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Exploring Promoting Paid Polygamy Mentoring on Social Media: Between Piety, Ideologization, and Economic Purpose

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Abstract

The promotion of polygamy mentoring began in 2017 by several polygamy practitioners along with the hijrah movement which was also increasingly popular among them. Polygamy was even openly promoted through high-cost mentoring courses, ranging from tens to hundreds of millions of rupiah.. This article presents qualitative research that employs the netnography method to investigate the promotion of paid polygamy mentoring on social media by Dauroh Poligami Indonesia (DPI), Forum Poligami Indonesia (FPI), and Private Mentor Coach Hafidin. This article aims to explore the goals and motives behind the promotion of paid polygamy mentoring conducted by the mentors. By observing their posts on social media and conducting interviews, this research found that the practice of promoting paid polygamy mentoring, which is a form of religious commodification, has several purposes for the mentors: fulfilling religious commandments (piety), increasing offspring and strengthening the power of Islam as well as engaging in jihad fi sabilillah (ideological goals), and achieving material gain (economic purposes). The author argues that the practice of religious commodification is not always aimed solely at generating economic profit, but in some cases also serves ideological and pious purposes. This research also corrects the studies by Ahmadi, Hasan, and Fealy, who argue that the practice of religious commodification is solely economically motivated. Based on this research case, the ideological and theological motives are also found in the practice of promoting paid polygamy mentoring on social media.

Keyword : Social Media, Paid Polygamy Mentoring, Komodifikasi Agama, Motives

Abstrak

Promosi pendampingan poligami dimulai pada tahun 2017 oleh beberapa praktisi poligami seiring dengan gerakan hijrah yang juga semakin populer di kalangan mereka. Poligami bahkan dipromosikan secara terbuka melalui kursus pendampingan berbiaya tinggi, mulai dari puluhan hingga ratusan juta rupiah. Artikel ini menyajikan penelitian kualitatif yang menggunakan metode netnografi untuk menyelidiki promosi pendampingan poligami berbayar di media sosial oleh Dauroh Poligami Indonesia (DPI), Forum Poligami Indonesia (FPI), dan Private Mentor Coach Hafidin.Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menggali tujuan dan motif di balik promosi pendampingan poligami berbayar yang dilakukan oleh para mentor. Dengan mengamati unggahan mereka di media sosial dan melakukan wawancara, penelitian ini menemukan bahwa praktik promosi pendampingan poligami berbayar, yang merupakan bentuk komodifikasi agama, memiliki beberapa tujuan bagi para mentor: untuk memenuhi perintah agama (kesalehan), memperbanyak keturunan dan memperkuat kekuatan Islam, serta berjihad di jalan Allah (tujuan ideologis), dan untuk memperoleh keuntungan materi (tujuan ekonomi).Penulis berpendapat bahwa praktik komodifikasi agama tidak selalu semata-mata bertujuan untuk menghasilkan keuntungan ekonomi, tetapi dalam beberapa kasus juga melayani tujuan ideologis dan kesalehan. Penelitian ini juga mengoreksi studi oleh Ahmadi, Hasan, dan Fealy, yang berpendapat bahwa praktik komodifikasi agama semata-mata didorong oleh motif ekonomi. Berdasarkan kasus penelitian ini, ditemukan

pula adanya motif ideologis dan teologis dalam praktik promosi pendampingan poligami berbayar di media sosial.

Kata Kunci : Media Sosial, Mentoring Poligami Berbayar, Komodifikasi Agama, Motivasi.

Introduction

As a country with the largest Muslim population in the world, the discussions about polygamy are still considered taboo in Indonesia. However, recently, the development of the digital era has brought about a shift in people's mindset, including in discussions about polygamy. Polygamy activists are increasingly active in the public sphere, including on social media. The previously private practice of polygamy is now increasingly in the spotlight and being fought for openly.

The first public campaign on polygamy was launched by Puspo Wardoyo through the Polygamy Award programme in 2003 (Azizah, 2003). The public was also surprised by AA Gym's polygamy in 2006 and Ustadz Arifin Ilham's frequent public appearances with his wives. In addition, the theme of polygamy has also begun to be discussed in the media over the past two decades. Films such as Ayat-Ayat Cinta, Surga Yang Tak Dirindukan, as well as various dramas and other Islamic-themed films, attempt to tell stories about polygamy (Rahmah, 2021).

In recent years, polygamy activists have promoted polygamy success training through social media platforms. Some examples of such promotions can be found on the Facebook accounts of Dauroh Poligami Indonesia's fanpage, Abu Khalif's account, the All About Syar'i Polygamy Facebook Group, BV Pria Mempesonah's account, and Coach Hafidin's account. Additionally, there are accounts on Instagram, such as daurohpoligami.official, Vicky Abu Syamil_Official, and Mentor Husband Qawwam. On YouTube, there is the Rabbanian Family channel and the Smart People-BV Official channel (Narasi, 2022). These accounts not only promote polygamy but also provide paid polygamy mentoring services.

To gather more information, the author made observations by following and interacting with these accounts. As a result, some information was found that the polygamy mentoring training advertised on social media offers tickets at various prices, ranging from around 2 million to tens of millions of rupiah. Despite the fantastic cost of polygamy mentoring, the mentoring classes are not devoid of enthusiasts and are attended by an average of around 20 people per session (Syamil, 2022). As of the writing of this research, there have been hundreds of participants in the paid polygamy mentoring advertised on social media.

