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## The biblical blueprint for marriage and the predicament of polygamy: A narrative review

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### Abstract

Polygamy is widespread in Africa, being highest in Burkina Faso (36%), Mali (34%), Gambia (30%), Niger (29%), and Nigeria (28%). 83.39% of traditional societies in the world practice polygyny, while 16.14% practice monogamy. Significant evidence that the Bible presents monogamy as God's blueprint or original plan for marriage exists. Despite this evidence, numerous investigations revealed that the percentage of young people who find polygamy morally acceptable has risen from 9% to 34%, with about 8% of Christians in Nigeria living in polygamous households. This study calls for narrative review, analysis, and synthesis of vast works of literature to delineate important information, insights, symbolism, purpose, and characteristics of God's plan for marriage, in line with *The King James Version Bible* (2022) adopted as the conceptual framework for this study. The purpose of this study is to present marital monogamy, marriages involving only two people, male and female, as the biblical blueprint for marriage, and to provide a biblical platform for godly inspiration and instruction in righteousness towards adopting godly monogamous marriage as against the numerous ungodly marriages. This study delineated how the Bible can significantly and positively influence choice toward monogamous marriage while x-raying the dilemma of polygamy. The researcher extracted some documentaries from *The King James Version Bible* and peer-reviewed articles within the last five years from electronic databases, engaging some keywords such as "God's blueprint for marriage", "Polygamous marriages", and "Bible accounts of Polygamy Vs. Monogamy", "Choosing between Polygamy and Monogamy", etc. Results show that God's original intention or blueprint for marriage, according to the Bible was monogamy which encompasses marital monogamy, social monogamy, sexual monogamy, and genetic monogamy, all overlapping. Results also show that God allowed divorce and polygamy because of the hardness of men's hearts, although neither was part of His original plan for marriage. Results and insights from this study may have a positive social impact on marriage, research and innovations, and on the significance, symbolism, purpose, and benefits of monogamous marriage in preference to polygamy.

**Keywords:** Bible; God's blueprint for marriage; Polygamy. Monogamy; Symbolism of marriage

### 1. Introduction

The biblical blueprint for marriage is monogamy. All Bible references are from [28]. God is the originator of marriage, and His original intention for marriage was for one man to be married to only one woman (Deuteronomy 17:17), (Ephesians 5:23), (Genesis 2:18), (Genesis 23-24), [22], [30], (Mathew 19:4-6), and (Titus 1:5-7). The term "monogamy" refers to one of the various relational types, depending upon the context, which generally incorporates four overlapping definitions: (i) marital monogamy which refers to marriages of only two people, male and female [22]. The emphasis here is the relationship of only two people, male and female, contrary to Gay Men's Monogamous Marriages [17], (Mark 10:6), (Mathew 19:4), and [52]. (ii) social monogamy which refers to two partners, a husband, and a wife, living together, having sex with each other, and cooperating in acquiring essential resources such as shelter, food, and money [47], (iii)

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sexual monogamy meaning two partners, a husband, and a wife, remaining sexually exclusive with each other and having no outside sex partners [48], and (iv) genetic monogamy which refers to sexually monogamous relationships between a husband and a wife with genetic evidence of paternity [30]. Marital monogamy may also be further distinguished between classical monogamy, a single relationship between people who marry as virgins, remain sexually exclusive throughout their entire lives and become celibate upon the death of the partner, and serial monogamy, which refers to marriage with only one other person at a time, in contrast to bigamy or polygamy [16]. Monogamy can also be long-term (strict) or serial (death and remarry) [16] and [44].

Polygamy or polygamous marriage refers to a marriage where a spouse has more than one wife, otherwise referred to as polygyny or a spouse having more than one husband, otherwise called polyandry [31]. Polygamy can be defined as a marital relationship involving multiple spouses [2] and [8], comprised of three forms: polygyny referring to one situation where one "husband" is married to two or more wives, while polyandry refers to one wife married to two or more husbands, while polygynandry refers to a scenario where two or more wives are simultaneously married to two or more husbands [9], [12], [29], and [43]. For the interest of simplicity and the purpose of this study which is to emphasize the biblical blueprint for marriage, preferring monogamy as against polygamy, the author shall refer to the three types of polygamy identified above: polygyny, polyandry, polygynandry simply as polygamy.

