withdrew from paying the household subsistence expenses in some instances due to having to buy things for the second wife. Attiya said that her husband buys gifts for the second wife overtly in her presence which is hurtful and demeaning to her. Hannah expressed her concern of how she is going to survive since her husband withdrew from paying the household expenses. Similarly, Fahmeeda reported that her husband does not give her any money hence she had to settle for a job with a low salary. Yet, a serious reading of the text in the Shariah (Islamic law) is unambiguous that the husband is liable for all marriage expenses (Cherekar, 2016). In that case, a man who wants to marry more than one wife must have the financial means to attend to the needs of his wives but if he is unable to, Doi (1990) emphasizes that he should restrain himself to marrying one wife. Thus, the experiences of the participants from this study are contrary to what the literature and Islamic law proposes therefore attests to the pain suffered by the wives due to being abandoned by their husbands following their subsequent marriages.

The fourth theme that emerged deals with participants (both first and second wives) being adversely affected emotionally and psychologically following the husband's subsequent marriage. In this regard, the first wives' perspective will be discussed first. Nisha, a first wife, explained how she was in a state of shock when her husband told her about his subsequent marriage and how miserable he made her feel. She lost about 10kg over a period of six months. Attiya affirms that amid other emotions, she experienced anger, upset and she cried a lot. Her emotional pain was evident in her expression: "*I cried a lot. A lot. A lot. A lot.*" Fahmeeda sobbed during most of the interview as she related her experience of being abandoned by her husband after his second marriage. She said that her husband's second wife looks at her as though she is insignificant "*the side chick*" and that she (second wife) is the "*main one.*" She feels that the community looks at her as though "*she is dirt*" and was at fault therefore her husband married a second wife and abandoned her. She pointed to herself and referred to herself as "*a train wreck.*" Her experience corresponds with the findings in studies by Al-Krenawi et al. (1997) who stated that commonly in polygamous marriages the subsequent wife is younger which affects the first wife tremendously as she feels that she is unable to please her husband any longer, feels embarrassed, feels that the younger wife is more beautiful and sexually alluring which affects her self-esteem. From the experiences of the first wives, in the present study it is clear that they suffered the pangs of being forsaken through no guilt of their own. The situation is forced on them to share their husbands totally against their will which weighs heavily on them physically and emotionally. This imposition to share their husbands ties in with what Moghissi (1999) stated that polygamy is viewed by some as oppressive especially the feminists who view it as the exploitation of women. According to several studies carried out in several countries in the Middle East and Turkey, they found that polygamy accounted for the high levels of psychological conditions such as depression and anxiety in the wives, namely first wives (Al-Krenawi, 2013).

From the second wives' perspective, Shabnam, a second wife, narrated that with the passing of time her husband was becoming increasingly unfair which affects her emotionally and makes her "*bitter inside.*" She added that she feels low, worthless, used and not good enough. The findings of this study are consistent with the findings of studies by Al-Krenawi (2013) who alludes to low levels of self-esteem, reduced satisfaction in the marriage, reduced life satisfaction and functional ability in family life among women in polygamous marriages. Heena, another second wife, reported that her mother-in-law discarded her on the day of her husband's funeral. She recounted how she cared for her sick husband for ten years but the

moment he passed away she lost her status of a wife. She feels that her value to her mother-in-law was comparable to that of a maid. She could not get over it for six months. Heena's experience shows that second wives are, often, not regarded as legitimate wives any longer after the passing of their husbands.

Looking at it from both the first and second wife's perspective, it can be concluded that they get affected physically and emotionally as Richardson (1987) and Ba (1979) state that polygamy can be viewed negatively as it causes emotional turmoil for both wives where the first wife feels cheated, replaced and jealous and the other wife feels the pain of having to share a lover.

The fifth theme deals with the notion of women subjugating women in Muslim polygamous marriages. In this study Shabnam and Heena (both second wives) relate their respective experiences of being victimised by the first wife and the family of the husband. Shabnam said that the first wife kept smearing her reputation in public, casted doubts about her to her husband and went to the extreme of getting Maulanas (religious leaders) to break the marriage between her and her husband. It appears clear from this report that Shabnam as a second wife is bearing the brunt of the revenge taken out by the first wife as a result of the pain suffered by her after her husband's second marriage. This finding is consistent with previous studies that state that the commonly occurring themes of jealousy, stress, unhappiness and abuse could negatively impact the lives of the wives be they first or subsequent wives (Slonim- Nevo & Al- Krenawi, 2006). Heena, a second wife, relates her story of when her mother-in-law told her to leave the house after her husband's funeral. The mother-in-law told her to never set foot in the house again and she forbade other family members to communicate with her. Heena noted that she was not regarded as her husband's legitimate wife any longer after his passing. In fact, Heena related in her earlier narrations that her mother-in-law never accepted her from the beginning when she married her husband as she was the stigmatised second wife. Heena's victimisation by her mother-in-law is similar to the subjugation suffered by Aissatou, another character in Mariama Ba's (1979) epistolary novel where her mother-in-law tried to break her marriage from day one as a result of her strong caste prejudices (Cherekar, 2016).

