Mononormativity Sentiment Towards Polygamous Ustadz on Social Media

Muhammad Noval Abdul Rozak
Universitas Sebelas Maret
e-mail: mnovalabdulr@student.uns.ac.id

Sri Kusumo Habsari
Universitas Sebelas Maret
e-mai: skhabsari@uns.ac.id

Eva Farhah
Universitas Sebelas Maret
e-mail: evafarhah@staff.uns.ac.id

Abstract

Mononormativity widely embraced by societies, often leads to negative sentiment toward non-monogamous relationships. Polygamy, as a form of non-monogamy, challenges this norm, particularly when practiced consensually, revealing a divergence from assumptions that label such relationships as destructive. In Indonesia, where Islam predominates, polygamy is conditionally legitimate under religious law and mutual agreement. However, it frequently faces public criticism and rejection, especially on social media. Religious figures like Ustadz Hanan Attaki, who practice polygamy, often become targets of this negative sentiment, revealing the tension between cultural norms, religious legitimacy, and societal perceptions. This study aims to analyze how mononormativity functions as a form of knowledge-power in constructing negative sentiments towards polygamists, especially ustadz, on social media. Utilizing primary data from social media comments and secondary data from online media and supporting articles, the research employs an explanatory sequential mixed method, where quantitative data supports qualitative insights. Combining sentiment analysis using NVivo and Foucaldian discourse analysis, the paper uncovers how societal norms and power structures shape and reinforce negative sentiments towards polygamists. The quantitative data provides a broad understanding of public opinion, while the qualitative analysis delves deeper into the discourses that perpetuate mononormativity. Through this integration, the study highlights the significant influence of mononormative discourse in shaping societal attitudes and maintaining power dynamics that marginalize non-monogamous relationships.

*Keywords: **Mononormativity, Polygamy, Social Media, Netizen, Ustadz***

Abstrak

Mononormativitas yang banyak dianut oleh masyarakat sering kali menimbulkan sentimen negatif terhadap hubungan non-monogami. Poligami, sebagai bentuk non-monogami, menantang norma ini,

terutama ketika dilakukan secara konsensual, yang menunjukkan perbedaan dari asumsi yang melabeli hubungan semacam itu sebagai destruktif. Di Indonesia, di mana Islam mendominasi, poligami secara syar'i sah berdasarkan hukum agama dan kesepakatan bersama. Namun, poligami sering kali menghadapi kritik dan penolakan publik, terutama di media sosial. Tokoh agama seperti Ustadz Hanan Attaki, yang menjalankan poligami, sering menjadi sasaran sentimen negatif ini, yang mengungkapkan ketegangan antara norma budaya, legitimasi agama, dan persepsi masyarakat. Studi ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bagaimana mononormativitas berfungsi sebagai bentuk pengetahuan-kekuasaan dalam membangun sentimen negatif terhadap poligami, terutama pada ustadz, di media sosial. Menggunakan data primer dari komentar media sosial dan data sekunder dari media daring serta artikel pendukung, penelitian ini menggunakan metode explanatory sequential mixed method, *di mana data kuantitatif mendukung data kualitatif. Dengan mengombinasikan analisis sentimen menggunakan NVivo dan analisis wacana Foucauldian, ditemukan bagaimana norma masyarakat dan struktur kekuasaan membentuk dan memperkuat sentimen negatif terhadap poligami. Data kuantitatif memberikan pemahaman luas tentang opini publik, sementara analisis kualitatif mendalami wacana yang melanggengkan mononormativitas. Melalui integrasi ini, penelitian menyoroti pengaruh signifikan dari wacana mononormatif dalam membentuk sikap masyarakat dan mempertahankan dinamika kekuasaan yang meminggirkan hubungan non-monogami.*

Kata Kunci: Mononormativitas, Poligami, Media Sosial, Netizen, Ustadz

Introduction

The concept of relationships prevalent in society is known to be of two types: monogamous and non-monogamous. Today, society is dominated by the knowledge that the ideal relationship is one with one man and one woman. This relationship is known as monogamy. Michaels and Johnson explain the scientific meaning of monogamy as the formation of a sexually exclusive lifelong pair bond. People who have a monogamous relationship mean that they commit not to have sexual relations with others, only with their partner. The concept of monogamy is the only accepted model of the social conservative support with the slogan *"one man, one woman, until death do us part"* (Michaels and Patricia 2015). Narratives on monogamy are supported by various factors, for example, literary works, films, music that romanticize monogamous relationships and sexual health narratives that recommend not changing partners. In the end, people agree that the concept of monogamy is the only right and unquestionable choice. Conversely, the concept of non-monogamous relationships tend to get opposed by society. People who believe in monogamy as an absolute truth consider any form of non-monogamy as a betrayal.

Mononormativity upholds exclusivity as a lifelong ideal. That a person should be 'exclusively' owned and loved by only one person, and vice versa. Such exclusivity is prioritized in terms of emotional and sexual commitment to one individual. It is considered a norm for someone if they want to be involved in a romantic relationship (Cassidy and

Wong 2018). In addition, there is an opinion that monogamous relationships are considered superior and more natural, while other relationships are considered inferior, immature, unstable, uncommitted, and unnatural (Ansara 2023).