A blueprint is a plan of action, a foundation, or something that is already done that can be used as a guide to doing something in the future. One cannot impose another set of laws on a game that already has its laws. For instance, anyone who wants to play the game of football with his hands must first rewrite the laws of the game. The same applies to the laws of marriage. Individuals must dwell more on the laws and principles of marriage than on the laws of love because there are more laws in the laws of marriage than there are in the laws of love. The relationship between Jesus and the Church which is the mirror or example to be followed in any Christian marriage has existed even before the foundation of the earth (Ephesians 1:4). It is required for Christian marriage to be practically patterned after this blueprint relationship between Christ and the Church, as there is no other blueprint or foundation except the one that is laid already. Christians are required to build according to the foundation already laid by the Master Builder (Jesus). For other foundation can any man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 3: 10-11).

The objective of this study is to present marital monogamy, a marriage of only two people, male and female, as the biblical blueprint for marriage, and to provide a biblical platform for godly inspiration that is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and for instruction in righteousness towards adopting a godly monogamous marriage even amid numerous ungodly marriages.

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## 2. Conceptual Framework

The King James Version Bible was adopted as the conceptual framework for this study which serves as the Biblical Blueprint for Marriage (BBM). BBM is a divine model or framework that is founded on the following five principles among others: (a) God is the foundation and founder of marriage. God saw that it was not good for the man he created to be alone, so He made for him a helper suitable for him (Genesis 2:18). (b) God's original intention was for one man to be married to only one woman. God brought only one woman to Adam. Adam described her as the bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh. According to Adam, she shall be called Woman because she was taken out of man. (Genesis 2:23-24). The first marriage revealed in the book of Genesis 2:24 emphasized the singular to describe how many people are involved in a marriage. According to Genesis 2:24, a (singular) man during marriage leaves his father and his mother, cleaves to his wife (one wife) and they become one flesh. According to 1 Corinthians 11:3, the head of the (*singular*) woman is the (*singular*) man. Jesus further confirms that God's original intent for marriage was monogamy when He reminded the people that God created them male and female (Mathew 19:4). This was consistent with Genesis 2:24, concluding with the injunction: what God has joined together let no man put asunder (Mathew 19:6).

(c) Marriage is designed to be a divine covenant that is never broken. God hates divorce. He hates sending away which He referred to as a treacherous act or one covering his garment with violence (Malachi 2:16). (d) God designed marriage to provide a mirror or image of our relationship with Him. Marriage is an earthly scenario of the spiritual relationship that exists between Christ (the bridegroom), and the church (His bride). Monogamous marriage is a great mystery in line with the mystery of the Church being the bride of Jesus (Ephesians 5:31-32). If polygamy were allowable, this great mystery exemplified in Christ's relationship with His body (the church) and the husband-wife relationship would have been contradictory, nonsensical, and of no effect. Christ-Church relationship is likened to a husband-wife relationship. Hence the Scriptures made us understand that the husband [singular] is the head and savior of his wife [singular], even as Christ [singular] is the head and savior of His church [singular] (Ephesians 5:23). (e) Multiple wives are not for kings and priests. By redemption, we have become kings and priests unto God (Revelation 1:6). Kings and priests are not permitted to take multiple wives so that their heart turns not away from God. (Deuteronomy 17:17). Every good steward

of God is expected to be a husband of one wife (Titus 1:5-7). Here Apostle Paul gave the qualifications of a bishop, which include monogamy. While this cannot be interpreted as a command that the kings must be monogamous, it can be understood as declaring that having multiple wives may cause problems [46]. These principles are consistent with claims by [40] that the Greek and Roman men were not allowed to be married to more than one wife at a time, or cohabit with concubines during the marriage. The rulers and kings were included in these norms.

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### 3. Literature Review

Marital Monogamy which involves one man married to only one woman was regarded as Ideal by the biblical blueprint for marriage. Despite these laudable benefits of monogamous marriage, a comprehensive survey of traditional societies in the world shows that 83.39% practice polygyny while only 16.14% practice monogamy [32]. Polygamy is predominantly practiced in Africa, with Burkina Faso having the highest (36%) spread among people who practice folk religions (45%), Muslims (40%), and Christians (24%) [29]. This is followed by Mali (34 %) and Gambia (30%), Niger (29%), and Nigeria (28%) depending on religious affiliation [29]. In Nigeria, 8% of Christians live in polygamous households compared with 40% of Muslims. Only 17 percent of human cultures are strictly monogamous, while only 2% of the global population practices polygamy [55]. The percentage of young people who find polygamy morally acceptable has risen from 9% to 34% from year two thousand and three to two thousand and six, and year two thousand and eighteen to two thousand and twenty, significantly more than the increase among older Americans.

