



TRAUMATIC CONFLICT AMONG POLYGAMOUS CHILDREN

by

SEANI MAVHINA

(25383575)

MA (THEOL) PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR M.J. MASANGO

OCTOBER 2010

DECLARATION OF ORIGINAL WORK

I, Seani Angelina Mavhina declare this dissertation on

TRAUMATIC EXPRIENCES OF HUSBANDS WITHIN POLYGAMOUS MARRIAGE: A CHALLENGE TO PASTORAL CARE GIVERS

Is my own work and all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means complete references.

Signed: _____ Date_____

Supervisor: _____ Date: _____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The process of conducting this research was one of the most challenging times in my life. To maintain a balance being a pastor, wife, good leader at work and being a good student was a challenge. Of the four tasks, being a mother presented most challenge as I often had to literary “abandon” my children.

Now that I have completed my studies, I would like to thank the following people and institutions:

- God for giving me strength that I never thought I had to complete my studies.
- I would also like express my sincere gratitude to my Supervisor Prof Masango, for his guidance, patience and insightful suggestions throughout this research.
- To my husband, Mr Livhuwani Mavhina, I lack words to express my gratitude. Thank you, for your understanding and undying support. Thank you for keeping things together at home and looking after the children outstandingly. “A vha Ntshileli”.
- To Makwarela congregation thank you for your undying support.
- Rotondwa, Anza and Mulamuleli, my children, you gave me the courage and inspired me to be the best in what I do.
- To the University of Pretoria thank you for the financial support through the bursary that you offered me.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents	Pages
DECLARATION	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	
DEFINITION OF TERMS	
CHAPTER ONE1	
1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT	4
1.3 RESEARCH GAP	8
1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES	9
1.5 THE ETHICAL CONSIDERATION	11
1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH	12
CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY	13
2.1 METHODOLOGY	13
2.2 WHAT IS A SHEPHERD?	15
2.3 PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION	24
CHAPTER THREE: UNDERSTANDING POLYGAMY	25
3.1. INTRODUCTION	25
3.2. MARRIAGE	25
3.2.1 Concept marriage defined	25
3.2.2 African marriage	30

3.3 POLYGAMY	32
3.3.1 Polygamy defined	32
3.4 CAUSES OF POLYGAMY	34
3.4 Economic reasons	34
3.4.2 Avoiding adultery	38
3.4.3 Migrant labour	38
3.4.4 Barrenness	39
3.4.5 Cultural practices	40
3.4.6 Sexual outlet ⁴¹	
3.5. THE BENEFITS OF POLYGAMY	42
3.6. CHALLENGES OF POLYGAMOUS MARRIAGES	44
3.6.1 Partiality of husbands	45
3.6.2 Impotence	45
3.6.3 Relationship between wives	47
3.7. THE IMPACT OF POLYGAMY	54
3.7.1 Psychological problems	54
3.7.2 Marital conflicts	56
3.7.3 Financial problems	57
3.7.4 Power relations	59

3.7.5 Children	60
3.7.6 The effects of trauma on husbands within polygamous Marriage	74
3.7.7 Impact of polygamy on wives	79
3.7.8 General observations on the impact of polygamy	81
3.8. CONCLUSION	85
CHAPTER FOUR	86
4.1 INTRODUCTION	86
4.2 STORIES OF THE SURVIVORS	86
4.2.1 CASE STUDY 1	86
4.2.2 REFLECTION ON RATSHILUMELA STORY	95
4.2.3 CASE STUDY 2 “Verbatim story of Thinawanga”	99
4.2.4 REFLECTION ON THE STORY OF THINAWANGA	102
4.2.5 CASE STUDY	103
4.2.6 AUTHOR’S REFLECTION ON WANANI STORY	107
4.2.7 CASE STUDY 4	110
4.2.8 REFLECTION ON THAVHA CASE STUDY	114
4.3 APPLICATION OF METHODOLOGY	117
4.4 CARING METHOD	120
4.4.1 THE MEANING OF CARE	122
4.4.2 AIM OF THE CARING METHOD	123
4.4.3 Healing	124
4.4.4 Sustaining	125
4.4.5 Guiding	127

4.5 SUMMARY	135
CHAPTER FIVE	136
5.1 INTRODUCTION	136
5.2 INTERVIEW WITH RATSHILUMELA	137
5.3 INTERVIEW WITH WANANI	138
5.4 INTERVIEW WITH THINAWANGA	139
5.5 FINDINGS	140
5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS	141
5.7 CONLUSION	142
BIBLIOGRAPHY	143

DEFINITION OF TERMS

- **Barrenness**- women or female animals not able to produce children.
- **Conflict**- a serious disagreement.
- **Culture**- Dickson defines culture as “the pattern of life which involves many things like language, morality, material creation, religion, politics and the legal system of given society” (Dickson47:1984).
- **Impotent**- unable to have full sex or reach an orgasm.
- **Khotsimunene**- uncle.
- **Marriage**- The dictionary of pastoral care and counseling defines marriage as a central feature of all human societies and an institution composed of culturally accepted union of man and a woman, in a husband and wife relationship as well as role that recognize an order of sexual behavior and legalize the function of parenthood (Hunter 204:1990).
- **Pastoral**- the work of priests or teacher, giving people help or advise.
- **Polygamy**- The custom of having more than one wife or husbands at the same time.
- **Sin**- the action of breaking a religious or moral law.
- **Therapeutic**-healing.
- **Therapy**- any treatment designed to improve a health problem or to cure illness.
- **Tshikwilimimba**- the bulging of a man’s tummy, just like a pregnant woman.