The sixth and final theme emerging under the research question one dealt with the women's anger against and resistance to perversion of the system of polygamy imposed on them. Participants from this study irrespective of being a first or second wife exclaimed that they

were against the practice of polygamy for various reasons. Half of the participants that were first wives expressed that despite it being practiced in South Africa it is not accepted as normal like in certain Islamic countries. They felt that albeit they are Indian Muslims they are born and brought up in South Africa hence have imbibed the western culture which follows the monogamous model of marriage. Furthermore, a first wife Fahmeeda added that in such cultures the older wife can exercise choice of her co-wife which is not something that South Africans can relate to. Similar to the Middle-Eastern countries, the literature on African culture states that this practice is more acceptable among traditional, rural women as compared to educated, westernized women where the first wife has the right to select the second or subsequent wife and has to give consent for her husband to marry a subsequent wife (Gwanfogbe et al., 1997). The experiences of the participants of this study make it clear that they do not resonate with the practices of Middle-Eastern and African cultures. Attiya, also a first wife, stated that she was always and still is against the practice of polygamy as a result of the pain and injustice women suffer. Shabnam a second wife advised women not to become second wives to save themselves from the heartache and pain acknowledging that it is painful for both first and second wives. This study corroborates with documented studies that show that the majority of women involved in polygamous marriages object to such unions (Al-Krenawi & Lightman, 2000; Madhavan, 2002). Based on the participants' narrations the assumption of women's anger against and resistance to the perversion of the system of polygamy imposed on them can be said to have been established in this study.

5.2.2. Research question two: What are the negative consequences of living in a polygamous marriage as a Muslim woman in South Africa?

This question generated themes that outlined the consequences of living in a polygamous marriage as a Muslim woman in South Africa as perceived by the participants who were in polygamous marriages. These themes are presented below.

The first theme dealt with the husband being aloof from his first family after his subsequent marriage. When asked the question whether the husband spends quality time with his wife and children, majority of the first wives alluded to the change in their husband's relationship with his family after his subsequent marriage; a finding that concurs with the view expressed by Ba (1979) that in Muslim Senegal, there is a tendency for Muslim husbands to focus attention on their younger second wives to the detriment of their first and older wives.

Commenting in this regard, both Attiya and Nisha had similar experiences and narrated that their husbands did not participate with them or the children as a member of the family. Attiya

elaborated that he does not take them anywhere, appears unhappy and finds fault with them. Nisha added that her husband is more absorbed on his phone, laptop and with his work. In a similar vein Hannah said that her husband avoids them and occupies himself with work. The findings of this study corroborate with a study undertaken by sociologists quoted in Al-Krenawi et al. (1997), who state that polygamy is substantiated as a reproductive strategy wherein men increase their number of children whilst decreasing the amount of time and energy invested in them. Commenting in this regard, Nisha expressed her disappointment in her husband for excluding her and her children in major decisions compared to before his subsequent marriage; a finding that corresponds with those from a study by Adongo et al. (1997) which found that through polygamy the emotional relationship between couples was decreased, the trust was weakened and women were excluded from critical decisions involving themselves and their families. Through the experiences of the first wives above it is evident that the behaviour of the husbands changed drastically after their second marriages in that they became more distant from their first families; all emphasizing the idea of the husband being aloof from his first family after his subsequent marriage.

The second theme that emerged under the second research question relates to the negative emotional and psychological impact that the husband's subsequent marriage has on the children of the first marriage. Majority of the participants reported that the children were emotionally and psychologically affected by their father's subsequent marriage. Commenting in this regard, Hannah noted that her son became quiet, withdrawn and could not relate to his father as before the subsequent marriage. Attiya, similarly reported that her children became rebellious, do not listen to her and acted out in different ways such as smoking and listening to loud music. She added that she feels like more of a single parent. Nisha said that her third child, a boy, started doing drugs. When asked if the behaviour could possibly be linked to them being teenagers as children in that stage of development sometimes like to experiment, Attiya argued that these changes in her children's behaviour were observed since the husband's subsequent marriage. Nisha echoed Attiya's sentiments and also added that her seventeen-year-old son is psychologically affected as at the time that her husband was involved in the affair and subsequent polygamous marriage, the boy was five years old and witnessed the fighting between the parents. Attiya further related that her children are angry at their father for hurting her and are unhappy for her to continue caring for him. The findings of this study tie in with the findings of a comparative study of polygamous and monogamous families by Elbedour et al. (2002) that found that family cohesion and violence in the home

correlated with increased mental health factors amongst adolescents. Furthermore, the findings of this study correspond with a study on the polygamous family structure which suggests that a number of family variables linked to polygamous marriages such as marital conflict, marital distress, absence of the father, the happiness or distress of the wives in polygamous marriages and financial stress could account for the children's developmental outcomes (Elbedour et al., 2007). Whilst the focus of this current study was not the children of the polygamous marriage, the mothers however made a noteworthy observation. They related that this change in their children was observed after the polygamous marriage thus implying that before that the children had healthy relationships with their fathers and shared a close bond with them. Therefore, it can be concluded that children are negatively affected by their father's subsequent marriages as perceived by participants of this study. The lived experiences of children and adolescents could possibly be a topic for future inquiry.