The practice of monogamy can be categorized into four: sexual, emotional, practical, and social monogamy. Because it is the opposite of monogamy, there is also a division in non-monogamy. Sexual monogamy means having only one sexually exclusive partner, although the meaning of exclusive is different for each person. Emotional monogamy, on the other hand, is when a person is attached with deep feelings to only one person. Emotional monogamy usually occurs in conventional relationship concepts. In addition to the two types of monogamy above, there is also practical monogamy. Practical monogamy refers to a living arrangement that involves both formal and non-formal rules regulated by the state and norms. Practical monogamy is closer to marriage. Then the last monogamy is social monogamy. This type of monogamy is limiting relationships related to social life such as hobbies, work, travel, friendship and so on. When two people in a couple establish a committed monogamous relationship, then the two people only do social activities when together. If it has to be outside of their relationship, it will be limited (Michaels and Patricia 2015).

Today, society is trying to adopt all four types of monogamy in its couple life. The contemporary model of monogamy requires each partner to fulfill all needs by getting married and to have an independent universe. The privilege given to monogamists is referred to as monocentrism or mononormativity. When monogamous relationships are upheld, non-monogamous forms of relationships are resented. The sentiment towards non-monogamous perpetrators is mainly for those who violate monogamous relationships sexually, emotionally, and practically. One of these relationships is polygamy, which is legal in the world of marriage. Those who practice polygamy have the potential to receive hateful sentiments by society, especially those who adhere to mononormativity. Non-monogamous relationships are universally assumed to be problematic (Michaels and Patricia 2015). Among the discriminated groups are those who practice consensual non-monogamous relationships. The identities and ways of life of people in consensual non-monogamous relationships are poorly understood and approached with judgmental attitudes. In many social contexts, the experience of personal and legal discrimination demanded of people who practice consensual

non-monogamous relationships leads to marginalization and hostility, which in turn, creates various social problems in their daily lives (Cardoso and Klesse 2010).

Society's assessment of relationships is a mononormative bias that frames a relationship in a binary framework of monogamy and betrayal (Ansara 2023). Monogamous relationships are one of the central values in many interpretations of culture, religion, ethics, morality, annulment practices, judgment, surveillance, governance, and policy. From the point of view of mononormativity, relationships that deviate from the monogamous pattern are regarded as deviant, in need of explanation, ignored, and marginalized (Cardoso and Klesse 2010).

Humans make themselves the subject of moral codes (Arribas-ayllon and Walkerdine 2017). In the context of mononormativism, the societal norm that privileges monogamous relationships, is deeply embedded in power structures and cultural norms that validate and enforce these relationships, positioning those who adhere to these norms as subjects within a dominant moral framework. In this case, power operates though the creation and control of knowledge, norms, and discourses. Discourses shape and are shaped by power relations and societal structures. Foucauldian Discourse Analysis explores how discourses produce subjects and maintain power relations within society. Applying Foucauldian discourse analysis could uncover how this power operates not just from the top down but also through everyday interactions, shaping identities and moral codes by creating self-regulating individuals who internalize monogamous ideals, thereby perpetuating the discourse, while also allowing for resistance and the emergence of alternative discourses such as polyamory, which challenge the dominant norms and offer new ways of understanding relationships beyond monogamous constraints.

Mononormativity becomes 'ethics' in the self-determination of its adherents as subjects. As explained by Michel Foucault about power that the ruling party must be recognized thoroughly and maintained until the end. Even in the application of power does not exclude the use of violence (Foucault 1982). Subject formation means the investment of the body with habitual patterns that define subjectivity. The body is then given certain attributes and a certain status. What it means to be a subject is the habits instilled in the body to adopt certain perspectives on itself and its environment, the result of certain behaviors, categorized in certain ways, and dealt with in certain ways (C.G. 2018). The subject exists to hold 'truths' about things, say certain things, and act in certain ways. Subjects internalize the

truths produced by power and act 'as they should'. Subjectivity does not come into being suddenly, but as a result of cognition or thought (C.G. 2018).

In the context of mononormativity, Indonesia is one of the societies that apply this notion. Most Indonesians only agree to monogamous relationships. Even so, Indonesian society is a country with a majority of Muslims and one of its teachings is to regulate polygamous marriage relationships. In Islam, polygamy in a legal marriage relationship is allowed. According to Minhaji (2019) Polygamy in Islam is allowed as evidenced by the verses and hadiths that explain that both monogamy and polygamy are religiously valid institutions.

The understanding of polygamy as a relationship that deviates from monogamy is deeply ingrained in Indonesian tradition, reflecting complex power relations and knowledge systems that shape public perspectives. In some parts of Indonesia, cultural practices actively punish polygamists, reinforcing monogamous norms through social and legal mechanisms. For instance, in Balinese tradition, a husband with a second wife without the first wife's permission faces fines and loss of customary recognition. Similarly, the Chinese community in West Kalimantan adheres strictly to monogamy, denying recognition to a polygamous man's second wife. The Muslim community of the Toro tribe in Southeast Sulawesi only permits monogamy, legalizing it through both customary and religious institutions. In cases of infidelity, women must divorce their husbands and marry the man they had an affair with, while men are allowed polygamy only with the first wife's consent, but must ensure the second wife lives in a different village. The Taa tribe of Southeast Sulawesi enforces expulsion for those practicing polygamy. These practices illustrate how power relations and established knowledge systems uphold monogamous norms and stigmatize polygamy, reflecting a complex interplay between tradition, religion, and societal values (Justina and Khadijah 2013).