From the research conducted, the author found that three institutions actively promote paid polygamy mentoring activities on social media: Dauroh Poligami Indonesia (DPI), Forum Poligami Indonesia (FPI), and Private Mentor Coach Hafidin. However, these three organisations are led by Arif Abu Khalif, Vicky Irawan Zaeni (also known as Vicky Abu Syamil), and KH. Hafidin. They use social media as a tool to promote polygamy. This promotion has drawn criticism from women activists and netizens (Narasi, 2022).

Polygamy in Indonesian marriage law is strictly regulated, and several requirements must be met in order for a person to be polygamous, as stipulated in Law Number 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage. However, in general, Muslim communities in Indonesia prefer monogamous marriage. This is supported by a research report from Alvara Research Centre in 2017, which revealed that 69.8% of Muslims in Indonesia consider polygamy to be morally wrong (Putri, 2022).

The issue of polygamy has been debated in society. The debate has resulted in diverse opinions and conclusions about polygamy. From a psychological perspective, for example, research by M. Hanoum shows that polygamy has a negative impact and is a form of exploitation of women that can cause psychological problems, such as internal conflicts within the family, conflicts between wives, conflicts between wives and stepchildren, and conflicts between children from different wives (Hanoum, 2014). In line with this study, Krenawi, Graham, and Izzeldin concluded that the

relationship between the first and second wives is not harmonious because the first wife has a lower level of self-confidence compared to the second wife (Krenawi, 2008).

A social perspective, Lies Marcoes concluded in her research that polygamy becomes a tool for harming women's character and encourages dehumanising practices. Some women even attempt suicide because of being polygamous by their husbands. Women become helpless, lose their self-esteem, and their logic is disrupted (Marcoes, 2021).

Faqihudin Abdul Kodir, in his book entitled 'Sunnah Monogamy", also explains that the practice of polygamy is not just a matter of text, blessing, or sunnah. Polygamy is a cultural issue. From a cultural perspective, polygamy can be viewed from various social angles. For people experiencing poverty or farmers in an agrarian tradition, for example, polygamy is considered a strategy for survival because it can save resources. Meanwhile, for the priyayi, polygamy is simply a form of extortion against women. Women are considered equal to wealth and the throne, which can be used to support men's social position (Kodir, 2021).

In addition to the views against polygamy, several studies conclude that polygamy has a positive impact. For example, Abdur Rahman in his research states that polygamy involves elements of rescue, protection, and respect for the existence and dignity of women. Polygamy can be a solution when the wife has a serious illness, cannot have children, or has bad behaviour. By practising polygamy, the husband is expected to find happiness in his household with his second wife, without having to divorce his first wife and so on (Rahman, 2013).

New Scientist reported that research conducted by Virpi Lumma, an environmentalist from the University of Sheffield, UK, found that polygamous men have a 12% higher life expectancy than non-polygamous men. The study involved men aged 60 years or older from 140 countries. Furthermore, Lumma analysed data from the World Health Organisation (WHO) and concluded that men who continue to have children at the age of 60 to 70 tend to take better care of themselves, as they have to provide for their children (Callaway, 2023).

Regardless of the pros and cons of polygamy, the phenomenon of promoting paid polygamy mentoring through social media involves Salafism networks in Indonesia. The author confirmed this from one of the participants of the polygamy mentoring class, Nunung Umar's Facebook account, who stated that before the existence of paid polygamy mentoring classes promoted through various social media platforms, this polygamy mentoring activity used to be carried out by several community groups in Jabodetabek and West Java around 2012 until now. Those involved in this activity are those who are already polygamous and those who intend to become polygamous. This association was later named the Forum Keluarga Poligami Sakinah (FKPS). The forum is guided by a religious expert or ustadz who has a thorough understanding of religious science and possesses both knowledge and experience in the practice of polygamy.

Additionally, the forum offers matchmaking services for its members. Gradually, the forum became very popular because, in addition to discussing polygamous households, it also served as a forum for religious studies. According to Nunung Umar, a member of FKPS, the forum encourages its members to be polygamous or to marry akhwat who share the same manhaj, the Salafist manhaj. The purpose of this, apart from practising the sunnah, is also to disseminate the salaf manhaj and the practice of religion in a *kaffah*/complete manner among Indonesian Muslims (Umar, 2023).

Then, since 2016, polygamy mentoring began to be conducted openly and promoted through social media due to the growing interest of the community (Khalif, 2022). In 2017, an organisation officially called Dauroh Poligami Indonesia held a polygamy mentoring class at a hotel in South Jakarta (Ramdani, 2022).

As a social practice, the promotion of paid polygamy mentoring on social media is a form of commodification of religion that can be seen from the high rates of polygamy mentoring classes. This is also concluded by Ahmadi et al's research, which mentions that the practice of paid polygamy mentoring is a practice of religious commodification (Ahmadi, 2022). The commodification of religion, in this case Islam, refers to what Greg Fealy calls 'Consumming Islam: Commodified Religion and Aspirational Pietism in Contemporary Indonesia', which can be interpreted as the commercialisation/trading of Islam and its symbols into something that is traded for profit (Fealy; White, 2008).

The most relevant and closest research to the author's study is the study titled 'Brands of Piety? Islamic Commodification of Polygamous Community in Indonesia' written by Rizqa Ahmadi, Lilik Rofiqoh, and Wildani Hefni, and published in the Journal of Indonesian Islam, Volume 16 No. 1, 2022. This study aims to investigate whether polygamy mentoring conducted by polygamous communities is a form of branding in practising religious obedience or merely a commodification of religion. The study concludes that polygamy mentoring conducted by polygamous communities is purely a commodification of religion, similar to the commodification of other religious aspects such as hijab, halal lifestyle, and so on (Ahmadi, 2022).