Theme three dealt with the first wives feeling physically married but emotionally separated. In response to the question of whether the relationship between the couple has changed in any way after the subsequent marriage as perceived by the first wives, Nisha reported that there is a distance between her and her husband which she referred to as a "*wall between us.*" Similarly, Attiya emphatically compared her experience to that of a maid in service of her husband and exclaimed: "*There's no emotional attachment between us. There's no marriage between us*". She said that she has accepted that her husband has feelings for the second wife and not her and she has also shut herself off from him. The findings from this study tie in with the results of a study by Al-Krenawi et al. (1997) which showed that as a result of the pain experienced by first wives or 'senior wives' there was a lack of affection shown towards the husband thus leading to decreased satisfaction in the marriage. Commenting in this regard, Hannah noted that she just wants security as far as her accommodation is concerned and they can continue to live their separate lives. Her husband can come and go as he pleases as his room is still available in her house. From the stories from these first wives, it is clear that their husbands' subsequent marriages caused an interference in their original marriage therefore it can be concluded that first wives in polygamous marriages feel like they are physically married but emotionally separated.

Theme four that emerged under this second research question uncovers the problem of the first wife's disempowering dependence on the husband's finances for sustenance and survival. When asked whether the wives contribute financially in the marriage, Attiya expressed her strong desire for independence through a career or a job so that she did not

have to tolerate her unjust situation. She emphatically stated that the only attachment between her and her husband is the finances which he is well aware of. Hannah expressed the feeling of being in the same predicament when she stated that she is stuck in her polygamous marriage because she cannot afford to look after herself. This particular finding thus suggests that first wives stay in the marriage against their will after the husband's subsequent marriage. They do not have much of a choice so the polygamous marriage is an unfair imposition. There are various reasons such as lack of independence, finance, children and a roof over their heads for which they are forced to stay as Engineer (2001) reinforces this point by stating that socio-economic factors such as being financially dependent on the husband may force the wife to stay in the marriage. The findings of this study are consistent with the findings of the above study in the literature. Therefore, it can be concluded that the problem of the first wife's disempowering dependence on the husband's finances for sustenance and survival is a consequence borne by first wives who are in polygamous marriages and have no independent financial means of fending for themselves.

5.2.3. Research question three: What are the unique experiences of first and second wives in polygamous families?

Four themes emerged in response to this research question. These themes highlighted the unique experiences of first and second wives respectively who are in polygamous marriages as perceived by the participants of this study. First the themes of the first wives' unique experiences will be presented followed by the themes of the second wives' unique experiences.

Proceeding in this regard, theme one relates to the first wives' experience of feeling betrayed by their husbands when they took on second wives. This feeling of betrayal was emphasized by Ba (1979) but is only experienced by the first wives in this study. In response to the question about how they felt when they learnt about their husbands' second marriages all of them were unanimous in saying that they never ever expected it. They mentioned that they had their 'ups and downs' like all marriages do but they did not think that their husbands had it in them to marry again. Nisha mentioned that she had made it clear early in her marriage that she would not accept another woman in their life. Fahmeeda recounted that despite her crying and being hysterical it made no difference to her husband's decision to marry his second wife. She added that she could not get over how these two human beings can continue with their lives after hurting her so badly. These accounts suggest that the participants were in shock, disbelief, hurt and felt heartlessly rejected by their husbands for taking on second

wives. Furthermore, the fact that these subsequent marriages were performed in secret long before the participants got to know of it was alluded to by Hannah. The secrecy of the second marriages added insult to injury, making the first wives' situation even worse. The findings of this study corroborate with that by Overall (1998) who asserted that the marital relationship would inevitably be disrupted and strained if there is knowledge of an additional wife and it could be viewed as adultery and a breach of trust and commitment between the original couple.

Theme two relates to the issue of the first wives' experience of being physically married but feeling emotionally separated. When asked the question about their relationship with their husbands after his subsequent marriage, the first wives were unanimous about their experience of still being married but feeling emotionally disconnected. Commenting in this regard, Hannah reported that when her husband stopped fulfilling his financial obligations and defaulting on his domestic duties, she realised that she was burdened with the financial responsibilities which caused her to distance herself from her husband and subsequently led to her first move out of her marital bed and then her bedroom. Nisha explained that she thought that she had become distant but found that the connection between her and her husband was missing. She said they did not fight but it was as if both wore masks and pretended that everything was fine and normal but inside, she was not a happy person. The findings of this study correspond with those by Al-Krenawi et al. (1997) which showed that first or senior wives are anguished by their husbands' subsequent marriages hence cannot show affection towards their husbands which leads to dissatisfaction in the marriage. It can therefore be concluded that the experience of feeling physically married but emotionally separated is a common experience borne by first wives in the polygamous marriages studied.