With the necessary conditions such as fairness in serving wives, maintenance, housing, clothing, turnover, and all external matters, polygamy is permitted in Islam. This refers to the words of Allah SWT. QS. An-Nisa verse 3 which allows polygamous relationships of up to four wives for one man. Even in Islamic history, Prophet Muhammad as the last apostle, had a polygamous relationship with various goals and interests. Some of these interests are for education and religious teaching, uniting Arab tribes, social, and humanitarian (Ghazaly 2019).

Although it is allowed in the majority religious understanding, society still has negative sentiments towards polygamists. For instance, in 2006, Islamic religious figure Aa Gym practiced polygamy by marrying for the second time, leading to significant criticism and the departure of worshipers who were disappointed with his actions. More recently, ustadz Hanan Attaki's polygamous practices, having two wives, resulted in him becoming a trending topic on social media platform X on April 4, 2024 (Donny and Isra 2024).

The public's reaction to Hanan Attaki's polygamous actions can be seen on social media posts. Posts by X accounts @tanyarlfess and @jogmfs, which asked for public opinions about Ustadz Hanan Attaki having two wives, received considerable attention, being liked by 20,000 and 12,000 accounts respectively. These posts were also re-uploaded on Instagram, promote further discourse. These posts, also shared on Instagram, stimulate debates with both supportive and critical voices, showcasing the spectrum of public opinion. These huge reactions raise an issue of how the public's perception of polygamy embodies Indonesian knowledge and ideal norms regarding relationships and societal values.

Foucauldian concepts of Subject and Knowledge form the foundation of this research, which aims to examine how the power of mononormativity shapes sentiments towards polygamists on social media. Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) is particularly significant in this context because it uncovers the underlying power dynamics and knowledge systems that influence public perceptions and discourses on polygamy. By analyzing social media posts through this lens, FDA helps us explore how mononormative ideals are constructed, maintained, and challenged within digital spaces. This approach reveals how individuals and groups are positioned and how their identities are shaped by dominant discourses. Moreover, FDA provides a framework to understand how resistance to these norms manifests, offering insights into the complex interplay between societal values, cultural practices, and individual beliefs. Utilizing FDA is crucial for uncovering public knowledge and normative perceptions, enabling us to comprehensively understand the sentiments and discourses surrounding polygamy in a predominantly mononormative society.

Methods

In cultural and media studies, the object of analysis is a topic, so there is no one research method that is a must. The method chosen in the field of cultural and media studies depends on the topic chosen (Jane 2003). Therefore, in cultural and media studies research,

one or both methods can be used simultaneously. A researcher can use qualitative, quantitative, or a mixture of both. The mixed method itself has three basic designs, namely *convergent, explanatory sequential, and exploratory sequential.* This research used an *explanatory sequential mixed method* design, a mixture of quantitative and qualitative approaches. There were two stages in applying this research, namely by collecting quantitative data, analyzing the results, then using the results to build arguments in the second stage, namely qualitative (Cresswell 2014). The quantitative and qualitative databases in the mixed approach were separate. Results from quantitative data were used to plan qualitative follow-up. Among the important things in this mixed approach is that the quantitative results not only have provided information about the sampling procedure but also indicated the qualitative questions being asked (Cresswell 2014).

In collecting data, the instruments used in this study were both conventional tools such as stationery and notebooks and software qualitative data analysis. Th software used in data processing is the NVivo 12, an abbreviation of N (*Non-Numerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theorizing).* While Vivo comes from in-vivo, a term from grounded theory research, NVivo, according to Strauss and Glasser means coding based on real, live data, and experienced by participants. This application is *installed* on a computer device (Sholeha 2023). These tools are part of the literature and document study process. In addition to these tools there is an important instrument, namely the author, because the data collected is qualitative and sourced from social media documentation.

In collecting data from social media, the researchers conducted documentation and utilized several software tools. The software used was online-based by accessing exportcomments.com. The way to use this website is to copy the link of the content to be exported by highlighting the link text and pressing 'ctrl+c', then the link is pasted by pressing 'ctrl+v' on the web. Then the exported data can be downloaded in Microsoft Excel format.

In addition to utilizing the website, the researchers utilized the *copy and paste* feature on computer devices. The step taken was to open Instagram social media content via a computer device. Then it was followed by opening the comments and highlight all comments that can be copied. Once the text is highlighted, press the 'ctrl+c' key on the keyboard. Then paste it by pressing 'ctrl+v' in Microsoft Word.

The source of the data were the comments of the two uploads on two Instagram accounts. The first upload came from the omg.indonesia.id account on April 5, 2024 with a

total of 597 comments. Then from the sisiterang.official account on April 6, 2024 there were 872 comments. From the two uploads, 611 comments were collected and then thematically analyzed using NVivo 12 software. The NVivo processed and analyzed the data by:

1. Importing data

    Importing data can be done after opening the application and then importing data in both Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Word formats.