- **Trauma-** a shock caused by an unpleasant experience, that affects you for a longer period of time.

CHAPTER 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis will concentrate in the far north of Limpopo Province in Vhembe District among Vhavenda speaking people at Mutale area. It is in this area where the researcher found out that polygamy is rampant as she is the product of polygamous marriage. In Vhavenda culture to marry more than one wife is a sign of richness, power and a symbol of control over women. Readers are made aware that the author will use I, my, me, the researcher and the author when referring to herself throughout this thesis. The researcher grew up in a family that practiced polygamy. All my uncles married more than one wife and one who comes before my father, had ten wives in total. The researcher's mother happens to be the first wife. When the second wife was married, we viewed it as a great achievement and we were all excited. As the family grew bigger, even the challenges and responsibilities grew bigger towards my father.

The researcher's father is physically disabled person, though he was once employed, but now is unemployed due to his disability. Because of him being unemployed, it is difficult for him to meet the needs of the family. Failure to meet the needs of the family resulted into family conflicts, because as the first children to be born in the family, we saw the second wife and her children as the cause of the inability of our father to meet our needs. The conflicts in the family resulted into the breakage of the relationship between the two wives and their children. The researcher's mother as the elderly wife moved out of the house in order to minimize the conflicts, and that created more responsibility to my father in taking care of the two households. The moving out of the first wife brought pain to him as his plan and expectations was to have one big and happy family staying together. Out of the children born with the second wife, four of them happen to be physically disabled, blame was directed to my father as the cause of this misfortune as he is also physically disable, and this traumatized him emotionally.

He suffered in silence for fear of creating more conflicts, because he was respected in the community, sharing his problems with others

would bring shame and embarrassment, and that made him to suffer in silence. The traumatic experiences of husbands within polygamous marriage is made worse because there is no structure in place that deals with conflicts which arises within the polygamous marriage.

The other cause of traumatic experiences within these kind of family set up, is cultural beliefs that takes marriage as a family issue, and that men don't share their problems with outsiders, they would rather go to traditional leaders, and they don't usually go there in fear of publicity or lack of privacy .these men will also not share their problem because of fear of stigma attached to polygamous marriage, especially within Christian circle. They view polygamy as demonic and unchristian, and these men within polygamous marriage, are people who cannot find any help and any position in the church structures, because they are viewed as people who are weak sexually and wicked , therefore they will corrupt "our church" these are the people who are judged before time. They are left alone to solve their own problems, because they are reaping what they have sown. When they don't get any help from the church, they take the problem upon themselves and suffer in silence.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The silence of traumatized husbands within their polygamous marriage is the cause of violence and suicidal acts in many families, because the unshared pain leads to irresponsible reactions that put the whole family in chaos. An incident happen around where the author stays which was publicized on the Sowetan of 11 April 2008: 7 where a man failed to share his problems and end up killing the whole family, his wife and three children. This is how the relative describe the killer “ he is a quiet and hilarious person, when faced with a problem, he will keep it to himself until he decide to take action” these are the kind of people who should get help from the care givers, but the challenge is, how will the care givers know their problems when they don’t share their experiences. The question is, how can men who are traumatized in their polygamous marriage be helped to open up and seek help? Secondly ,what can be done in order to offer help to husband who are survivors of abuse and pain within their polygamous marriage? How can pastoral care givers intervene and bring therapy to this kind of marriage?

Though this man entered this kind of marriage with pride , now that their expectations are shattered , how can they be helped to rebuild their lives , to rebuild their pride within the family and in the community? These are the people who are humiliated and their expectations in life have crumbled down. All men see themselves as the symbol of power, one who should provide food for his family; one who should solve the problems of the whole family , one who should protect the whole family , but when he fails to deliver as he is expected, he is undermined, by his wives, children, the extended family, the in-laws and by the whole community. Gerkin write to say;

“The middle years of life are often years marked not only by achievement and success, but also by failure. Relationships begun in exuberant promise crash or end in stagnant alienation. Commitments made with the best of intentions turn sour and are either abandoned or diminished.” (1997:201).

The author is of the same mind with Gerkin because when all the failures happens, they made him feel useless and disempowered in order to fulfill his responsibilities as a man.

Phophi write to say:

“A husband must provide his family with all they require in the way of clothing, he must build a hut for the wife and hut for the children grain bins, granaries pens for goats and fowls, and supply the household utensils as well” [1988:313]. Phophi continues to say that:

“ If a husband neglect or fail to provide for his family with any of these things he gets a bad name and sometimes the wives desert him”.