Theme three concerns the second wives' negative experience of being regarded as devil's advocates in the promotion of the practice of polygamy in Muslim marriages. When posed with the question whether they still feel the same way about polygamy after living in a polygamous marriage both the second wives said that they were not in favour of it. Heena related that previously she had not given it much thought but after her polygamous marriage she has to rethink it. She mentioned that when the husband has his own family and a child in it then it becomes complicated. She feels that despite being nice to them it is not appreciated. She asserted that she would "*never get married again and put herself through that again.*" Shabnam also affirmed that she would "*never want to be a second wife again or never do it again*" as the inequality, injustice, disregard for her feelings and the emotional abuse that she

experienced has put her off from the practice of polygamy. The findings of this study links to other studies that maintain that equality towards the wives is virtually impossible; elaborating that, if at all possible, feelings of betrayal, jealousy and anger amongst the wives is inherent (Ahmed, 1991). From the narrations of the participants above it is clearly evident that their negative experiences have turned them against the practice of polygamy.

Theme four emerging from the third research question revolves around the complaint of the second wives about the stigma held against them from the husband's family. Firstly, there is a stigma against them for being second wives. In this regard, Heena felt that since Islam allows a man to marry four wives why should there be a stigma against subsequent wives? Secondly, she mentioned that she is not justifying being a second wife but in Islam a person's fate is pre-written at the time when they are born. She said that she did not ask to be a second wife hence her destiny was pre-written. Despite this she said that there is a stigma against her for becoming a second wife even though she was married for twenty years and widowed for five years. She further added that she was rejected by her in-laws on the day of her husband's funeral and not regarded as his wife any longer. Although her husband died five years ago her in-laws continue to say negative things about her for example, they said that "*she forced him to get married to her.*" Another stigma that the second wives in this study confronted is that the first wives and their families feel that they are in the second marriage exclusively to use the husband to have a good time and to spend his money. Heena stated that the first family does not realise that often the second wives have their own business running and are not expecting things for themselves as is the case with her. Shabnam reported that her husband is holding back on spending on her house security upgrade and buying her a descent car. The reason for this is that his first wife poisoned his mind that Shabnam is not going to be around for long as she is there only to use his money. She mentioned that the first wife creates doubt in her husband's mind and finds people to go to him to say that Shabnam is in the marriage to use him and eventually leave him. This trend appears to concur with the point emphasized by Ba (1979) that in many instances of polygamous Muslim marriages, mothers-in-law force their daughters to marry as a second wife into an established monogamous marriage simply to make it possible for her (the mother-in-law and her daughter) to enjoy the money of a wealthy husband.

5.3. Summary of the study

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived reality of a sample of six Muslim women in polygamous marriages in Durban and surrounding areas by allowing them to articulate their experiences, stories and understanding. The study sought to determine the consequences, if any, that Muslim women have to live with as a result of being in polygamous marriages. It also sought to establish what the unique experiences of first and second wives are in polygamous families.

This study adopted a qualitative research design. According to Smith & Shinebourne (2012) qualitative designs are theoretically committed to the participants as cognitive, affective and physical beings; and undertake a chain of linking peoples' talk, thinking and emotional states thus allowing the researcher to understand the participants' world and describe their multidimensional views of what it feels like to be in a polygamous marriage. A non-random purposive sample of six Muslim women who were in polygamous marriages in Durban and the surrounding areas, participated in the study. The rationale behind purposive sampling was to select a small group of information-rich cases from which insider information about the core issues of the phenomenon under study could be obtained (Patton, 1990). Since this sample was not easily accessible, a snowball sampling and 'word of mouth' or 'the friend of a friend' approach was used with the understanding that people who have similar experiences tend to know or know of each other (Terre Blanche, 2006). Individuals that responded and agreed were invited to participate in semi-structured interviews. These interviews were transcribed, coded and themes were developed. The data collected was analysed using Thematic Analysis (TA) which can be used to identify patterns within and across data in relation to participants' lived experience in polygamous marriages.

The findings of this study showed that women who are in polygamous marriages have specific experiences such as feelings of being betrayal by a husband that they have invested in for such a long time, feeling subjugated by the husband, feeling abandoned by the husband who is focussing his attention on the second wife, the notion of women subjugating women and their anger and resistance at the perverted practice of polygamy. The study also showed what the unique experiences of first and second wives are in polygamous families such as the first wives' experience of feeling betrayed by their husbands when they took on second wives, the first wives' experience of being physically married but feeling emotionally separated, the second wives' negative experience of being regarded as devil's advocates in

the promotion of the practice of polygamy in Muslim marriages and the complaint of the second wives about the stigma against them from the husband's family.

5.4. Implications and Recommendations

The above findings have implications for women who choose to become second wives. It is clear from the findings of this study that the second wives were also adversely affected from a physical, emotional and psychological perspective and are faced with the stigma of being second wives. Women who fall in love with married men or marry them for financial security and other gains that go with it must be prepared to suffer the associated repercussion that this study has revealed. Therefore, there is a need for the use of an educational approach in mosques, madrassas (vernacular school), halaqa (educational circles), Islamic print media, Islamic radio stations and social media to make Muslim men and women in society aware of the core realities of living in polygamous marriages. Husbands and wives (including first and subsequent wives) from Muslim polygamous marriages should come forward and share their experiences both negative and positive. This would allow men and women to take decisions with caution if they opt to enter a polygamous marriage.

5.5. Limitations of the Study

Some of the limitations of the current study are highlighted below.

Firstly, this study is limited in its sample population and geographical coverage. It only covered Muslim women in polygamous marriages in Durban and the surrounding areas.