This article questions and will elaborate on the motives and objectives of polygamy mentors in organising paid polygamy training amidst the widespread practice of religious commodification in Indonesia.

Literature Review

Several researchers have conducted studies on polygamy mentoring institutions, including a study by Annisa Afifah entitled 'Kritik terhadap Pemahaman dan Praktik Poligami Syar'i pada Lembaga Dauroh Poligami Indonesia: Studi Kasus Surat an-Nisa Ayat 3'. This study was written by Annisa Afifah in 2019 and published by UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya. The research question is how the Indonesian Polygamy Dauroh Institution (DPI) interprets and understands polygamy (Afifah, 2019).

This study concludes that the Dauroh Poligami Indonesia (DPI) is an institution that serves as a centre for education and consultation on polygamous marriage. According to this institution, the basis of marriage in Islam is polygamy, with monogamy being the last option for those who realise their limitations. The basis for understanding and practising Sharia polygamy is based on theological foundations such as the Quran and hadith. In the practice of Sharia-compliant polygamy, according to this institution, practitioners must first fulfil all the obligations and sunnah as a Muslim (Afifah, 2019).

Furthermore, a study titled 'Problematika Mentoring Poligami Berbayar di Era Modern' by Noor Efendy was published in the journal Ar-Risalah, Volume 18, No. 1, 2022. The research question is how polygamy mentoring becomes problematic in the modern era. The study concludes that although paid polygamy mentoring is controversial today, its implementation can serve as an important means to improve understanding of polygamy. However, it does not rule out the possibility that such mentoring could exacerbate negative stigma toward polygamy in society (Efendy, 2022).

Miski et al. wrote a study titled 'Polygamy Mentoring in Indonesia: al-Qur'an, Hadith, and Dominant Discourse Resistance,' published in the Journal of Millati, Volume 7, No. 1, 2022. This study aims to explore the practice of polygamy mentoring conducted by KH. Hafidin, considering the understanding of the Qur'an, Hadith, and the dominant discourse. The findings reveal that KH. Hafidin bases his polygamy practices on his interpretation of verse 3 of Surah an-Nisa in the Qur'an regarding polygamy. Additionally, Hafidin endeavours to uphold patriarchal ideology when explaining polygamy to mentoring participants (Miski, 2022).

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Based on the previous research findings outlined, this article explores the motives of the organisers of paid polygamy mentoring classes, which have not been previously investigated by researchers.

Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research approach using the netnographic method (Creswell, 2007; Kozinets, 2010). The term 'netnography' was introduced by Kozinet as a variant of ethnography that specifically studies user behaviour on social media. Netnography is a naturalistic study that utilises publicly available information on online forums. As this is a type of ethnography, netnography also employs ethnographic procedures such as alteration, anonymity, immersion (enabling interviews), and others as means of observation (Kozinet, 2010).

The data sources used for this qualitative research include data obtained from the internet through social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and websites. This data comes from several accounts and groups such as 'Dauroh Poligami Indonesia,' 'Forum Poligami Indonesia,' 'Coach Hafidin,' and others. The Facebook accounts used are 'Dauroh Poligami Indonesia' with 3,000 followers, 'Vicky Abi Syamil' with 1,552 followers, 'Abu Khalif' with 4,100 followers, 'Coach Hafidin' with 3,756 followers, and 'Grup Semua Tentang Poligami Syar'I' with 6,783 members. On Instagram, the accounts used are 'daurohpoligami.official' with 1,446 followers, 'Vicky Aby Syamil' with 144 followers, and 'coach.hafidhin' with 1,781 followers. On YouTube, the author observed the account' Rabbaniyan Family' with 1,340 followers. On TikTok, the accounts used are 'Vicky Aby Syamil' with 471 followers and '@daurohpoligamiofficial' with 9,894 followers. Additionally, the research data includes interviews with sources related to paid polygamy mentoring. These sources include Abu Khalif (DPI), Vicky Abi Syamil and Akbar Gatang (FPI), as well as Coach Hafidin. The research was conducted through observation of the social media accounts, documentation, data recording, and direct interviews with the sources. The interview technique used was semi-structured interviews.

First, the author identified themes and patterns within the collected data. Then, the author identified these themes until the data reached saturation, meaning no new information was found. The author repeated these steps for each theme and pattern until conclusions could be drawn.

Results and Discussion

The Meaning of Polygamy According to Mentors

1. Dauroh Poligami Indonesia (DPI)

DPI is an institution led and mentored by Arif Abu Khalif. This institution promotes a polygamy mentoring programme that emphasises the values of amar ma'ruf (enjoining what is good) and syiar (promoting) polygamy. Abu Khalif himself is a father of four children from two different wives. As a mentor at DPI, he has two wives who live separately; his first wife resides in Depok, and

his second wife lives in Jakarta. He views polygamy as the practice of Islamic law (Khalif, 2022). He expressed this with the following statement:

"...pada awalnya saya menikah monogami. Lalu saya ngaji sunnah dan para ustadz menganjurkan berpoligami. Para ustadz itu sendiri juga berpoligami. Saya jadi bersemangat karena termotivasi oleh beliau-beliau. Lalu saya mengajak istri saya berdiskusi. Awalnya tentu ada perasaan tidak suka dari istri. Menolak lah ya istilahnya... meskipun tidak ia lakukan secara frontal. Kemudian saya ajak istri mengaji yang fokus pada kajian poligami. Kami pada akhirnya percaya dan yakin bahwa syariat poligami itu tidak untuk disia-siakan. Syariat poligami itu adalah bukti keimanan yang kuat dan keyakinan kepada kebenaran ajaran Islam..." (Khalif, 2022)[.]