When husbands within polygamous marriage get a bad name, he loses his respect, there and then he will develop the habit of self-hatred, and he would accuse everybody around him. That is, where the trauma begins. He cannot think straight and he worries about the realities he is facing which eats him up, and he does not want anybody to see that he is having a problem. Wives would start telling of his failures, scolding him about the hunger, and clothing for the whole family. When all these problems bottled up inside of him, he develops a spirit of self-condemnation. This always leads to aggression which leads to violence, and in this case, the it is the man who is in the receiving end, especially, if he is physically weak

that he cannot defend himself. The wives would harass him to an extreme or beat him up, taking advantage that he will not scream or shout because that will be viewed like part of the weaker sex. They know that he will not report the case to the police because man abuse is not taken seriously.

Since our justice system is male dominated, when a man report a case of abuse by his wife, they will call other officials to come and listen to the beaten man. They will laugh at him saying or telling that he is a weakling and leave him humiliated again without any help. All these traumatic experiences that this men have is a challenge to the church, the church must be able to come with a therapy which will enable them to see their mistake and show them that it is possible to correct them.

Gerkin write to say “We are also reminded that it was the recognition of the past failures and the coming to grips with them that proved salutary to both couples; by recognizing the dangerous directions their relationships were taking, they were able to alter their course”. The aim of this research is to find a way of helping

survivors of these traumatic experiences of husbands within the polygamous marriage to open up and seek pastoral help in order to rebuild their lives.

1.3 RESEARCH GAP

Much has been done on polygamy, but trying to find out on what has been already done, the author discovered that some authors researched on the reason of polygamy like Valerie Moller when he writes to say;

“Polygamous wives keep each other company and look after each other. If necessary one wife can visit the husband working in town while the other remains in charge of the rural homestead” (1985:20) he continues to say; polygamy provides the husband with approved sexual partners on a regular basis (1985:6).

The researcher find out that nothing has been done in connection with the trauma that husbands within polygamous marriage experiences, they are viewed as people who enjoys all the benefits of marriage more than those who married one wife. The researcher through this work will try to close this important gap of unattended

men in order to bring healing and hope to the survivors of this trauma, and try to come up with a model that will help them to regain value and worth in their life.

1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

Through this research, the researcher's aim is to explore ways that can help husbands within polygamous marriage, to open up in times of pain and disappointment, to seek pastoral help. This will also help women to cope in their family set up, though it is not the researchers focus on women. The author will also try to come up with pastoral care model which will empower pastors and the church community to be able to offer help to the traumatized men within their polygamous marriage the therapeutically.

Secondly, the author want to propose a model that can help the church community and the care givers to extend a hand of acceptance and the listening ear to the traumatized husbands into the church membership, and into the leadership positions of the church.

Waruta says:

"The church has to provide professional counselors who will endeavor to direct the abused and the abuser towards Christ and his reign of love and peace" (2000:134) .

I am of the same mind with the above quotation because it is only the church that can extend a hand of fellowship and tell the abused that we care, and if the church achieve that the researcher's aim will be fulfilled. The author is also aiming at seeing the traumatized husbands utilizing the services that are given through the pastoral care givers.

The model which are being proposed, must be able to equip the victims of this trauma, to stand on their own and rebuild their lives through the help that are being offered to them, they must be able to forget their failure, and be able to say , we cannot change our past, but we can build our future. It is also the authors aim to make recommendations to the church and the government structures to start to put in place structures that can take care of the traumatized husbands and ensure them that it is not the end of the world, there

is light at the end of the tunnel. This will also give a biblical teaching, on how we can avoid conflict that arises within the polygamous marriage, and to sound a warning to those who are intending to marry more than one wife, to know the risk that goes with that practice.

1.5 THE ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

The author need to be careful when dealing with questionnaires, so as not to destabilize the family life style of the couples, whom even though they are in the polygamous family live happily and peacefully.

It is therefore, ethical for me to explain clearly the purpose of this assessment to those who will take in answering the questionnaire, and be prudent enough not to disclose sensitive issues which may need their special permission. Indeed I will have to exercise the seal of confidentiality, and I will build up the high level of trust and confidence in the whole process, which at the end will bear good fruits and mutual understanding and readiness to share openly.

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The researcher would like to limit her research to men who are being traumatized within their polygamous marriage, specific reference to Vhavenda in Vhembe District Limpopo in South Africa.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

2.1 METHODOLOGY

Three models of working in this area will be used and later explain how they will be a caring model of working in polygamous marriages. The methodology that the author elected to use is the shepherding Theory contained in Charles Gerkin and Nick Pollard's Positive Deconstruction Theory. Gerkin share great insights about the method of caring and says:

"The Shepherding model is one of the four Biblical models priest, prophets, wisdom, and shepherd for pastoral care used by Him is first appropriated from the religious experience which speaks of the care of Yahweh for Yahweh's people. Gerkin alludes that " the prophetic, priestly, and wisdom models of caring ministry we inherit from the Israelites community are not, the only biblical images with which we pastors have to identify. Another, insight he share is that of caring leader as shepherd (1997: 27).

I am of the same mind with Gerkin, in that a caring leader must be ready to go an extra mile with the traumatized men until their lives are restored, they must be ready to journey with them even among their enemies. The presence of a caring leader with those who are traumatized is of highly importance.