Secondly, due to its qualitative nature, the findings may not be generalized to the entire population of Muslim women in polygamous marriages across South Africa.

Thirdly, it was difficult to find participants that were subsequent/second wives as they had to be sought out by others who knew them and when found were reluctant to participate as they were worried that their husbands would find out about their participation and be angry at them. For example, some of them agreed to participate and then withdrew at the last minute. This study had more first wives than second wives hence this study could be biased in favour of first wives.

Lastly, the women that participated in this study were exclusively Indian Muslims who were in polygamous marriages. There are women who belong to the Black, Coloured and White race groups who are Muslim and are also in polygamous marriages.

5.6. Recommendations for Future Research

Given the above limitations, the following recommendations are made for improved future research:

Firstly, a similar study like the present one is recommended to be conducted in other South African towns and provinces in order to enhance generalizability.

Secondly, more sample participants are needed than were available in this study to gain a broader comprehensive idea of the lived experiences of women in polygamous marriages, both first and subsequent wives.

Thirdly, for improved generalizability, a future study could be designed to include women from other race groups who are Muslim and also in polygamous marriages.

Fourthly, a study exploring the lived experience of children and adolescence could be considered for future inquiry in order to determine the impact of the polygamous marriage on their development.

Lastly, a study is recommended that could explore the lived experiences of men in polygamous marriages to gain an understanding from their perspective.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Ethical Clearance Letter



09 December 2019

Mrs Zorah Bibi Ismail Sooliman (204520096)
School of Applied Human Sciences
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Mrs Ismail Sooliman,

Protocol reference number : HSS/0264/019M

Project title: Voices of Muslim women in polygamous marriages across KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa : A study of participants' lived experiences

Approval Notification – Full Committee Reviewed Protocol

Your response received on 29 August 2019 to our letter of 20 May 2019 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

This approval is valid for one year until 09 December 2020.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Urmilia Bob
University Dean of Research

/ms

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Dr Rosemary Sibanda (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4609 Email: sibanda@ukzn.ac.za / snymanm@ukzn.ac.za / mohunof@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za



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Appendix 2 – Semi structured interview Schedule:

Voices of Muslim Women in Polygamous Marriages in Durban and Surrounding Areas: A Study of Participants Lived Experience

Please note – this schedule will be used as a guide and the interviewer may not ask all the questions below. She will be guided by the responses of the participants during the interview.

These questions are prepared for both first and subsequent wives, and will be asked to the respective wives according to the relevance to their situation. Where the question applies to a specific wife it has been indicated.

Introduction:

Greeting and casual conversation to break the ice.

Ensure that the participant is clear about the voluntary consent to participate and for the recording of the interview, confidentiality, anonymity, risks, benefits and right to withdraw at any point of the study without any disadvantages and to clarify any further concerns. Sign the documents and commence with the interview!

1. Could you tell me a bit about yourself so that we can get to know each other better?
(Personal details, background, education and job/career).
2. Could you explain the circumstances (reason) that led to your marriage?
3. Was your marriage an arranged or love marriage?
4. How old were you when you got married? How old was your husband?
5. Would you say that you knew your husband well enough before you decided to get married?
6. Is this your first marriage?
7. How many children do you have? Are they all from this marriage?
8. What were the circumstances leading to your husband's subsequent marriage? (**first wife**)
9. Were you informed of his intention to marry another woman? (**first wife**)
10. When did you learn of your husband's subsequent marriage? (**first wife**)
11. Did it ever occur to you that he would take another wife? Did you have a choice? (**first wife**)
12. Did he ask your consent to marry another woman? (**first wife**)

13. What was your initial reaction? (**first wife**)
14. Were you aware that your husband is already in an existing marriage? Did he tell you?
(**subsequent wife**)
15. Did you meet his first wife before you got married? (**subsequent wife**)
16. Did you think it was important for her to know that you were planning to marry her
husband? (**subsequent wife**)
17. How long have you been in this polygamous marriage?
18. What has your overall experience been like to be in a polygamous marriage?
19. Describe your relationship with your husband in terms of:
 - 19.1. Communication between the two of you?
 - 19.2. Show of care and affection between the two of you?
 - 19.3. The intimate relationship?
 - 19.4. Other aspects?
 - 19.5. Has the above changed in any way since the subsequent marriage? (**first wife**)
20. Relationships between the families
 - 20.1. How do you relate to your husband's other wife and vice versa?
 - 20.2. How do the children relate to their father?
 - 20.3. Describe the relationship between your children and the co-wife?
 - 20.4. Describe the relationship between her children and yourself?
 - 20.5. Describe the relationship between all the children?
 - 20.6. Any observations that is out of the ordinary?
21. Financial Situation in terms of:
 - 21.1. Does your husband provide for you in terms of personal needs and expenses?
 - 21.2. Does your husband provide for your children in terms of personal and educational
needs?
 - 21.3. Do you contribute financially?
 - 21.4. Has this support changed in any way since the subsequent marriage? (**first wife**)
 - 21.5. What are the accommodation arrangements for the different families?
22. Time allocation between wives and children:
 - 22.1. Do you feel that you get enough quality time with your husband?
 - 22.2. Do you all spend enough time together as a family?
 - 22.3. Could you say it is equal on both sides? Explain.