According to Abu Khalif, polygamy is part of Islamic law that must be implemented like other obligations under Islamic law. He believes that polygamy is also a way of life that is permitted by Islamic law. He believes that the principle of marriage in Islam is essentially polygamy and must be practised correctly. Abu Khalif expressed his views as follows:

" Berdasarkan penjelasan para ustadz, bahwa prinsip pernikahan dalam Islam itu poligami ya... bukan monogami. Monogami hanya bisa dilakukan jika seseorang berada dalam situasi darurat alias sangat tidak mampu. Lagipula jika kita bisa berpoligami secara syar'i mengapa memilih bermonogami. Orang-orang membenci poligami itu sama saja dengan tidak mengakui syariat poligami. Padahal syariatnya jelas" (Khalif, 2022)

In explaining the meaning of polygamy, the DPI's mentor explained that polygamy is one of the laws of Islam. The main principle of marriage in Islam is polygamy, not monogamy. However, in cases where a Muslim is unable to practise polygamy, monogamy may be applied.

The DPI's mentor also commented on those who criticise polygamy as a rejection of Islamic law. He provided an argument against the narrative that polygamy does not originate from Islam but from societal culture. Here is his argument:

"karena poligami itu pernah ada jauh sebelum ajaran agama Islam datang, maka poligami syar'i itulah yang sesuai syariat. Kalo sebelum Islam bahkan poliandri juga ada. Tapi kan dalam Islam ada pembatasan hanya boleh menikahi maksimal empat istri dalam satu waktu... saya baru dua. Masih kurang dua lagi..hehehe. kite tuh ngajarinnya poligami syar'i ya..bukan poligami sesat" (Khalif, 2022)

The sharia-compliant polygamy referred to by the DPI's Mentor is the practice of polygamy that allows a man to marry up to four women at the same time. The DPI's Mentor criticises past practices of polygamy that did not set limits on the number of wives a man could marry.

Mentor of DPI also shared his experiences of living in a polygamous household as part of his understanding of polygamy (polygamy is a rule within religion. Ed.) :

"...pada dasarnya pernikahan poligami itu menyenangkan. Itu karena kita menjalaninya sesuai syariat. Saya tidak menikah poligami secara sembunyi. Saya izin sama istri sesuai anjuran ustadz. Kami bahkan mencatatkannya di Kantor Urusan Agama. Kami tidak menganjurkan seseorang menikah poligami dengan nikah sirri. Poligami sesat itu. Bisa jadi ajang gonta-ganti pasangan kalo modelan begitu...."(Khalif, 2022)

From his explanation, it can be concluded that the DPI's Mentor does not recommend polygamous marriage through a secret marriage. He even emphasises that registering marriages at the Office of Religious Affairs (KUA) is mandatory and condemns polygamous marriages conducted in secret as

misguided polygamy that is not by religious teachings. According to the DPI's Mentor, polygamy, as defined by Sharia law, is a legally valid polygamous marriage that has obtained permission from the court. The application for permission from the Religious Court must also be based on the consent of the relevant wife. Therefore, the DPI's Mentor does not recommend the practice of polygamy in secret, as explained in the following statement:

"..poligami kok sembunyi-sembunyi. Poligami ya harus atas izin istri. Makanya kami membuat edukasi poligami ini ya gunanya itu. biar para istri tuh ngasih izin ke suaminya. Supaya dapat dicatatkan di KUA dan nikahnya bisa resmi. Poligami yang gak izin istri gak bisa dikatakan sebagai poligami syar'i. Kan kite maunya ibadah poligami nih bareng-bareng kan.. masa istri kagak dikasih tau..."(Khalif, 2022)

In understanding the concept of polygamy, the DPI's mentors emphasise the importance of obtaining permission from the wife before practising it. Therefore, the polygamy mentoring class aims to educate wives so that they can give their consent to their husbands to practice polygamy.

The DPI's mentor also makes wives partners in polygamy for their husbands. The following is his statement :

"sukses tidaknya poligami suami itu yang tergantung pada istrinya. Makanya jangan jadi istri yang sulit. Istri itu adalah partner poligami suaminya. Para akhwat jangan terlalu mengekang suaminya lah. Suami tuh punya hak berpoligami. Haknya tuh ada dalam al-Qur'an. Kalian jangan menyusahkan diri dengan menolak dipoligami lah.. biar gampang masuk surganya..." (Khalif, 2022)

The DPI's mentor shared his view on a wife who refused her husband's desire to practice polygamy, which he considered a form of denial of the husband's rights. The DPI mentor also acknowledged that polygamy is a husband's right as stipulated in the Qur'an. However, the DPI mentor also criticised husbands who practise polygamy but do not fulfil their financial obligations to their wives. Below is a statement from the DPI's mentor:

"ngapain berpoligami kalo ujungnya minta nafkah pada satu istri untuk menafkahi istri lainnya. Berani berpoligami, berani menafkahi. Apalagi suka ganti-ganti istri. Poligami syar'i ya gak begitulah...."(Khalif, 2022).