2. Data coding

    Furthermore, through this application, data coding can be done by utilizing the node feature. Through this feature, data related to non-monogamy is marked and coded.

3. Data visualization

    After coding the data, the coding results are visualized using the Explore feature. Data were visualized in the form of *Word Frequency, Matrix Coding,* and *Text Search.* (Sholeha 2023).

    Once all data were analyzed, the researchers interpreted through identifying patterns, correlations, and general trends. The next step was to collect and analyze qualitative data. The researchers applied purposive sampling to select some samples of the comments which contained the positive, neutral, and negative perspectives on the practice of polygamy. The next step was using Foucauldian Discourse Analysis to interpret how power relations and discourses influence the quantitative results. Through such interpretation, the research could explain why certain patterns existed and how they weere maintained or challenged by societal norms and power structures. The last step was data presentation which highlighted how the discourse and power relations uncovered societal perspective on the practice of poligamy in Indonesia.

Result and Discussion

The act of polygamy is a relationship that occurs when a man marries more than one woman. According to Indonesian law, polygamy is regulated through Law No. 1 of 1974 which reads:

Article 3 (1) In principle, a man may have only one wife. A woman may have only one husband. (2) The court may, if the parties concerned so desire, grant permission to a husband to have more than one wife.

Article 4 (1) Where a husband intends to be married to more than one person, as referred to in Article 3(2) of this Law, he shall file an application with the Court in the area

where he resides. (2) The Court referred to in paragraph (1) of this article shall only grant permission to a husband to be married to more than one person if: a. the wife is unable to fulfill her duties as a wife; b. the wife suffers from an incurable disability or illness; c. the wife is unable to produce offspring.

Article 5 (1) To be able to file a petition with the Court as referred to in Article 4 paragraph (1) of this Law, the following conditions must be met: a. the consent of the wife/wives; b. the certainty that the husband will be able to provide the necessities of life for the wives and their children; c. the guarantee that the husband will be fair to the wives and their children. (2) The consent referred to in paragraph (1) letter a of this article is not necessary for a husband if his wife/wives cannot be asked for their consent and cannot be a party to the agreement; or if there has been no news from his wife for at least 2 (two) years or for other reasons that need to be assessed by a Court Judge.

The existence of this regulation is evidence of the legalization of polygamy, of course with strict conditions. The regulation is the result of some of the demands made by Kartini to limit polygamy (Trigiyatno 2012).

Despite having gone through various legal procedures, polygamists who are legal in religion and the state still receive various sentiments and criticisms. Hanan Attaki as one of the most popular religious leaders on social media with 10.4 million Instagram followers has also experienced this criticism. These sentiments are found in comments on Instagram social media. The following analysis of Instagram social media comments has been carried out.

Negative Polygamy Sentiments on Social Media

The emergence of negative sentiment towards Hanan Attaki on Instagram social media occurred between April 5 and 7, 2024, particularly when news media accounts such as @sisiterang.official and @omg.indonesia.id uploaded posts about Hanan Attaki's polygamy. The @sisiterang.official account has over 2,200 followers, while the omg.indonesia account boasts more than 95,300 followers. Both accounts share a common theme in their content, functioning as media outlets that report on viral topics across social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter/X. When covering Hanan Attaki's polygamy, both accounts contributed to the viral spread of the topic, eliciting responses in the form of likes and comments that generated discourse on polygamy. Therefore, these accounts are deemed appropriate sources of data for this study. In the 611 comments collected, the word

"Polygamy" appeared most frequently. This highlights the need to use sentiment analysis to understand public perspectives and discourses on polygamy and mononormativity. Through sentiment analysis, we can quantitatively measure the emotional reactions and attitudes expressed in these comments, providing valuable insights into the diverse and complex views on polygamy. This analysis helps identify the dominant sentiments, whether they are supportive, critical, or stigmatizing, and sets the stage for a deeper qualitative analysis to explore the underlying discourses and societal norms related to polygamy and mononormativity.

Figure 1. *Wordcloud* on both uploads.

The emergence of the word polygamy as a word that often appears is evidence that in both uploads the word becomes a discussion of netizens in which there is negative sentiment.

Topic	Number of Codes
Defending	
Unconditional acceptance	52
Accept with conditions	22
Rejecting polygamy	
Disappointed in polygamy	27
Rejecting for himself	19
Polygamy stigma	

Religion as a cover	9
Lust-based	47
Hurt	19
Unfaithful	4

Table 1. Comment analysis on both posts

The data categorizes perspectives on polygamy into three main topics: Defending, Rejecting Polygamy, and Polygamy Stigma. The table shows different groups of comments collected. In the Defending category, there are 52 comments of unconditional acceptance, reflecting individuals who embrace polygamy without reservations, and 22 comments of acceptance with conditions, indicating support for polygamy but with specific constraints. In total, there are 74 comments in defense of Hanan Attaki's polygamous actions.

Meanwhile, the Rejecting Polygamy category comprises 27 comments expressing disappointment with polygamous relationships and 19 comments from individuals who reject polygamy for themselves. The Polygamy Stigma category highlights various negative perceptions, including 9 comments suggesting that polygamy is justified under religious pretenses, 47 comments implying it is driven by sexual desires rather than genuine emotional connections, 19 comments indicating emotional pain or hurt associated with polygamous relationships, and 4 comments pointing to perceptions of infidelity linked to polygamy. The table shows the different groups of comments that have been collected. In the grouping that makes a defense, there are 52 comments that accept unconditionally, and 22 comments that accept with conditions. In total, there are 74 comments in defense of Hanan Attaki's polygamous actions.