Nick Pollard explain Positive Deconstruction as “ The recognizing and affirming of the elements of truth to which individuals already holds, but also helps them to discover for themselves the inadequacies of the underlying worldviews they have absorbed. Deconstruction= helping people to deconstruct (take apart) what they believe in order to look carefully at the belief and analyses it. Positive = the deconstruction is done in a positive way in order to replace it with something better (Pollard 1997: 44). Pollard will be used in order to connect where Gerkin falls short , shepherding model is helpful in caring but does not enter into the space of developing a person. Positive deconstruction helps in deconstructing a person’s life. For example, the shepherd will help a person to reconstruct their life, especially where things were bad, by taking the good side of that person in order to reconstruct it.

Both the qualitative and quantitative approaches will be employed in this research. The primary approach that will be used in this research will be qualitative, the reason being that the author believes that there are multiple possible realities constructed by different individuals, the available literature is limited and narrative writing skills will be used. The nature of data that will be collected will be documentary, statistically, interview data and questionnaire. Adductive analysis (combination of deductive and inductive analysis) will be used for argumentation. The main aim is to create a caring model that will empower these men in order to cope with this traumatic experiences.

2. 2 WHAT IS A SHEPHERD?

The prophet Ezekiel in his book says:

“As shepherd seeks out flock when some of his sheep have been scattered abroad so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness” (Ezekiel 34:12).

The author is of the same understanding that a shepherd is someone who leads, guide, heal, seek the lost and bring the scattered sheep together. He supply them with water either at the running stream or troughs, in the evening he brought them back and he watches the entrance of the fold throughout the night, acting as gatekeeper.

It also requires tenderness towards the young and feeble driving them to and from the pasture. Pastoral care givers, are shepherds who help the victim's traumatic experiences in polygamous marriage, taping the from the Holy Scriptures in order to enlighten their inner being to get courage in rebuilding their lives and regain their dignity. This method will also empower the pastoral care givers knowledge in their responsibility to the traumatized community and gain to know how to journey with the survivors of this kind of phenomenon, because shepherding is not a one-day responsibility of a pastor. Jesus was always there for his sheep as a good shepherd ". When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice".(John 10:4).

Gerkin again say this words in his method of caring “reflections on the action and words of Jesus as related to the people at all levels of social life, gives us the model sine qua non for pastors relationship with those immediately within our care and those we meet along the way (1997:80) .

The author of this research is aligning herself with Gerkin on the above quotation; this is because it makes the caregivers to be where those who are hurting and abused are found. Waruta says:

“Sometimes all that a pastoral counselor may be able to do is to comfort and encourage the suffering person by his/her presence, prayers, reading a bible verses or just extending a loving touch or embrace, he continues to say the most therapeutic activity in pastoral counseling is the assurance that exudes from human love, with such word as “I am here, I am with you and I care”. (Waruta 200:7).

The author find it very important to be where people are hurting in order to see and offer an ear to listen to their cries, it helps the pastor to be contextual to the hurting husbands and it also helps them to open up in sharing their experiences.

Adams also supports Gerkin and Waruta's view on the presence of the shepherd with his sheep "shepherds are with the sheep. Keeping watch over their flock by night, passing through the valleys where every shadow lurk the possibilities of death from wild animals, a gently leading those young and gathering the lambs (see Isaiah 40:11, Ezekiel 34:15.Psalm 23) it is the shepherd who leads them out and who goes before them" John 10:3-4. He defends them from wolf by his rod. No wonder shepherds are called simply, but "leaders" in Hebrews 13:7, 17 and 24. That is why the writers may urge the sheep to consider their ways of life and to imitate their faith (v.7). The shepherd is an involved example (1980: 322-323).

Pastoral care giver must be where the traumatized husbands are, let he/she be an example in the community, he/she must practice what he preach.

The author of this research discovered that shepherding needs total commitment and heart for the sake of other people who are hurting. To offer therapeutic counseling to the traumatized husbands it

also needs patience, tolerance and long suffering in helping the victims to feel safe so that they may share their experiences without fear of being rejected and judged. It is also a challenge to the pastoral shepherds to journey with the victims until the healing stage is achieved. Waruta goes on to say: "A shepherd is a leader and companion of the flock. A good shepherd is characterized by gentleness, strength, flexibility, solidarity, concern and love for the flock. In other words, the role that shepherd plays is important in healing the wounds of the traumatized people.

The wounded and the traumatized husbands need a person who can be where they are, who will not condemn them, will support , love them, respect them as they are and the wisdom to deconstruct them until they find themselves and see the need to change. Pollard is helpful in entering their lives by suggesting a method of positive deconstruction. One way of helping them is taking them from where they are, for the husbands who have been traumatized they need somebody who will demonstrate the love that God have for them.

Pollard writes to say:

“ if we tell people of God’s love without demonstrating that love, our words are empty and hypocritical. God has given us a gospel of love and reconciliation. We must communicate it in that way.” (Pollard 1997: 22-23).

David in Psalm 23 sees God as a good shepherd who leads his people in the path of righteousness, who restore the souls of his people walk with the people and protect them though faced with all evil and even death. When David considers that God is his shepherd, he boldly says, “I shall not want”. He sees his needs being supplied.