The DPI's mentor believes that those who practise polygamy without fulfilling their obligation to provide for their wives are deviant polygamists who are against Islamic teachings. In his statement, he criticised those who practise polygamy while asking one wife for financial support to support their other wives, as this is not in line with Islamic principles.

The DPI's Mentor also shared about the pleasant experiences and challenges he faced while living in a polygamous marriage. Here is a quote from his experience:

" poligami itu menyenangkan saat kita bisa bersama para istri kita berkumpul dengan anak-anak juga, saling bercanda ...tapi tentu saja pernikahan itu penuh dinamika. Gak hanya poligami, pernikahan monogami juga sama dinamikanya. Tapi karena sejak awal kita tuh berpoligami niatnya adalah ibadah, ya pasti terlewati ujian-ujian itu. gak ada yang mulus-mulus aja. Sama dengan yang menikah monogami kan. Jadi ya kita niati ibadah nih berpoligami supaya dapat berkah. Lagipula kan kita jelas-jelas menjalankan syariat. Pasti berpahala lah. Kenapa berat dilakukan? karena poligami tuh hadiahnya surga..." (Khalif, 2022).

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The DPI's mentor cannot deny that in polygamous marriages, there are certainly problems similar to those found in monogamous marriages. He considers this to be a natural dynamic of marriage.

2. Forum Poligami Indonesia (FPI)

The FPI's mentor, named Vicky Irawan Zaeni, is also known by the nickname Vicky Aby Syamil. He resides in Cileungsi, Bogor Regency. Vicky, a 37-year-old man, has 16 children from four wives. He acknowledges that he currently has four wives and has been married 11 times (Vicky, 2022). He divorced several wives and then married other women, making them his wives, so the total number of his wives always remains four. Vicky views polygamy as the implementation of his long-held desire, which he developed while studying the Prophet's marriage practices. Here is his statement:

"Ane sih tidak ada keturunan poligami ya. Maksudnya orang tua saya tidak berpoligami, kakek saya juga tidak berpoligami, tapi ini sih katanya dulu kakek saya tanahnya banyak... Tapi ya tidak berpoligami. Saya tuh punya keinginan poligami sejak SMA. Waktu itu saya mempelajari kehidupan pernikahan ala Rasulullah tuh bagaimana. Lalu terbesitlah pengen poligami. Tapi baru mempraktikkan poligami tahun 2011. Saya menikah pertama kali tahun 2006..." (Vicky, 2022).

The FPI's mentor explained that he first thought about polygamy when he was still in high school. He was inspired by the polygamous marriage of the Prophet Muhammad and wanted to practise it in adulthood, even though his family was not involved in polygamous marriage (Vicky, 2022).

As someone who has been married several times and currently has four wives, the FPI's mentor revealed that the polygamous marriage has complex family dynamics. However, this does not diminish his intention to continue practising polygamy. Some issues with his wives can be resolved through harmony, but some problems cannot be resolved, leading to divorce. Therefore, he decided to remarry in order to maintain a steady number of four wives simultaneously (Vicky, 2022).

The FPI mentor stated that he supports his wife through the businesses he runs, including being a travel agent for Hajj and Umrah pilgrimages, raising goats, selling herbal supplements to enhance male stamina, and engaging in other buying and selling activities. Additionally, he serves as a mentor on the topic of polygamy. Some of his wives have their income from the businesses they operate. One of his former wives, who is also a university educator, has a stable career. Therefore, he does not provide her with much material support. However, due to several conflicts within his household, he decided to divorce his academic wife (Lucky Path Channel, 2023).

The FPI's mentor has preferences for the women he marries in polygamous marriages. Some of his preferences include women who are widows, beautiful, and independent. However, if the woman is not independent, she must be younger than him in terms of age and mental resilience. To date, the FPI's mentor has been married 11 times and has 16 biological children. The FPI's founder also believes that when choosing a second, third, or subsequent wife, she must be more beautiful than the previous one. However, it cannot be denied that he sometimes marries widows out of compassion (Vicky, 2023).

He also explained that he occasionally takes all four of his wives on trips together to avoid jealousy and unfairness. However, the situation is not always smooth. Jealousy often arises among the wives, leading to arguments between them. As the husband, he always tries to act as a mediator. However, if the issues become too complicated, he usually takes decisive action by divorcing one of his wives (Vicky, 2023).

According to Vicky Aby Syamil, polygamy is part of a lifestyle that should be emulated, as exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad. Therefore, Vicky Aby Syamil has chosen to live in a polygamous marriage with four wives to this day. He revealed that he approaches this marriage with joy, though it is not without its challenges in family life. Vicky Aby Syamil also feels that there are many benefits to marrying in a polygamous relationship compared to a monogamous one (Vicky, 2023).

In addition to Vicky Aby Syamil, there is another FPI mentor named Akbar Gatang. He has two wives and lives in Bogor. Akbar Gatang explains his understanding of polygamy as follows:

"awalnya saya tidak terpikirkan sama sekali untuk menikah dengan berpoligami. Tetapi suatu hari saya mengikuti pelatihan bisnis dan mentornya waktu itu menanyai kita-kita yang ada di ruangan. Yang menikah secara poligami disuruh berdiri di sebelah kanan dan yang hanya mililiki satu orang istri di sebelah kiri. Sepulang dari situ saya berpikir untuk memudahkan bisnis saya maka saya harus berpoligami sesuai saran ustadz.." (Lucky Path Channel, 2023).