#### 3.1. A Brief History of Monogamy

Trying to understand the origin of monogamous marriage some scholars have propounded some theories such as the Female Choice Theory of Marriage Practices, which assumes that women determine the marriage form by their choice of polygamy or monogamy based on greater resource inequality among men or lesser inequality among men respectively. Some other scholars argue that the female choice theory of marriage practices is problematic majorly because it ignores male choice, and propounded the Male Choice Theory of Marriage Practices. The Male Choice Theory of Marriage Practices argues that males' desire for sexual variety, a desire that has evolved to promote male reproductive success results in either monogamy or polygamy. Another theory, Nation-States Impose Monogamy, imposed monogamy on their male citizens to equalize their reproductive opportunities [39]. This is suggested as the best theory currently available, with empirical data support [39]. But these theories fail to give an account for the origin of monogamy.

Various viewpoints on the history of monogamy exist. [33] cited the claim by New York Times, that early humans began shifting towards monogamy about 3.5 million years ago, though the species never evolved to be 100% monogamous. According to [33], humans through unquantifiable emotional reasons have come to favor monogamy over the centuries. The views of [33] suggest that a marriage system different from monogamy has existed, contrary to the biblical truth that God made the first woman (later named Eve by Adam) and brought her to the first man (Adam) (Genesis 2: 23-24). The answer is simple. The counsel of God from the beginning for marriages was monogamy. The ways of God are fast finding, and irrespective of the plans in the heart of a man, the counsel of God stands forever (Proverbs 19:21), not by emotional reasons. Another view described monogamy as socially imposed, being first established in ancient Greece and Rome, claiming that only 43 (of 238 societies across the world) are monogamous [20]. The views of [20] were contrary to God's blueprint for marriage as recorded in Genesis 2:22-23. Marriage is a mystery (Ephesians 5: 31-32), and one does not use the majority to measure its goodness. Rather every invention or creation of God passed the test by the creator Himself. God described His creation, especially man as very good (Genesis 1:13).

The first marriage ever was monogamous (Genesis 2:22-23). However, humans might operate such inventions wrongly. Polygamy, I will say, is monogamy wrongly operated. Yet another study claimed that monogamy evolved in humans when low-ranking males changed tack from competing with higher-ranked rivals to revealing their more caring side to potential suitors [24]. Claims made by [24] are not consistent with the conceptual framework for this study. It was a man that named the low-ranking animals (Genesis 2:19), including his wife Eve (Genesis 3:20). This suggests that man was a higher and more intelligent being, and will not likely go to learn from low-ranking animals This claim by [24] is not consistent with biblical truth. Before God took the first woman (Eve) to Adam, God first created every beast of the field and every fowl of the air; and Adam named all of them (Genesis 2:19). It was when Adam did not find his match from all the animals that God decided to create a woman for Adam (Genesis 2:20). Other studies offer two perspectives on when monogamy evolved in the human species. One perspective claimed that monogamy may have evolved very early in human history. The other suggests that monogamy existed less than 10,000 to 20000 years ago. These perspectives are not consistent with the conceptual framework for this study which claims that the first marriage ever was monogamous (Genesis 2:22-23).

### 3.2. Contrasting Researchers of Biblical Blueprint for Marriage

Not all researchers agreed with the Biblical Blueprint for Marriage (BBM) that established God's original intention for marriage as one man married to only one woman. There are contrasting or opposing views on BBM that question the validity of monogamy, claiming that monogamous partnership was outdated, overly restrictive, or even unnatural. They rejected monogamy because it might be a way out of high divorce rates, reports of infidelity, and sexual boredom. People who hold these views generally cite polygamy as a healthy alternative because there were more females than males, coupled with the fact that females died in childbirth, the desire to increase the wealth of the household, and a large number of children was needed to work the fields or with the herds. Other reasons included greater companionship, higher income, and ongoing sexual variety which were cited as advantages of polygamous relationships [48]. On the other hand, some researchers claimed that monogamy tends to enhance bonding, emotional intimacy, honor, respect, fidelity, loyalty, and trust, and decreased worries of STDs [48]. However, the values above may still be observed within polygamous relationships.