23. Religious, Social and cultural aspects of Polygamy:

- 23.1. How did your family feel about your polygamous marriage?
- 23.2. Did you consult with any elders?
- 23.3. Was there anyone that you knew of in a polygamous marriage that could consult with?
- 23.4. Did you consult with religious scholars for either legal or spiritual guidance?
- 23.5. Do you feel that you were provided with sufficient information from an Islamic perspective in terms of your rights, being able to negotiate around polygamy and marriage contracts? In which way did this influence your decision?
- 23.6. What was your perspective on polygamy before and has this changed in any way now?
- 23.7. Would you say that religion, social and cultural aspects have a role to play in the way polygamy is practiced?

24. Self-reflection:

Would you say that your experience of being in a polygamous marriage has changed your view of yourself and life? And if so, how?

Thank you for taking the time to be part of this study. Your input is valuable and much appreciated.

Please note that you are free to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequence. Your information will not be used for the study and will be returned to you.

If you feel that you need psychological support, please utilize the services that are listed on the information sheet.

Appendix 3

Appendix 3.1 - Information about research study and invitation to participate

My name is Zohra Sooliman, I am studying for a Master's degree in Counselling Psychology at UKZN, Pietermaritzburg. A part of my studies requires me to undertake research for which I have to carry out interviews.

My study is entitled **“Voices of Muslim Women in Polygamous Marriages in Durban and Surrounding areas, South Africa: A Study of Participants' Lived Experience”**.

In order to fulfil the criteria for this study, willing participants must be or have been in a polygamous marriage. You could be a first wife or subsequent wife. Based on your personal experience of polygamy you are rendered the perfect candidate to contribute to this under researched area of study.

As a participant you will be interviewed face to face individually for an hour at a time and at a venue suitable to you. A semi structured interview guide will be used to have a conversation about the above-mentioned phenomenon under study. This will enable me to gain a deeper insight into understanding your experiences of living in a polygamous marriage.

Confidentiality:

If you are willing to participate in this study you must respond directly to me at the contact details provided below. This will ensure privacy and protect your identity. All information exchanged between the participant and researcher will be confidential.

Voluntary Consent:

Participation

Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without any negative consequences. You are free not to respond to anything that makes you uncomfortable. As a participant, your written consent would be required for participation in this study.

Audio Recording:

The interviews would be recorded to capture information accurately for purposes of transcription. The recording will be heard by the researcher and supervisor only if necessary.

Pseudonyms will be used for each participant in the transcripts thus concealing your identity. As a participant your written consent would be required for audio recording in this study.

Dissemination of information

The results of this study will be written up in the form of a report as part of the Master's degree. The report could possibly be presented at a conference, published in a journal or used for further research in the future. Any identifiable information about the participants will not be revealed in the report, transcriptions or future publications.

Storage and disposal of data

As per regulation, information has to be stored for a five-year period which will be stored safely under lock and key where only the researcher and supervisor will have access.

Thereafter notes, transcripts and consent forms will be discarded using a paper shredder and audio recordings on a CD or memory stick will be deleted or appropriately destroyed.

Benefits and Risks:

There are no direct benefits to the participant however your experience will contribute to a body of knowledge of the above-mentioned field of study. In terms of social value, the contribution of participants will allow the findings of his study to influence the way that this phenomenon is practiced. As a show of appreciation, a summarized version of the study results will be available on request.

There are some risks involved in participating, as the interview could possibly evoke strong emotions from talking about your experience. Arrangements to provide free face to face counselling has been made with the UKZN Child and Family Centre based on the Pietermaritzburg campus. Free telephone and face to face counselling could also be accessed through IMA Baytul Nur in Durban and Gift of the Givers Careline Counselling in Pietermaritzburg. Appointments for face-to-face counselling can be made by calling the respective organizations. Contact details are as follows:

Child and Family Centre (CFC) UKZN, Pietermaritzburg

Telephone – 033 2605116/5374

Address – 20 Golf Rd, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg

IMA Baytul Nur: Face to Face - Office Line: 031 209 7838

Address - 22 Browns Grove, Sherwood, Durban

Gift of the Givers Careline

Toll free: 0800 786 786

Face to face - Office line: 033 3450163

Address – 290 Prince Alfred Street, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg

For further details about the study, you can contact:

1. The researcher, Zohra Soliman, on +2783 236 4028 or e-mail sooliman.zohra@gmail.com.
2. The academic supervisor, Professor Augustine Nwoye, at 033-2605100.
3. Chair of UKZN's Human and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) Dr Rosemary Sibanda, at 033-260 3587/8350/4557 or e mail ximbap@ukzn.ac.za.

Best regards

Zohra Sooliman

Master's in Counselling Psychology student @ UKZN PMB

Cell: +2783 236 4028

E mail: sooliman.zohra@gmail.com

Appendix 3.2 - Request permission to recruit study participants for Master's research.

Zohra Ismail Sooliman

B Soc Sc Psychology Master's Student

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Pietermaritzburg

Student no: 204520096

10 June 2019

To whom it concerns

Dear Sir/Ma'am

Re: Permission to recruit participants for research study:

I am studying for my Master's degree in Psychology at UKZN and part of my degree requires me to undertake a research study which involves interviewing participants.