3. Coach Hafidin

The author communicated online with Coach Hafidin, a private mentor specialising in polygamy. The author followed his social media accounts, such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, under the name 'Rabbanian Family,' and also became a member of a WhatsApp group he created as a platform to learn about polygamy. As a member of this WhatsApp group, the author learned that Coach Hafidin's views on polygamy were not much different from those of previous polygamy mentors and were even more extreme. According to Coach Hafidin, polygamy should be practised by Muslims. This is because polygamy is a sunnah that was practised by the Prophet Muhammad, and there is no evidence to prohibit it (Rabbaniyan Family, 2022).

Coach Hafidin, a religious leader in Banten, runs an Islamic boarding school in Serang. In addition, he also takes care of orphaned children. Coach Hafidin has four wives and 26 children. As a religious leader in his area, Coach Hafidin has extensive knowledge about polygamy. He believes that polygamy is an important part of Islamic law, on par with obligations such as prayer, zakat, fasting, umrah, and hajj. Therefore, he believes it is important to spread this understanding (Rabbaniyan Family, 2022).

Coach Hafidin understands that the principles of marriage in Islam allow polygamy. Therefore, he encourages Muslims to consider polygamy. According to Coach Hafidin, the most important aspect of polygamy is the existence of a 'qawwam' husband, that is, a husband who has good leadership and can manage and educate his wives well. According to Coach Hafidin, men who possess the quality of 'qawwam' should consider practising polygamy. In his role as a polygamy mentor, Coach Hafidin no longer states that polygamy is permissible. However, he emphasises the importance of polygamy for men who have the ability and leadership qualities. One of his posts on his Instagram account states that Muslim men who do not practice polygamy will not escape the final reckoning in the afterlife, as mentioned in Surah An-Nisa' verse 3, as shown in the image below:



Figure 1. Coach Hafidin's quote about polygamy. Source: Coach Hafidin's Instagram Account

From the above post, it can be concluded that Coach Hafidin considers Surah an-Nisa verse 3 as the legal basis for polygamy, which a Muslim man must practise if he is capable and fulfils the requirements as a *qawwam* husband. According to Coach Hafidin, if a man does not practise polygamy, he will be held accountable for the implementation of Surah an-Nisa verse 3, as seen in the image above.

Coach Hafidin, a polygamy mentor and leader of an Islamic boarding school, has specific reasons for choosing polygamy and advocating it to Muslims. In his conversation with the author, he stated that the purpose of his polygamy is to avoid adultery and his desire to have many children. Currently, Coach Hafidin has 26 biological children. He hopes that the children born to his wives will continue the *jihad* in the path of Allah. Therefore, in an interview with the Narasi team, he divorced one of his wives who had reached menopause and married another more productive woman (Narasi, 2022). His statement sparked controversy in the community, as Coach Hafidin's views on polygamy tend to be detrimental to women, and he links polygamy to the concept of *jihad* (Hafidin, 2022).

In addition to his role as a polygamy mentor, he is actively involved in caring for orphans and abandoned children at the boarding school he manages, where they receive free education. His goal is to guide these children to become religiously devout individuals who are militant in upholding the values of Goodness and enforcing Islamic teachings in a *'kaffah'* manner according to his interpretation. In addition to establishing the boarding school, he believes that this goal—*jihad* to fight for Islam—can also be achieved through polygamy (Hafidin, 2022).

The three organisers of paid polygamy mentoring programmes in Indonesia understand that polygamy is part of Islamic law that needs to be communicated to the Muslim community at large. Promoting polygamy is an act of '*amar ma'ruf*' (enjoining good) and '*nahi munkar*' (forbidding evil), as explained in their statements.

Motives for Promoting Polygamy Mentoring According to Mentors

1. Theological Motives

DPI, FPI, and Coach Hafidin are promoting mentoring classes on polygamy. They use religious arguments and refer to verse 3 of Surah An-Nisa, which they interpret as 'polygamy is sharia' (Rabbaniyan Family, 2022). From their pro-polygamy perspective, they use religious commands as a motive for practising and promoting polygamous marriage (Rabbaniyan Family, 2022).

If we refer to theological reasons, which means referring to arguments in the Qur'an, the discussion about polygamy has been a long-standing debate. This debate has yet to reach a consensus. However, so far, it can be concluded that there are three views on polygamy. First, there is the view that allows polygamy in a loose sense. This view is based on the assumption that polygamy is a

'sunnah,' meaning to follow the behaviour of the Prophet Muhammad, and that polygamy is part of Islamic law. Second, there is the view that accepts polygamy with strict conditions, such as financial conditions, which are a manifestation of formal justice, as well as substantive justice in the form of love and affection. This view still accepts the practice of polygamy with stringent conditions. Third, there is a view that explicitly rejects polygamy. This third view rejects any arguments regarding polygamy, whether theological or sociological (Muhammad, 2020).

Views based on theological reasons cause organisers to have their motives for promoting polygamy. Although they share the same view on polygamy, each mentor's motivation is different. DPI's motive for promoting polygamy is that it is a fundamental principle of marriage in Islam, so polygamous marriage is considered superior to monogamous marriage (Khalif, 2022). Meanwhile, the FPI believes that the commandment of polygamy in the Qur'an makes promoting polygamy an obligation (Vicky, 2022). Coach Hafidin argues that polygamy has the same obligation as other pillars of Islam, such as prayer, zakat, and fasting, so that spreading the sharia of polygamy is considered as important as teaching about the pillars of Islam (Rabbaniyan Family, 2022).