The need of husbands within polygamous marriages is to see their dignity and integrity being restored. Gerkin’s model of shepherding connects with the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ, for example, Jesus cared for the people in his teaching in the parables in Luke 15: 1 – 31, the parable of the lost sheep in verses 4 – 7, the parable of the lost coin in verses 8 -10, and the parable of the lost son in verses 11 – 31. These parables depicts that Jesus cares for marginalized and forsaken individuals. The author finds that the shepherding method of Gerkin is a relevant method to be used in rebuilding the traumatized men in their polygamous

marriages. The parables help us to see how Christ entered the world of broken people, deconstructing their lives and restoring them back into their community.

Men who are in polygamous marriages are a group of people who are viewed as worst sinners by the Christian community. These are the people who cannot be offered any position in the church. In other words they are rejected by the very same community that suppose to heal them. Some of the churches went to an extent of refusing them membership of their church. Husbands within polygamous marriages have the right to be treated by the church like other members of the church because when Christ died on the cross, he also died for them. They therefore, deserve the respect and acceptance in the church without stigmatization. The church must offer an ear to listen to their stories and offer therapeutic counseling and bring total healing to them and help them gain the respect they lost at home, and in the society.

Although their intentions of marrying more than one wife were influenced by many reasons which some of them are unacceptable

to the church, but when they come to repentance, who is the church to refuse them when Jesus accept them. Jesus asked the woman who was caught red handed committing adultery, after her accusers were gone, he asked. “Where are your accusers, has anyone condemned you?” She said “no not one my Lord” and Jesus said to about her background or her status but because she was a person created in the image of God, he forgave her and so are we challenged to do the same. We must shepherd God’s people without prejudice and discrimination. That is what the church is called for, to care and not to judge. The bible shares ways and examples for us on how to do pastoral care as Jesus did. He commanded his disciples to do like he commanded to all nations. The method of deconstructing their lives is important, especially when you are a caring shepherd.

In John 21:13 Jesus asked Peter three times whether he loves him more than others and when Peter said yes Lord, he gave him the same instruction to the question he asked him, to feed the sheep, feed the lambs and tend the sheep. This is a caring ministry is called to deliver He wanted this to be very clear to Peter that he should be a real shepherd. Gerkin puts it this way:

“Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has left us a commandment which concerns all Christians that we should render the duties of humanity or as the scripture calls them, “the works of mercy” to those who are afflicted and under calamity, that we should visit the sick, endeavor to set free the prisoners and perform acts of kindness to our neighbors whereby the evil of their present time may in some ways be lightened” (1997: 42).

The above quotation reminds us of what Christ meant when he said: “The son of man came not to be served but to serve” Mat.20:28. He served people by identifying himself with them, the afflicted, those that have been rejected by their society, those viewed as the worst sinners. He got to their homes, ate with them, and took their pains away. In the same way he came to take away the pains of those who are being traumatized in their polygamous families. That is why he said: “Come to me all ye who are heavy laden and I will give you rest” Math.11:28.

2.3 PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION

The author found the model used by Gerkin, Adams and Waruta to be relevant in bringing healing to the traumatized husbands and their families. From the stories of traumatized men, the author will get to know their problems and the effects of their problems and help them by bringing Christ the good shepherd to their situations. The author will share stories of traumatized husbands and apply shepherding and positive deconstruction method . In the following chapter, the author will explain polygamy in full, its causes and its effect on the victims.

CHAPTER 3

UNDERSTANDING POLYGAMY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to present an analysis of the impact of polygamous marriages on children and women. Emphasis will be placed on the impact that polygamous marriages have on children, women and the family structure in general. Relevant literature on polygamy and marriage in general will be analysed to provide the context within which polygamy must be understood. This chapter will also reflect on the information gathered from interviews that were conducted as part of the research. The extent to which literature and interview data complement each other will also be determined.

3.2. MARRIAGE

3.2.1 Concept marriage defined

Waruta (2005) defines marriage as the approved social pattern whereby two or more persons establish a family. Marriage was and continues to be regarded as a very important aspect in the

development of humankind, church and culture. It is assumed that marriage takes place in instances where a love relationship exist between a man and a woman. From a Christian perspective, marriage is also regarded as a relationship which brings together the human and divine. This view stems from the understanding that marriage has been created and uniquely blessed by God. The position of God in the institution of marriage seems to somehow lost its meaning in some of African communities. There also exist a perception in the African communities that a Western marriage which involves a wedding ceremony with a white wedding dress, suits, flowers, cake, decorations is a proper and blessed marriage, especially within the Christian tradition. It can however be argued that this view dismisses the reality that different cultures have different approaches to their interpretations of what marriage is all about.

In the African context, marriage is not a Western wedding as there are significant differences that underline the two types of marriage. For example, in the African context, lobola forms an integral part of the marriage. The understanding is that marriage is not just about the two people involved. This is because marriage involves the families of the two

people who are getting married. In the African community marriage is core of and one's identity. It is a way of expanding and extending the name of the family, the culture or even clans. Some people get into marriage without the knowledge of what marriage is, and without knowing what they are committing themselves to. Waruta had this to say:

“For African people, marriage is the focus of existence. It is a point where all members of a given community meet: the departed, the living and those yet to be born. All the dimensions of time meet here and the whole drama of history is repeated, renewed and revitalized. Marriage is a drama in which everyone becomes an actor or actress and not just a spectator” (Waruta & Kinoti 2005:103).