Some researchers have the view that the Scripture supports polygamy on the basis that the Bible did not outrightly condemn polygamy [46]. The first reference to polygamy was found in the lineage of Cain, of Lamech, a descendant of Cain (Genesis 4:19–25), which brought a clear distortion of God's original intentions for marriage. These researchers claimed that there are many mentions of polygamous relationships in the Bible, practiced among the patriarchs of Israel: Abraham, Jacob, David, and Solomon who had multiple wives. It is interesting to note that polygamous relationships are never mentioned in a positive light; rather the problems of such relationships were presented. In contrast to some researchers' views that the Scriptures support polygamy, numerous researchers on the other hand refuted the notion that Scripture condones polygamy [9], [10], [19], and [35]. Also, empirical studies comparing monogamy and polygamy confirmed that the psychological impact of polygamous marriage on women and children was relatively higher than monogamous marriage. In conclusion, polygamy was recognized as a risk factor for developing social problems in children [8] and [36]. Also, a large literature has claimed that significant correlations exist between polygamy, poor child health, and increased child mortality in several African contexts [7] and [49]. Similarly, researchers have claimed that no significant difference exists in fertility rates and mental health between women in polygamous unions and those in monogamous households in almost all countries [9], [34], and [42].

Women in polygamous unions have no advantage over women in monogamous unions in terms of fertility rates [48]. However, women in polygamous unions desire more children and are less likely to use family planning than women in monogamous unions [34]. Polygamy is likely to create a complex family system that impacts negatively on the way the husband may relate to his wives and children [43], thereby creating distinct household problems, usually stemming from jealousy between co-wives over the husband's affections and resources [2]. In addition to studies documenting polygamy's detrimental effects on wives' health, researchers have identified polygamy as a risk factor for adverse child health outcomes [14] and [48]. The first ever marriage ceremony conducted by God Himself was between one man (Adam) and one woman (Eve) (Genesis 2:18–25). This is the biblical blueprint for marriage. The contrasting views of these researchers notwithstanding, the Bible (the Word of God), remains our conceptual framework because the Bible is both theoretically and spiritually justified as true from the beginning (Psalm 119:160), consistent and founded forever (Psalm 119:152), valid, and reliable (1Peter 1:25), eternal (Mathew 5:18), forever settled in Heaven (Psalm 119:89), upholds all things (Hebrews 1:3) including marriages. This property of BBM makes BBM the preferred blueprint for marriage or model for this study which focuses on a biblical blueprint for marriage, especially among Christians. This study cannot exhaustively cover all of the issues related to polygamy, but we can look to the BBM as the standard for understanding the world we live in regarding plural marriage, prayerfully considering what God has revealed, and applying the principles He has given us in Scripture.

### 3.3. The Predicaments of Polygamy

About 55% of polygamous marriage exists in Cameroon and 40% in Senegal and Burkina Faso [25]. While polygamous marriages are almost non-existent in developed countries [25], approximately 85 percent of human societies have permitted men to have more than one wife (polygynous marriage) [27]. Evidence from research works has claimed that wives in polygamous marriages suffered from more psychological difficulties: lower self-esteem, less marital satisfaction, and more problematic family functioning than wives in monogamous marriages [4], with significant symptoms of higher levels of somatization, depression, anxiety, hostility [4], paranoid ideation, and interrelated difficulties, manifesting as psychological distress, marital dissatisfaction, economic hardship, poorer family functioning and economic status [18], (1 Kings 11:1–8), and [54]. This is consistent with previous claims by [2] stating that polygamy creates distinct household problems, usually stemming from jealousy between co-wives over the husband's affections and resources. This is probably because, in a polygamous marriage, a woman's utility decreases as more wives come into marriage. Also, recent claims by [43], and [48] testify to the fact that polygamous marriages breed a complex family system that impacts negatively on the way the husband may relate to his wives and children, resulting in

controversial household problems, usually stemming from jealousy between co-wives over the husband's affections and resources. Evidence from studies has claimed that significant higher fertility differentials exist between women in monogamous marriages than between the women in polygynous unions [41], a possibility that makes women in polygamous unions craving for more children, and less likely to use family planning [34]. This situation poses detrimental effects on wives' health, which identified polygamy as a risk factor for adverse child health outcomes [48].