These data provide a nuanced insight into the diverse attitudes towards polygamy, from acceptance to outright rejection, and underscores the emotional and stigmatic aspects associated with it. This quantitative analysis provides a comprehensive view of public sentiments, paving the way for a deeper qualitative analysis to explore the underlying discourses and emotional dimensions.

Monopride/Polyphobia

The debate between the concepts of monogamy and non-monogamy occurs because of the narrative of fidelity. The concept of fidelity becomes a conventional value agreed upon by society. Monogamy represents loyalty and non-monogamy is betrayal. By believing that

the concept of monogamous fidelity is the most correct, society feels entitled to discipline betrayal. The view that privileges monogamy is referred to as monocentrism or mononormativity. This belief system only recognizes that normal relationships belong to monogamists. They regard the monogamous type of relationship as natural, optimal, and morally superior. In contrast, monogamous couples are deviant, unnatural, and dysfunctional (Ferrer 2018).

Non-monogamous relationships in the form of polygamous marriages receive negative reactions. As experienced by Hanan Attaki, a religious leader who received negative reactions after practicing polygamy. As in the following news.

Figure 2. News excerpt about Hanan Attaki's polygamy

In the news, it is known that some of Hanan Attaki's fans are disappointed with his polygamous actions (Mad 2024). The act of fearing others who are in non-monogamous relationships is called polyphobia. Polyphobic fear can manifest outwardly towards others and inwardly towards oneself. The form of this attitude leads to expressions of disgust, social rejection, moral judgment, anger, spiritual condemnation of non-monogamous perpetrator (Ferrer 2021).

Sentiments towards consensual non-monogamy perpetrators are based on several stereotypes. Among the stereotypes are: 1) Consensual non-monogamy perpetrators are simply based on sexual desire to have more sex and are at risk of disease; 2) it is inherently oppressive to women; 3) non-monogamous perpetrators do not love their partners; 4) the

practice of non-monogamy will cause jealousy for the partner to destroy the relationship (Scoats and Campbell 2022). These sentiments also appear in the comments about Hannan's polygamy. These stereotypes reflect deeply ingrained biases and fears about non-monogamous relationships and also appear in the comments about Hanan's polygamy.
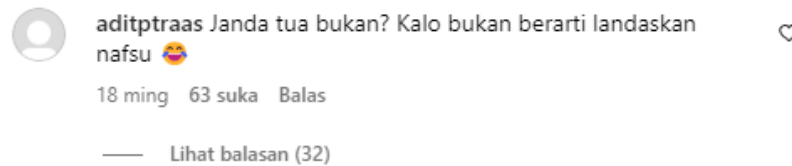
aditptraas Janda tua bukan? Kalo bukan berarti landaskan nafsu 😆

18 ming   63 suka   Balas

—— Lihat balasan (32)

Figure 3. Comments on the @sisisterang.official account

There are 47 comments that polygamy is an act based only on lust or sexual desire. As exemplified by the account @aditpraas who expressed his opinion that Hannan's polygamy was only based on lust because the one he married was not an old widow. In addition, there are other relevant data as follows:

> "*Memang poligami disini itu milihnya perawan2. Jarang yg kedengeran nikahnya sama Janda... Apalagi yg udah tua*😂. *Sebenernya dengan ada poligami seharusnya bisa mengurangi PSK. Tapi ga ada yg mau nikahin mereka.*" (comment from @vyllainsfallen)

The two comments above demonstrate that a broader societal sentiment that views polygamy as driven by lust or sexual desire. They argue that if not driven by lust, polygamy is practiced to marry widows. This aligns with the views of Islamic modernists regarding polygamy, who state that Muhammad practiced polygamy as a consequence of the Battle of Uhud, aimed at addressing the issue of the increasing number of widows and orphans (Rohman 2013). This sentiment aligns with the concept of polyphobia, which is the fear or aversion towards non-monogamous relationships. Polyphobia can manifest in various ways, including expressions of disgust, social rejection, moral judgment, anger, and spiritual condemnation, as seen in the comments from @aditpraas and @vyllainsfallen.

These comments also highlight common stereotypes about consensual non-monogamy, such as the belief that it is solely based on sexual desire, is inherently oppressive to women, and leads to jealousy and relationship destruction. These stereotypes contribute to the negative perceptions and judgments towards individuals in non-monogamous relationships, reinforcing polyphobic attitudes.
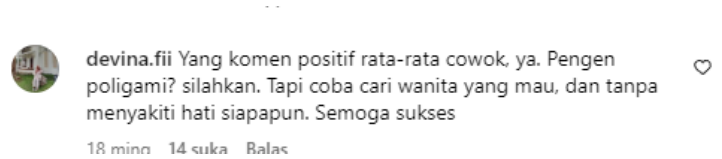
Figure 4. Comments on the @sisiterang.official account

Polygamy is considered oppressive and hurtful to women. This sentiment arises because it considers men who are polygamous to be unfaithful. As with the example of a comment from the account @devina.fii which shows that polygamy is considered an act that can hurt women's hearts. Society perceives polygamy as benefiting men while disadvantaging women (Adha et al. 2024). Even some scholars support the view that polygamy is a marital practice that demeans and is unjust to women's dignity (Rohman 2013). Many believe that polygamy is a patriarchal practice because women are not seen as having the power to make decisions in such arrangements (Risno Paputungan 2020).