Referring to the three general perspectives on polygamy according to Islamic legal scholars, the motives of polygamy supporters based on theological reasons align with the first perspective, which permits polygamy in a lenient manner. However, these supporters hold more extreme views and tend to regard polygamy as nearly obligatory. Thus, they consider polygamy almost obligatory, not merely as a sunnah or something recommended. This could lead to a new legal perspective on polygamy, that it is obligatory, not merely a sunnah.

2. Ideological Motives

Discussing the ideological motives behind promoting polygamy mentoring for organisers, this is generally not explicitly stated unless it is stated that polygamy is Islamic law that must be openly communicated to Muslims and supported in its implementation. However, are there ideological motives beyond the promotion of polygamy that drive mentors, such as financial gain or mere commercialisation? Although the ideology of individual mentors is not explicitly stated in every promotion, the use of specific language referencing particular ideological identities is often employed in arguments about the importance of polygamy. For example, the FPI stated the following in a post on their Instagram account:

"IDEALISME DULU, KINI DAN NANTI

Idealism pernikahan poligami yang dibangun oleh salafusshalih sebenarnya adalah bagaimana mempertahankan tauhid melalui jalan pernikahan yang kemudian bergerak dan berdampak pada banyak hal yang sangat efektif. Dalam histori besarnya populasi Islam di Nusantara adalah fakta bahwa intervensi pernikahan adalah faktor penentu terbesar yang kemudian terus diadopsi oleh pembesar-pembesar bangsa ini yang pada akhirnya runtuh oleh pemikiran-pemikiran liberalism, kapitalisme dan sejenisnya setelah perang dunia dimenangkan oleh Barat dan runtuhnya kekhilafahan Islam..." (Vicky, 2023).

The FPI claims that polygamy is fundamentally motivated by an ideological goal to *'salafusshalih*,' which is to spread religion through marriage. The term *'salafusshalih'* used by the FPI refers to Salafism (Iqbal, 2019). According to the FPI, the more Muslims who practice polygamy, the stronger the Muslim community will become, because it will produce many children. With a large number of future generations of Muslims, it is hoped that the strength of the Muslim community will grow. In this context, this means that more individuals will be able to practice *amar ma'ruf* and *nahi*

munkar, which are religious commands. Therefore, the FPI promotes polygamy as an effort to strengthen the Salafi ideology.

The DPI does not explicitly mention ideology, but its understanding of polygamy and the position of women in Islam reveals the paradigm it adheres to. In general, polygamy today is often promoted by conservative Islamic groups, while progressive Islamic groups tend to challenge the dogma and doctrines surrounding polygamy through new interpretations. The use of words by the DPI, such as 'akhwat' and 'ta'adud', which employ Arabic more frequently than Indonesian, suggests the characteristics of an Islamic group with a conservative religious understanding.

In contrast, Coach Hafidin, in a private conversation with the author, expressed his view that a Muslim man should consider polygamy as an option. The reason is to have more offspring. It is hoped that having many offspring will counteract the influence of Zionists who have been weakening Muslims through propaganda programmes such as Family Planning or KB (Hafidin, 2022). The impact is that the number of Muslims and their descendants is becoming small. Coach Hafidin has personal reasons because he has a grudge against Zionists, and his motive for choosing polygamy is to have many children. As a polygamy mentor, he uses this opportunity to promote polygamy to his clients and the general public. He hopes that polygamy can become the lifestyle of the majority of Muslims in Indonesia to unite strength within the Islamic faith. To better understand the ideological background he adheres to, one can refer to one of his Instagram posts below:



Figure 2. Coach Hafidin's posts as his ideological background.

Source: Coach Hafidin's Instagram account

In the first image, Coach Hafidin explains the origin of the red and white colours on the flag of Indonesian Muslims, which has the same colour combination as the flag of the Ottoman Caliphate. Based on his ideological reasons for practising polygamy and posting images of the Islamic caliphate flag from the past, it can be concluded that Coach Hafidin adheres to a political ideology that seeks to implement Islamic sharia law, also known as formal Islam or the caliphate ideology. However, he does not discuss this extensively in his polygamy mentoring promotions. One of the reasons behind his campaign on polygamy is the struggle for the revival of the Muslim community (Narasi, 2022). The ideological foundation he has chosen is Islamic conservatism, which often conflicts with progressive Islamic groups that reject the doctrine of polygamy.

Another indicator of ideological motives is the use of the term '*kaffah*' in understanding Islamic teachings. This term refers to a specific ideological identity that is banned in Indonesia, namely the caliphate ideology. The following is a post by Coach Hafidin on his Instagram account:



Figure 3. Coach Hafidin's post about Pancasila Source: Coach Hafidin's Instagram account

3. Economic Motives

It cannot be denied that paid polygamy mentoring is a form of training that provides economic benefits for the organisers. This was acknowledged directly by Coach Hafidin in an interview with Narasi Newsroom. Initially, his main goal was to improve the community, but it is clear that he also receives payment for his mentoring activities (Narasi, 2022). Although he admits that he does not intend to continue this mentoring activity indefinitely, as many other people can also do it, Coach Hafidin continues to provide mentoring by adjusting his rates and increasing the price every month (Hafidin, 2022). Thus, economic motives are an important factor in promoting polygamy mentoring classes.

Coach Hafidin deliberately targets wealthy individuals to participate in his mentoring classes. This provides significant advantages compared to offering free polygamy training, as he did in his WhatsApp group. Here is his post regarding participant segmentation in polygamy mentoring:

"Ada yang tanya : kenapa fee mentor Poligami ratusan juta begini?