The title of my research is **"Voices of Muslim Women in Polygamous Marriages in Durban and surrounding: A Study of Participants' Lived Experience"**.

In order to do this, I am required to interview women who are in polygamous marriages to gain a deeper insight into their lived experiences. I am aware that your organization offers various kinds of counselling, including marital and relationship counselling. I would appreciate it if you could please put the information sheet (attached) up regarding my study in a strategic place where your clientele will be able to notice it. If someone from the clientele fits the criteria (Muslim women in polygamous marriage) or know of a friend or another person who does, they can respond directly to me at the contact details which are provided at the bottom of the information sheet, thus offering them privacy and protecting their identity and confidentiality.

Attached you will find the abovementioned information sheet about my research study and ethical concerns regarding the participants. If you have further questions regarding this study please feel free to contact me at the below mentioned details.

I anticipate a favorable response.

Best Regards

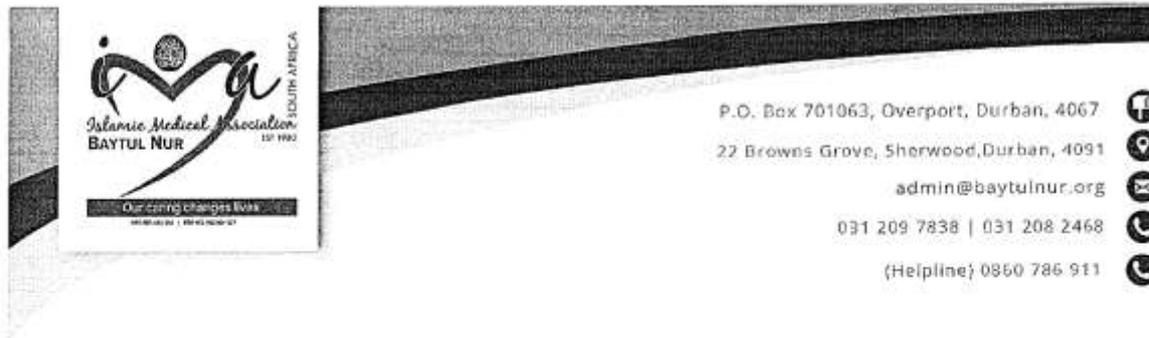
Zohra Sooliman

Master's student @ UKZN PMB

Cell: +2783 236 4028

E-mail: sooliman.zohra@gmail.com

Appendix 3.3 - IMA Baytul Nur permission to recruit study participants



14th June 2019

Zohra Ismail Sooliman
B Soc Sc Psychology Master's Student
School of Applied Human Sciences
University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg

Dear Ms Sooliman ,

RE: Permission to recruit study participants for Master's research study.

We hereby grant you permission to undertake your research study of "Voices of Muslim Women in Polygamous Marriages in Durban and surrounding, South Africa: A Study of Participants' Lived Experience" at our organisation.

Our staff have been notified about your research and the referral procedure of clients to you.

We look forward to your completed research as this will most certainly aid us in the development of our organisation, services and clients.

Yours faithfully,



Fathima Abdulla
Senior Social Worker

Appendix 3.4 - Request permission from gatekeeper to conduct research

Zohra Ismail Sooliman

Ruwaida Vadachia

B Soc Sc Psychology Masters Student

Administrator

School of Applied Human Sciences

Polygamy Social Media Forums

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Durban

Pietermaritzburg

Student no: 204520096

Ms Vadachia

Re: Request to conduct research with members of the two Polygamy Social Forum Support Groups:

I am studying for my Master's degree in Psychology at UKZN and part of my degree requires me to undertake a research study which involves interviewing participants.

The title of my research is **“Voices of Muslim Women in Polygamous Marriages in Durban and Surrounding Areas: A Study of Participants' Lived Experience”**.

In order to do this, I am required to interview women who are in polygamous marriages in order to gain a deeper insight into their lived experiences. Since you are the administrator of two social media forums that have been especially set up for support, sharing, learning and growth of this particular population group; I believe that they would be suitable candidates for my study. I wish to invite volunteers from these two forums, 1) the “GEMS” support group for first wives and 2) “1st Sisters 2nd Wives” support group for second and subsequent wives and would appreciate it if you could please post information about my research on the two abovementioned forums. Interested volunteers could respond directly to me at the contact details provided below, thus protecting their identity and confidentiality on the group.

Included you will find an information sheet about my research study and ethical concerns regarding the participants. If you have any further questions regarding this study please feel free to contact me at the below mentioned details.

I anticipate a favourable response.

Best Regards

Zohra Sooliman

Master's student @ UKZN PMB

Cell: +2783 236 4028

E-mail: sooliman.zohra@gmail.com

Appendix 3.5 - Response from gatekeeper of social forum support groups

**DR RUWAIDA
VADACHIA**

Registered Chiropractor

Pr 230111

CONTACT

PHONE:
0312025980
0828383154
509 Cheguevara Road,
Glenwood Durban 4001

EMAIL:
ruwaida@computask.co.za

Mrs Zohra Sooliman
B Soc Sc Psychology Masters Student
School of Applied Human Sciences
UKZN
Pietermaritzburg

Dear Mrs Sooliman,

Re: Research project

Thank you for your request to draw participants from our support groups for your study entitled, "Voices of Muslim Women in Polygamous marriages across the KZN province South Africa, A Study of participants' lived experiences."