Scoats and Campbell also explain that one of the stigmas faced by non-monogamous individuals is the perception that they do not love their partners. This stems from society's belief that if someone truly loves their partner, they would not engage in other relationships and would remain monogamous. This sentiment is reflected in the comment made by the account @zalerycious on Ustadz Hanan Attaki's polygamy:

> *"Udah paling bener aku percaya suamiku ,walau skrg sholatnya bolong2, puasa bolong2,tapi dia baik hatinya dan setia ,dan aku selalu mendoakan semoga suamiku dibukakan pintu hidayah oleh Allah SWT"*

The comment above suggests that not engaging in polygamy is an act of loyalty, while those who practice polygamy are seen as the opposite. This also ties into the subsequent stigma that polygamy or non-monogamy leads to the destruction of a relationship due to jealousy.

> *"ya memang poligami diperbolehkan jika mampu dan memenuhi syarat tp hati perempuan mana yg rela berbagi, lg cuma 1 aja kadang selalu ga sepaham dgn kondisi rumah tangga sehari' lah ini 3 kepala ya jelas yg paling diuntungkan pihak laki"*
> (comment from the account @tenun_ethnic_fashion)

The comments reflect societal sentiments that view marital relationships involving polygamy are often seen as a source of conflict that extends beyond the couple to include children, mothers, and other family members. Similar finding also attributes the practice of

polygamy to the feelings of jealousy and hurt experienced by the women involved (Rohmadi, Fauzan, and Jafar 2022). In line with Rohman's finding, the netizens view polygamy as cruel, as it forces women to accept their husbands dividing their attention with others (Rohman 2013). Whereas in some countries, it is common for men to have multiple wives, and although there are many potential problems in polygamy, many of them, lead fulfilling lives in these relationships (Tina and Ardian 2020).

By correlating these sentiments with polyphobia, we can see how societal biases and fears shape the discourse around polygamy and other forms of non-monogamous relationships. This understanding can help in addressing and challenging these prejudices, promoting a more inclusive and accepting view of diverse relationship structures.

The Subject and Knowledge of Mononormativity

Societies that uphold mononormativity occupy a subject position in which the "value" of a good relationship is intrinsically tied to monogamy. These subject positions delineate the historical boundaries of what can be expressed, practiced, or understood about relationships. They are not grounded in unilateral assertions but rather emerge through nuanced and intricate systems of organization, deeply embedded in the moral frameworks that shape social interactions (Arribas-ayllon and Walkerdine 2017).

Speaking of subjects, the embedding of negative sentiments by societies that embrace mononormativity is their way of applying the value of monogamy. Foucault understands that it is 'ethics' or in this case the norm of monogamy that makes it a moral subject. Ethics is a practical way of subordinating a person to a moral obligation (Arribas-ayllon and Walkerdine 2017).

Netizens, as subjects expressing discourses, reinforce negative sentiments towards polygamists. By engaging in online discussions and expressing their views, netizens help shape and propagate the dominant discourse that favors mononormativity. This discourse positions monogamous relationships as the normative and morally superior form of relationship, while framing polygamous relationships as deviant and morally inferior. Through their comments and interactions, netizens contribute to the stigmatization of polygamists, reinforcing societal norms and power structures that privilege monogamy.

Figure 5 News about polygamy sentiment

The negative sentiments toward polygamists are not exclusive to Hanan Attaki; Arifin Ilham, another prominent religious figure, has also faced significant stigma for his polygamous practices. According to a report on hot.detik.com (Bahar 2017), Ilham became the target of negative comments when a video showcasing his intimacy with his two wives was posted on Instagram. These reactions highlight how societal perceptions of polygamy are shaped and amplified by netizens through social media. The commentary from netizens reflects their subjective moral judgments and power dynamics, reinforcing the prevailing discourse that deems polygamy morally unacceptable.

The practices carried out by mononormativity on social media are power practices of monogamous knowledge. As explained by Foucault, power/knowledge refers to its diffuse, deep and often hidden character. Power is not just repressive but also productive. In society power/knowledge lies deep within society with and among individuals, bodies, gestures, dispositions, techniques, and so on (Alan and Alan 2003). In this research, the power of the netizens produces knowledge of mononormativity and shapes what is considered true or acceptable in society. Social media as the institution mediate the netizens to disseminate knowledge and norms that valorize monogamy. In turn, it could drive individual behaviors and societal attitudes to create a positive sentiment toward mononormativity.