In line with Waruta’s argument, marriage has to be seen as the drama of two people playing equal roles, characterized by twists and turns. Sometimes the actors conduct the drama of marriage in an abusive manner. As a result, the “spectators” tend to lose interest on marriage in fear of the abusive nature of some marriages. This is as a result of the abuse that women are often subjected to within marriages.

Marriage is characterized by rites of communication through which the couple is welcomed into social adulthood. To be in a blessed marriage, consensus needed to be reached between the two families. This includes the process of paying lobola (bride-price) to the family of the bride. This however, is not regarded as the selling of the daughter , but an essential element that signifies the appreciation for them raising the girl for the bridegroom. This is also seen as a way of cementing the union of the two households and clans from which the couples belong. Furthermore, with their blessings, a wife would be handed to the bridegroom, though this process. It must be noted that although general practice remains the same, the exact details differ between customs or clan. Fortes have this to say:

“ The transaction of marriage were carried out at two levels, first between the couples, and then between the household. Moreover, marriage was understood as the process of taking many years to complete. The relationship between the man’s household and that of his wife or wives was expected to continue without an end in

normal circumstances which include the birth of the child” (Fortes & Dieterlen 1965:273).

In order for marriage to succeed there is a need for the relationship to be blessed by the family, clan, community and the church. This is not optional, but a step in which one has to undergo before a marriage is finalised. In some African communities, it is not the wedding ceremony that really matters , but the acceptability of the entire marriage process and adherence to established procedures to the satisfaction of the families.

In some African communities, marriage was arranged by parents and elders and the couple has to simply abide by the decisions of the elders. However, although this is still practiced in some communities, there is a shift in that partners have a significant role to play in initiating the marriage. However, even in the changing environment, they still seek the involvement and approval of their parents and elders. The supportive structures are set at the beginning of the process. It is important to note that if they are not followed, that marriage may face difficulties.

3.2.2 African Marriage

In the African context, marriage that leads to divorce could be justified if a woman gives birth to girls only. There still exist, in some quarters, a belief that boys are more important than girls because they will be able to sustain the family name as opposed to girls (given that girls get married and change their surnames).

According to Musimbi Kanyoro:

“ before marriage, a woman did not have an independent identity. A woman was regarded as the daughter of her father. After marriage she became the wife of her husband”
(Oduyoye & Kanyoro 1995: 89).

The quotation above confirms the perception that in the African context, a male child was given a higher status by their father than a girl child. This is because he will sustain the family name.

According to Mwamwenda:

“ a son is considered to be of special significance because is an heir of his father’s name and wealth and he will be responsible for the well-being of his mother when his father is no more, thus enabling the latter’s spirit to be accepted into the other world ” (Mwamwenda 1995: 383).

African culture draws a responsibility line for both daughters and sons. It is in this context that a boy child is seen as the highest symbol in the family and has a higher status in the family. This state of affairs places women in a less powerful situation in the family. They become more dependent on man who holds more power within marriage. This situation accounts for most abuse that take place within a marriage set up. As a result, women who are unable to give birth to a male child are often divorced. Alternatively, the husband marries a second wife, thus polygamy, in order to give birth to male child.

3.3. POLYGAMY

3.3.1 Polygamy defined

Polygamy is a form of marriage in which a person has more than one spouse at the same time. It is often discussed as the other side of monogamy; a relationship in which a person has only one spouse at a given time. In instances where a woman has more than one husband, although generally rare, it is referred to as polyandry. Marriage relationships that involve multiple husbands and wives are referred to as group marriage.

According to Elbedour, Onwuegbuzie, Cardine, and Abu-Saad (2002: 255), polygamy represents expanded family structures that are based on marriages involving a husband with two or more wives. Hamdan (1999), further states that polygamy is defined as a marital system in which one man is married concurrently to more than one woman. Despite some reports that polygamy is in decline, it remains a prominent feature in societies of sub-Saharan Africa. It must however be noted that it is difficult to obtain statistics on the prevalence of polygamy.

Polygamy often applies regardless of whether the relationships are recognized by the state or not. It is in this context that in areas of study such as sociobiology and zoology, polygamy is used in a broad sense to mean any form of multiple mating. It is important to note that different countries may or may not include all forms in their laws relating to polygamy. In this regard, Elbedour, Onwuegbuzie, Cardine, and Abu-Saad (2002: 255) indicate that polygamy is legally and widely practiced in 850 societies worldwide.

According to the World Book Encyclopedia Volume 15: 650, Polygamy refers to a system in which a man is to marry more than one wife at the same time or less commonly in which a woman is married to more than one husband. The word polygamy comes from the Greek word, meaning many marriages e.g. polygamy which is more specific term for the practice of marrying more than one wife.

Polygamy was regarded as an acceptable and valid form of marriage among Africans, despite their challenges. They viewed monogamy (the state of having one wife) as natural forms of marriages. In most cases people who would marry more than one

wife were economically stable. Those in poor background would then marry one wife because they could not afford to maintain wives. A man with one wife, in other societies, could not speak in the meetings of elders; such a man was regarded as a weak man who cannot stand for his responsibilities.