These negative effects are consistent with this study's conceptual framework. In Genesis 21:9-14, polygamy brought bitterness between Abraham's wives, Sarah and her maid, Hagar, and the eventual dismissal of Hagar and Ishmael. It led Jacob's polygamous family into envy, strife, contention, manifestations of psychological distress, marital dissatisfaction, economic hardship, and all manner of family quarrels, (Genesis 29 and 30). This also led to Joseph, one of the sons of Jacob's polygamous family, being betrayed and sold by his half-brothers (Genesis 39:1). David's polygamous family witnessed a rape scenario of one of his daughters (Tamar) by one of his sons (Tamar's half-brother Amnon) and Amnon's subsequent murder by Tamar's brother Absalom (2 Samuel 13). Also, polygamy turned away Solomon's heart from the Lord to the worship of false gods (1 Kings 11:1–8). The fact that polygamous marriages were recorded in the Bible, allowed by God, does not imply approval of the same by God. God's original blueprint for marriage, as witnessed in the first marriage, was for one man to be married to only one woman. Researchers have claimed that a polygamous family is less likely to function well, both by its structure and because of the economic hardships that usually accompany it, than a monogamous family [1], [4], [8], [18], and [50]. In contrast, monogamous marriage provides a framework for organizing good intimacy relationships that is highly related to other strong societal institutions that portray monogamous marriage as a godly family institutional identity (Deuteronomy 17:17), (Titus 1:5-7), [51], as well as an instrument for increasing national fertility [6].

Wives in polygamous marriages are likely to report poor relationships with their husbands. At the entrance of another wife, previous wife or wives considered themselves as divorced or widowed, while others considered their husbands dead [2] and [5]. This feeling may suggest, culturally, a lack of sexual relationships with their husbands as their spousal relationships worsened after the husband's remarriage to a second wife. According to [1], unmarried female children from polygamous marriages are emotionally abused by what they witnessed in their mothers' experiences with second marriage [38] and [53]. Polygamy should be discouraged through biblical faith that comes through biblical education and the word of his grace, which can build a people up, and give them inheritance among all them which are sanctified (Acts 20:43; Romans 10:17). A considerable body of research concludes that education is a critical factor that impacts how the community responds to polygamy ideology [3].

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#### 4. Methodology and Data Collection

The data collection processes for this study comprised the data instruments that were used, the techniques adopted during data collection, and the techniques used to name and organize the data files to facilitate their quick and safe access. Researchers are considered the first data collection instrument in a qualitative or narrative study [21] and [45], because the information is mediated through the human instrument (researcher), instead of through questionnaires, machines, or inventories [37] and [45]. Data collection methods involved extensive collection of knowledge and review of the same that are relevant and related to the study. The researcher collected data from peer-reviewed journals, King James Version Bible, and other sources. Narrative research design engages storytelling as a way of inquiry [26], with a study approach that is best fitted for descriptive or explanatory, synthesis, and analysis of related research findings required to draw holistic interpretations or conclusions based on the reviewers' own experience, and existing theories [11]. The choice of narrative research design was most appropriate where findings resulting from holistic interpretations or conclusions based on the reviewers' own experience, analysis, and synthesis of various and related research data are required [15] and [23].

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#### 5. Discussion and Findings

Several Old Testament passages appear to approve or condone polygamy, encouraging some, even among Christians to tolerate its practices. The Old Testament recorded a couple of polygamous marriages by godly men, greatly blessed by God, such as Abraham (Genesis 16-22), Jacob (Genesis 29-34), David, and Kings Solomon and Joash (1 Kings 11 & 2 Chronicles 24), and others Lamech (Genesis 4:19-24), and Esau (Genesis 26-28). Many Modern skeptics, sometimes point to these examples as instances of the Bible endorsing polygamy since it was practiced by godly men, greatly blessed of God, who had multiple wives. The gift and calling of God are with a full warranty, without repentance, and irrevocable (Romans 11:29). God is therefore in the business of restoring marriages to His original plan according to Genesis 2:18-24. Polygamy was not God's original intent. God seems to have allowed polygamy in the Old Testament to

solve a problem, but it is not ideal. Whosoever is not with God is with satan. There is no middle class or standing on the fence.