In the context of giving negative comments about an ustadz who practices polygamy, mononormativism becomes a form of power/knowledge. Social media currently plays a role in herding the opinions of its users, especially when affiliated with certain religions with the aim of strengthening the doctrine of the community (Imamah 2016). Society internalizes the monogamy norm, creating a standard that is considered valid and correct in the context of romantic relationships. Criticism of polygamy becomes a response to the deviation from the

monogamy norm. Mononormativism not only represses those who practice polygamy, but also produces subjects who comply with the monogamy norm. Thus, mononormativism becomes a system of power or knowledge that infiltrates daily life, regulates behavior, and creates a stigma against anyone who deviates from that norm.

As previously explained, the norm of monogamy is also reinforced by interpretations provided by scholars, including Quranic exegeses. Thus, the intertextuality between Quraish Shihab's interpretations and the findings offers a more comprehensive perspective on how polygamy is understood, both in religious and social contexts. As in the excerpt from Al-Misbah's interpretation of QS. An-Nisa verse 3 about monogamy follows:

> *"Having taken and used the property of orphans wrongfully, what is now forbidden is to do wrong to the persons of the orphans". Therefore, he emphasized that, "If you fear that you will not be able to do justice to orphaned women and you are confident that you will be able to do justice to women other than orphans, then marry whatever you like according to your taste and is lawful from other women." If necessary, you can combine two, three or four but not more, "then if you fear that you will not be able to be just" in terms of wealth and outward behavior, not in terms of love if you marry more than one, then marry only one or your slave, that is, marry other than orphans which results in injustice, and sufficing one wife is closer to not doing injustice, that is, it is closer to justice, or not having many children that you have to bear the cost of their lives."* (Shihab 2002).

The passage discusses the ethical considerations and conditions under which polygamy is permitted in Islam, as explained by Shihab (2002). According to this interpretation, polygamy is allowed under certain conditions but emphasizes justice and fairness towards all wives. It suggests that marrying more than one wife is permissible only if the man can maintain justice in terms of wealth and outward behavior, though not necessarily in terms of love. If justice cannot be assured, it is recommended to marry only one to avoid injustice. Shihab also says that being with just one wife tends to keep away from abusive behavior, leads to justice, and does not increase the number of dependents.

In the context of discourses of mononormativity, this interpretation can be seen as conflicting with the dominant societal norms that valorize monogamy. Mononormativity holds monogamous relationships as the ideal and morally superior form of partnership. It shapes the discourse that positions monogamy as the standard and any deviation from this norm as inferior or morally questionable.

Netizens, as subjects expressing discourses, reinforce negative sentiments towards polygamists. By engaging in online discussions and expressing their views, netizens help shape and propagate the dominant discourse that favors mononormativity. This discourse

positions monogamous relationships as the normative and morally superior form of relationship, while framing polygamous relationships as deviant and morally inferior. Through their comments and interactions, netizens contribute to the stigmatization of polygamists, reinforcing societal norms and power structures that privilege monogamy.

This dynamic illustrates how power operates through discourse, shaping what is considered acceptable and normal. By expressing negative sentiments towards polygamists, netizens uphold the prevailing knowledge and power structures that maintain mononormativity as the dominant relational framework.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the understanding of mononormativity positions polygamy as a deviant and unnatural relationship. This is reflected in the responses of individuals who adhere to mononormative beliefs, as observed in Instagram comments on Hanan Attaki's polygamous actions. The case study analyzed comments from posts by @sisiterang.official and @omg.indonesia.id, identifying three groups: defending, rejecting, and stigmatizing polygamy.

By employing the explanatory sequential mixed method, the study effectively integrates quantitative data from social media comments with qualitative insights gained through Foucauldian Discourse Analysis. This approach uncovers how societal norms and power structures shape and reinforce negative sentiments towards polygamists. The quantitative data provides a broad understanding of public opinion, while the qualitative analysis delves deeper into the discourses that perpetuate mononormativity. Through this integration, the study highlights the significant influence of mononormative discourse in shaping societal attitudes and maintaining power dynamics that marginalize non-monogamous relationships.

This analysis reveals that Indonesian society predominantly embraces mononormativity as the ideal relationship structure. According to Foucault's theory of subject and knowledge, society acts as a subject that regulates and devalues polygamous relationships. Mononormativity serves as a form of knowledge that perpetuates the monogamous regime.

Moreover, some regions in Indonesia enforce monogamy and penalize polygamists, while certain Islamic religious leaders advocate for monogamous marriages as the preferred form. This reinforces the societal perception of polygamous relationships as morally inferior

and contributes to the stigmatization of polygamists, such as Hanan Attaki, within the broader cultural context.

Suggestion

In the discourse on good relationships, it is necessary to initiate a more critical and inclusive discussion for both monogamists and polygamists. This is expected to increase knowledge for the community about how good marriage relationships are and whether they are determined by the number of partners they have. In addition, social media needs to be a space for good discourse and avoid one-sided judgment, this is needed so that social media is more educative and reflective when discussing monogamous and non-monogamous relationships.

The government can play a crucial role in adopting policies that are more adaptive and inclusive of diverse relationship forms, including polygamy. Such policies are essential to reducing the stigma and discrimination faced by individuals in polygamous relationships. This approach should be informed by research on mononormativity, a topic that remains underexplored in Indonesia. Further investigation into relationship frameworks can provide valuable insights into how they influence various aspects of social life, including legal systems, public policy, and education.