As Mbiti observes:

“the more wives a man has the more children he is likely to have, and the more children the stronger the power of immortality in the family. Such a man has the attitude that the more we are the bigger I am (1969: 142)

In this regard, a women’s procreative power was or is important for the husband and for the sake of strengthening his power or immortality. This has been a culture among polygamist within their marriages. Some African women had acknowledged living with this kind of heavy life, of being “children producers” in order to make their husbands happy and to secure their marriage. In other words, they lost who they are or identity as individuals or women, especially

being created in the image and likeness of God. They can only be recognized by the number of children they produce, especially boys. Polygamy has been viewed by some people as the major or course of oppression within the cycle of marriage to African women.

Before we come to causes of polygamy, the researcher wants her readers to know that in polygamous marriages, like in a monogamous marriage, there are good and bad things about this kind of marriage. Firstly let's look at the good side of polygamy.

3.4. CAUSES OF POLYGAMY

3.4.1 Economic reasons

There are various reasons why men engage in polygamous marriages. According to Hamdan (1999), in some cultures, polygamy is a marker of economic success. The implication is that the more wives a man has, he is then perceived to be more successful in society. What has also become evident is that polygamy is a common practice in areas where subsistence farming requires large labor force, serving as a means to ensure the family's socio-economic stability. It is therefore evident that child bearing in

contexts where polygamy is practiced, it is also meant to ensure that the family has enough labour to generate enough food for the family.

Income generation is one of the main reasons for marrying more than one wife. This is because the bigger the family, the bigger the family income as there will be more children working in the fields; which in turn results in the production of more food for the family. In this case, surplus food is sold at the market to generate income for the family. The children who born in a polygamous family become part of the work force. It is against this background that if a women does not bear children, it sometimes leads to a man seeking to marry a second wife.

According to Julian “children contribute to the family’s earnings or economy by working in the fields, and they represent a considerable financial liability that many couples choose to defer or avoid altogether” (1986:326). The researcher is of the same view because most men in a polygamous marriage, especially those who depend on farming for survival, want to have as many children as possible in order to help them in the fields. When no children are born in that family, it creates a problems for the husband and the whole

family.

The inability to meet the needs of the family often creates extreme pressure on the husband as it is often seen as a measure of a “real man”. This problem often leads to conflict within the family. Failure to manage his wealth often diminishes a man’s economic power. As a result, this could lead to frustration, humiliation and trauma to the man.

As Gyimah (2005) indicates, while wealth may be a decisive factor for a man in securing multiple wives in many polygamous cultures, few may have sufficient resources to effectively support multiple partners. As such, the husband’s resources may be thinly spread among his wives and children such that wealth per capita may not follow the same pattern as household wealth. As a result, women in polygamous marriages have limited resources as compared to their counterparts in monogamous marriages.

3.4.2 Avoiding adultery

Some of the main reasons cited by husbands for marrying a second wife include the need to avoid adultery. The general feeling in most instances is that second wives perceive polygamy as a way of avoiding adultery. On the other hand most first wives cited “to satisfy lust” as their husbands’ main reason for marrying again(Ding Jo-Ann, 2010).

3.4.3 Migrant labour

It has also become evident that when men are employed in the cities, they are forced to leave their wives back home. As a results men are forced to look for the alternative ways to meet their sexual needs, given that they visit their wives once or twice a year. This kind of situation places men in a situation where they are pressurized to marry a second wife.

Moller writes to say:

“polygamy also used as a solution to solve the problems of being away from the family” (1985:20).

It must however be noted that the decision to marry a second wife often leads to conflict between wives because the income generated by the husband will not be enough to support both wives. This kind of conflicts will finally affect the husband, and cause tension between the children.

3.4.4 Barrenness

According to Phophi , “children are commonly believed to bring joy to any household. The desire to have them is certainly one of the major reasons that the couples marry”. (Phophi 1982:217). As Phophi contends, this paper argues that barrenness of the wife robs the husband and the whole family of the joy that comes with the coming of a new person in the family. The husband often takes the decision to marry another wife on the assumption that it is the wife who is not capable of bearing children; when in actual fact he could be the one who has a problem. Sometimes the husband discovers that he is the one who is having a problem after marrying three wives. This becomes unfair to the other wives. As a result, the man could be traumatized.

3.4.5 Cultural practices

There is a Vhavenda saying that says “*Munna ndi ndou ha li muri muthihi*”, which means that, men are like an elephant, they don’t feed on one kind of a tree. The implication in this regard is that men are not suppose to marry one wife. This line of thinking reduces wives only to the level of objects. This statement supports the argument that marrying more than one wife is a cultural practice among Vhavenda. Another cultural practice that leads to men to marrying more than one wife is that when a family owes another family, and it is unable to pay back the money or the herd of cattle they promised in marriage, if that family has a daughter they will replace the money or cattle with the daughter, to settle the debt. In short women and girls are used as commodities to settle debts of men.

In this regard, Waruta further states that:

“Men still believe that women are their possession, and that they can do with them what they like. They feel they can take their aggression out on their wives and no one has the right to tell them they can’t (2000:128)”.