However, it should be noted that the old Testament also witnessed the first monogamous marriage conducted by God Himself (Genesis 2:18-24), a clear indication of God's original blueprint for marriages, and a clear warning by God that kings and good Christian stewards were not to have multiple wives (Deuteronomy 17:17; Titus 1:5-7). Therefore, Scripture never condones or legislates polygamy. In today's new dispensation, the New Testament (NT) must be interpreted in light of its fulfillment in Christ, bringing the fulfillment or completion of the Mosaic sacrificial system and Law (Matthew. 5:17-18). The NT Christians no longer live by the ceremonial law (i.e. the Mosaic sacrificial system) that has become the "old covenant" in contrast to the "new covenant" (2 Corinthians 3:6; 3:14). The NT Christians no longer live by the "old covenant", regarded as the ministration of the dead, written and engraved on stones (2 Corinthians 3:7), nor by the works of the law, but by faith (Romans. 4:9-12; 1 Corinthians. 7:19; Galatians. 6:15). The "old covenant" has been rendered old and obsolete (Hebrews 8:13), invalid and no longer in force (Romans 13:1; 1 Peter 2:13-15), no longer normative (Romans 7:4-7), because of Christ's work on the cross which is a fulfillment of the Law (Matthew 5:17-18). Therefore, Christians have "died" to the law through Christ Jesus. Today's Christians are justified by faith (Romans 3:28; 5:1; Galatians 3:11; 3:24), live by faith, (Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38), walk by faith (2 Corinthians 5:7), purified by faith (Acts 15:9), sanctified by faith (Acts 26:18), made righteous by faith (Romans 3:22; Philippians 3:9), access to Grace by faith (Romans 5:2; 9:32), stand by faith (Romans 11:20; 2 Corinthians 1:24), and become children of God by faith (Galatians 3:26; Ephesians 3:17).

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## 6. Conclusion

In the Old Testament, God promised to make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah (Jeremiah 31:31), which He emphasized in the New Testament (Hebrews 8:8), that rendered the ceremonial law (i.e. the Mosaic sacrificial system) as an "old covenant" in contrast to the "new covenant" (2 Corinthians 3:6; 3:14; Hebrews 8:13; 12:24). This New Covenant is clearly distinguished from the Mosaic Covenant, and now governs the Church above any community positions or Mosaic Law. Jesus Christ is the fulfillment and the end or completeness of the Mosaic Law for righteousness, for anyone that believes (Romans 10:4; 13:10). By the new covenant, Jesus, mediator of the new covenant, and the personality in the blood of sprinkling, that speaks better things than that of Abel (Hebrews 12:24), has made the first old, decayed and ready to vanish away (Hebrews 8:13). Hence no man (no flesh) is justified by the works of the Law (Mosaic Covenant), but by the faith in Jesus Christ (Galatians 2:16).

There lies the dilemma for polygamous continuity positions. A discontinuity position surely will void this problem as the Church is governed by the New Covenant in Christ Jesus. Records have it that only 17% of human cultures are strictly monogamous, while only 2% of the global population practices polygamy, while the percentage of young people who find polygamy morally acceptable has risen from 9% to 34% in recent times, a situation that appears critical and may confront families with a serious dilemma if not put in check. Polygamous communities suffer from increased abuse against women, early marriages, and sex exploits in the sense of procreation. This may lead to equipping the family, especially children, with dwindling resources after their husbands take additional wives. Children are the worse hit who suffer as a result of perennial rivalry with other children and mothers for attention and material support. This is significantly evident enough cases to make the practice of polygamy too risky to condone.

Findings from this study based on the analysis, synthesis, and reflections therein, established that Christ has only one bride (the Church), and all Christian marriages should testify to that truth. Polygamy is contrary to God's original blueprint for marriage (Genesis 2:18-24; Deuteronomy 17:17; Titus 1:5-7), [36], and [51]. The sins of polygamy as witnessed in David's family, for example, included among others, conflict and violence characterize by rape, murder, etc. (2 Samuel 12). Both the Old and New Testaments rigidly uphold monogamy as normative. In conclusion, God's blueprint for marriage is that marriage between a man and a woman is described as monogamous [22], and generally overlaps into marital monogamy, social monogamy [47], sexual monogamy [48], and genetic monogamy [30]. This study is not judgmental but designed to present marital monogamy, the marriage between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:18–25) as the biblical blueprint (God's original plan) for marriage. Despite the claim that sexual exclusivity is unlikely with the statistical evidence that shows that one in every eight married women and nearly one in every four married men are "unfaithful", with marital infidelity as close as 60% [13], does not remove the truth that monogamy is God's blueprint for marriage. Though the vow of "I do" at a wedding ceremony may not blossom, like the fig tree (Habakkuk 3:17-18), yet one must rejoice in absolute God's original intent for marriage which is monogamy.

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## Compliance with ethical standards

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