CoachHafidin | 0812-8927-8201, menjawab, supaya orang-orang seperti :

- Presiden Bisa Poligami.

- Ketua DPR dan MPR bisa Poligami.

- Sandiaga Uno bisa Poligami.

- Rafi Ahmad bisa poligami.

- Mardigu wowik bisa poligami.

Coach Hafidin, yakin jika keadaan ilmu, mindset dan cara rumah tangga yang ada pada orang-orang seperti mereka saat ini, orang-orang hebat seperti mustahil bisa poligami.

Peserta Ideal Private Mentoring The Relevant Husband For Harmony Family :

1. Orang kaya

- 2. Orang yang memiliki nilai spesial terhadap keluarga,
- 3. Orang yang biasa belajar tuntas,
- 4. Orang yang mementingkan kerahasiaan

5. Orang yang mengerti fikiran bawah sadar tidak menerima gratisan atau tanpa pengorbanan maksimal.

Untuk orang biasa, bisa mengikuti program lain yang sudah disediakan coach hafidin. Barokallah fiikum" (Hafidin, 2023)

FPI stated that the fees they set for participants in polygamy classes were commensurate with the benefits that participants would receive. Although the fees seemed expensive, FPI's target participants were from the upper-middle class. This was because they had high purchasing power. FPI argued that the services they provided were also a form of charity to spread knowledge about polygamy, which was very important in life (Licky Path Channel, 2022).

If Coach Hafidin and FPI openly acknowledge that they profit from the polygamy mentoring activities they conduct, this differs from DPI. DPI does not explicitly state economic motivations in the organisation of their polygamy mentoring classes. However, DPI offers two types of polygamy mentoring classes—first, an exclusive class that requires payment, and second, a free class. Participants in the exclusive class are required to pay a certain amount of money to join the mentoring programme and become part of a VIP group. Meanwhile, participants in the free class can only join a WhatsApp group and do not receive materials in the form of PDF files, videos, or other formats. DPI occasionally provides free mentoring to participants who are not part of the exclusive class (DPI, 2022).

Mentors from FPI and DPI, as organisers of polygamy mentoring classes, do not have religious authority like religious leaders or ustadz. They are merely practitioners of polygamy. The difference is that Coach Hafidhin is a religious leader who also practices polygamy. Therefore, the promotion of polygamy by FPI and DPI appears to have economic motives, unlike Coach Hafidin, who has motives or reasons other than economic ones.

FPI and DPI utilise the Salafist network, which has never opposed polygamy, to promote their mentoring classes. As a result, when these classes were announced on social media, many welcomed them, and to this day, paid polygamy classes continue to be held. FPI and DPI recognised this as an opportunity (DPI, 2022).

Given the high fees set by each mentor for each mentoring class, polygamy mentoring is a form of educational business, polygamy training. Therefore, it can be said that the mentors also have economic motives in promoting polygamy mentoring. However, it should not be overlooked that other factors, such as ideology, also influence the promotion of polygamy mentoring on social media.

The three polygamy mentors share the same motive in promoting polygamy, which is economic motives. However, economic motives are not the only motives driving them to promote polygamy. Coach Hafidin is a mentor with strong ideological motives when promoting polygamy. He even uses political arguments, such as increasing the number of descendants, to oppose Zionism and so on. Meanwhile, DPI and FPI are more inclined towards the motive of 'obedience to religion' or theological motives in promoting polygamy.

Table 1. Meaning and Motivation of Promoting Polygamy.

| No | Name o | of Mentori | ing Class/ | The Meaning of Polygamy The Me | otives of | | |
|----|---------|------------|------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|--|--|
| | Mentors | | | Promoting | Promoting | | |
| | | | | Polygamy | Polygamy: | | |
| | | | | Mentoring | Mentoring Class | | |
| 1. | Dauroh | Poligami | Indonesia | The main principle of Carrying | out God's | | |
| | (DPI) | | | marriage in Islam is command, | | | |
| | | | | polygamy, not monogamy. ideologisat | tion, and | | |

| | | | | | economic purposes. | | |
|----|--------------------------------|------------|---------|--------|--------------------|----------------|----------|
| 2. | Forum Poligami Indonesia (FPI) | Polygamy | is | sunnah | and | Ideologisation | and |
| | almost obl | | igatory | | | economy | |
| 3. | Coach Hafidin | Polygamy | is | jihad | fii | Ideologisation | , piety, |
| | | sabilillah | | | | and ec | conomic |
| | | | | | | purpose | |

Conclusion

Based on the data presented, this study corrects Ahmadi's research in 'Brand of Piety? Islamic Commodification of Polygamous Community in Indonesia,' which states that the phenomenon of paid polygamy mentoring is merely a practice of Islamic commodification, like other commodification practices such as the *halal* lifestyle and so on, by providing additional information that in the practice of religious commodification, there is also a practice of ideologisation. In the context of this study, polygamy mentors produce religious aspects, polygamy, to become an economic commodity, and at the same time incorporate ideological elements into the commodity, in this case, Salafism. This study also corrects the findings of Hasan (Hasan, 2005) and Faely (Fealy, 2006), which suggest that in the practice of religious commodification, the substance is often lost due to a focus on commercialisation. In fact, in the practice of promoting polygamy mentoring by the mentors, there are theological motives, the motive of implementing religious teachings purely.

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