References

Adha, Alifia Zahratul, Bhirawa Anoraga, Universitas Islam, Internasional Indonesia, and Universiti Teknologi Mara. 2024. "The Dialectics of Polygamy and Feminism: An Analysis of Mentoring Polygamy by Coach Hafidin and Musdah Mulia's Thoughts," 33–34. https://doi.org/10.28918/muwazah.v16i1.6847.

Alan, Milchman, and Rosenberg Alan. 2003. *Foucault and Heidegger Critical Encounters*. University of Minnesota Press.

Ansara, Y. Gávriel. 2023. "Getting Real about Monogamism: Disrupting Mononormative Bias in Sex Therapy and Relationship Counselling." *Relationally Queer: A Pink Therapy Guide for Practitioners*, 5–23. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003260561-2.

Arribas-ayllon, Michael, and Valerie Walkerdine. 2017. "Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (Second Edition)," no. January 2017.

Bahar, Komario. 2017. "Video Keharmonisan Poligami Ustad Arifin Ilham, Netizen Nyinyir." 2017.

C.G., Prado. 2018. *Starting With Foucault An Introduction To Geneaolgy*. Taylor & Francis.

Cardoso, Daniel, and Christian Klesse. 2010. "Living Outside the Box – Consensual Non-Monogamies, Intimacies and Communities. Notes on Research and Terminology." In *The Handbook of Consensual Non-Monogamy: Affirming Mental Health Practice. Diverse Sexualities, Genders, and Relationships*, 421.

Cassidy, Taya, and Gina Wong. 2018. "Consensually Nonmonogamous Clients and the Impact of Mononormativity in Therapy (Les Clients Non Monogames Consensuels et l'impact de La Mononormativité En Thérapie)." *Canadian Journal of Counselling and Psychotherapy* 52 (2): 119–39.

Cresswell, John W. 2014. *Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches-SAGE Publications*. SAGE Publications.

Donny, Adhiyasa, and Berlian Isra. 2024. "Heboh Isu Ustaz Hanan Attaki Poligami, Netizen Ngaku Shock." 2024.

Ferrer, Jorge N. 2018. "Mononormativity, Polypride, and the 'Mono–Poly Wars.'" *Sexuality and Culture* 22 (3): 817–36. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12119-017-9494-y.

———. 2021. *Love and Freedom Transcending Monogamy and Polyamory*.

Foucault, Michel. 1982. "The Subject and Power. In The Essential Foucault." *Critical Inquiry* 8 (4): 777–95.

Ghazaly, Abdur Rahman. 2019. *Fiqh Munakahat*. Kencana.

Imamah, Fardan Mahmudatul. 2016. "The Construction of Media in the Political Identity of Wearing Jilbab by Policewomen." *DINIKA : Academic Journal of Islamic Studies* 1 (3): 327–48. https://doi.org/10.22515/dinika.v1i3.154.

Jane, Stokes. 2003. *How To Do Media and Cultural Studies*. BENTANG.

Justina, Rostiawati, and Siti Nurwati Khadijah. 2013. "Poligami & Perselingkuhan." *Komnas Perempuan*, 1–17.

Mad, Mad. 2024. "Ustaz Hanan Attaki Ketahuan Poligami, Fans Ramai Unfollow," 2024.

Michaels, Mark A., and Johnson Patricia. 2015. *DESIGNER RELATIONSHIPS A GUIDE TO HAPPY MONOGAMY, POSITIVE POLYAMORY, AND OPTIMISTIC OPEN RELATIONSHIPS*.

Minhaji. 2019. "Monogami Dan Poligami Dalam Islam (Perspektif Sejarah-Sosial Hukum Islam)," 1–15.

Risno Paputungan, Sopyan. 2020. "Argumen Kaum Feminis Terhadap Penolakan Poligami Di Indonesia." *As-Syams* 1 (1): 128–52.

Rohmadi, Rohmadi, Fauzan Fauzan, and Wahyu Abdul Jafar. 2022. "Positive and Negative Impacts of Poligamy in The Life of Muslim Family." *Madania: Jurnal Kajian Keislaman* 26 (1): 75. https://doi.org/10.29300/madania.v26i1.6483.

Rohman, Arif. 2013. "Reinterpret Polygamy in Islam: A Case Study in Indonesia." *SSRN Electronic Journal* 2 (10): 68–74. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2258284.

Scoats, Ryan, and Christine Campbell. 2022. "ScienceDirect What Do We Know about Consensual Non-Monogamy?" *Current Opinion in Psychology* 48: 101468. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2022.101468.

Shihab, M. QURAISH. 2002. *Tafsir Al-Misbah*. Lentera Hati.

Sholeha, Adellia Wardatus. 2023. "Tips Mudah Olah Data Kualitatif Dengan Aplikasi Nvivo." Ebizmark Blog. 2023.

Tina, Timm, and Blow Ardian. 2020. "Fidelity, Infidelity, and Nonmonogamy." In *Couple Relationships in a Global Context Understanding Love and Intimacy Across Cultures*, 395–416.

Trigiyatno, Ali. 2012. "PEREMPUAN DAN POLIGAMI DI INDONESIA (Memotret Sejarah Gerakan Perempuan Dalam Menentang Poligami)." *Muwazah* 3 (1): 334–41. https://doi.org/10.28918/muwazah.v3i1.8.