As you know, two Whatsapp Groups were started to support women in the Muslim Community who are in polygamous marriages namely "GEMS" a group for 1st Wives in polygamous marriages and "1st Sisters 2nd Wives" a group for 2nd wives in polygamous marriages.

As an administrator of these groups, I am very pleased that you have looked to these pioneer groups to draw participants for a most pertinent study.

I will be most willing to assist you in placing notices inviting participants to join as well as disseminating information about your study on these groups.

I wish you all the best with your upcoming research project and dissertation.

Yours faithfully

Dr R Vadachia

Appendix 3.6 – Consent Form to Participate

1). CONSENT FORM TO PARTICIPATE

I _____, voluntarily agree to participate in the research project entitled

I understand that I am under no obligation to participate in this study; and can withdraw at any time during the study by informing the researcher without any negative consequences to me. I understand that I may require counselling and have understood the options in this regard.

I understand fully what the study entails. By signing this consent form, I agree to voluntarily participate in this study.

Signature.....

Date.....

Appendix 3.7 – Consent Form to Audio Record

2). CONSENT FORM TO AUDIO RECORD

I _____, voluntarily agree to the audio recording of the interview for the purpose of capturing information accurately in the transcription. I understand that the recording will only be heard by the researcher and her supervisor if necessary. I understand that my identity will be concealed by using a pseudonym.

Signature.....

Date.....

Appendix 4

Appendix 4.1 - Confirmation of Psychological Support (CFC, UKZN, PMB)



19 July 2019

To whom it may concern

This letter serves to provide the assurance that should any research participant in the study by Mrs Zohra Sooliman (Psychology masters student) require psychological assistance as a result of any distress arising from the research project titled: **"The Voices of Muslim Women in Polygamous Marriages in Durban and Surrounding Areas, South Africa: A study of their lived experience"**, the service will be provided by Psychology Masters students and/or Intern psychologists at the Child and Family Centre, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus.

It is acknowledged that Mrs Sooliman's project is under the supervision of Prof Augustine Nwoye.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Phindile L. Mayaba
Director: Child and Family Centre
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Pietermaritzburg Campus

CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRE

School of Applied Human Sciences

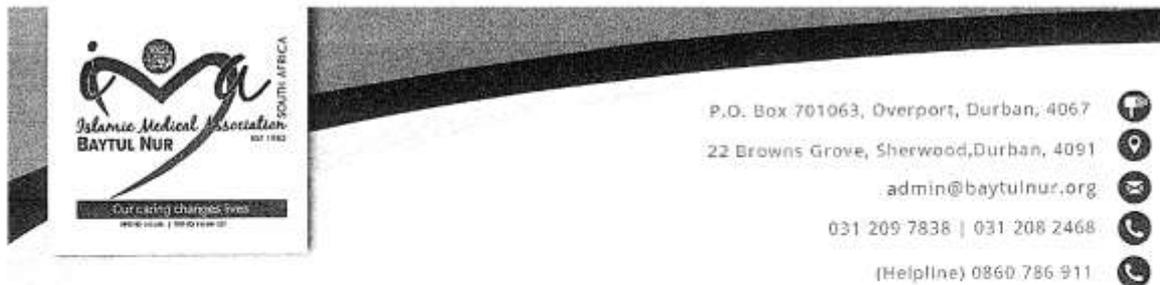
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Appendix 4.2 - Confirmation of Psychological Support (IMA Baytul Nur)



14th June 2019

To whom it may concern

Re: Confirmation of psychological Support to study participants

This letter serves to confirm that should any participant in the study by Mrs Zohra Sooliman (Psychology master's student) require psychological support as a result of any distress arising from the research project titled: ***"The Voices of Muslim Women in Polygamous Marriages in Durban and Surrounding Areas, South Africa: A study of their lived experience"***, the service will be provided by counsellors at the Islamic Medical Association Baytul Nur.

Yours faithfully



Fathima Abdulla
Senior Social Worker
Islamic Medical Association Baytul-Nur
Tel: 031 209 7838
Fax: 031 208 2468
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Address: 22 Browns Grove, Sherwood, Durban, 4091
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Appendix 4.3 - Confirmation of Psychological Support (GOTG Careline Counselling)



11th June 2019

To whom it may concern

Re: Confirmation of psychological support to study participants

This letter serves to confirm that should any participant in the study by Mrs Zohra Sooliman (Psychology master's student) require psychological support as a result of any distress arising from the research project titled: **"The Voices of Muslim Women in Polygamous Marriages in Durban and Surrounding Areas, South Africa: A study of their lived experience"**, the service will be provided by counsellors at Gift of the Givers Careline.

Yours faithfully



Aqirah Rawat

PROJECT MANAGER & COUNSELLING SUPERVISOR

"Best Among People are those who Benefit Mankind"

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