She will either be given to the father or his son or any member of the family even when he is married and thus become the second wife. Most of the girls who are married because of their parents failure to pay the debt, are married when they are still young. The challenge in this regard is that the age gap between them leads to the difference of interest between the second wife and the husband. As a result, this creates conflicts which brings pain rather than pleasure in the marriage.

3.4.6 Sexual outlet

According to Moller (1985:48) “When a wife has a small baby she is not allowed to cook for the husband. Culturally, this makes it necessary to have two wives”. It must also be taken into consideration that in

Vhavenda culture, if the wife is having a small baby, she cannot cook or meet with the husband sexually because she is considered unclean. Moller further states that “if the first wife is too old for sex, then the second wife will take her place.” In this cultural paradigm, when a woman reaches menopausal stage, there is a believe that if a man meet her sexually, he will suffer from a disease called “tshikwylimimba”. This is a condition where a man’s stomach bulges like a pregnant woman. To prevent this problem they marry another wife.

3.5. THE BENEFITS OF POLYGAMY

Although from a Christian perspective polygamy is discouraged, from a cultural perspective, there are certain benefits derived from polygamous marriages.

It could be argued that monogamy promotes adultery, because it leaves many women unmarried , which at the end causes those who are not married to have relationships with married men in search of the sense of belonging, security, and sexual fulfillment. Whereas in polygamous marriages, no one is unmarried except those who choose to stay

single. Polygamy minimizes the problem of adultery and unfaithfulness. It is also seen to be a way of preventing the spread of sexual diseases.

In polygamy, no children are fatherless , because they are born inside within a marriage set up. No children will be found in the street because of lack of proper care and love in the family. There is no negligence of the children by the father to offer proper guidance, as all the resources in the family are shared. In monogamous marriages, the unfaithfulness results in children growing up without care and moral guidance from their father because they will not be allowed to come closer to their father. Most of them grow without the father figure in their lives because the father does not want to be identified with the child in fear of the stigma which is attached to polygamy, more especially in the Christian community.

It has also become evident in this study that there are many children who are born outside of the wedlock by those who condemn polygamous marriages. They practice polygamy in secret. In this case, children are born, and houses built for the secret wives and children. In polygamy children find equal share as everything is done openly

without fear of embarrassment. On the other hand, in monogamous marriages some husbands engage in polygamous marriages in secret. As such, the husband lives with a guilty feeling as the “other” wife becomes too demanding.

Lastly, the Venda culture , when the husband dies, the wife of the deceased will be given to *khotsi munene* (uncle) to be his wife. This is meant to ensure that the family structure remains intact and that the children are well taken care. Monogamous relationships on the other hand do make such a provision This practice leaves the widow and her children in a safe environment because her sexual needs will be met, and children who are born out of this relationship are legitimate .

3.6. CHALLENGES OF POLYGAMOUS MARRIAGES

The following discussion deals with the challenges that polygamous marriages presents to the family structure in general. These challenges deal with the nature of the relationships within the family set up.

3.6.1 Partiality of husbands

According to Phophi (1984:305), “The greatest problem among the wives in a polygamous marriage is favoritism. When the husband shows preference for the particular wife, this leads to jealousy and hatred towards the most favored wife. When jealousy amongst the wives becomes very bad, women sometimes resort to resort killing the other in order to become the sole favorite. . Sometimes the jealousy has an impact on the children. The children are sometimes hurt as a way of making sure that the mother forced to leave in order to protect her children.

3.6.2. Impotence

The impotence of men is one of the biggest problems in a polygamous family. It is sometimes difficult for men to accept that they have such a problem. This often contributes to man marrying of more than one wife, thinking that it is not him who has a problem., The African concept is that the woman is always the one who has a problem. Marry the second wife is a way of proving to the family that he can bear children. However, when that fails to help, it creates

conflicts between him and the wives. Trauma in his life is caused by not being sincere as a result of that he loses all the respect. The newly married wife is a problem, because having children is one of her expectations when coming to this family. The failure of the husband or the impotence of this man leads to the unfaithfulness of the wives. According to Phophi , “The impotence of man is a disease which afflicts men and women. The men afflicted with it is a man merely by virtue of wearing male dress, if he marries a wife his only interest is his plate of food, but as for procreating a family, that is beyond him”.

This happens to be a traumatic experience to the husband whose plan is to have a big family. Having no one to share the burden with, and fear of stigma and humiliation attached to this kind of a problem, men die in their silence. Several of them are depressed, and are not able to share this with others, because it is regarded by culture and society as sign of weakness.

3.6.3. Relationship between wives

The ideal relationship must be sought in love without the power or authority of either one over the other. Marriage is a bond that locks people in the boat of humanity. It is something grounded by love and unity. Moreover, relationship within polygamous marriage strengthens the family and brings unity and oneness to children. However, this is not the case in some polygamous marriages. In some families, women pretend to one another in fear of the husband, but hating each other on the other hand. Some women do not hide that they hate each other. This becomes a burden to the husband within that polygamous family. This behavior causes problems and suffering on the children. The relationship becomes dull and the hatred line is sketched. On the other hand, jealousy can be seen as the major cause of rejection, isolation and hatred. This also creates rivalry amongst the wives.

In some polygamous marriages, one discovers that among the wives , there is one wife who controls almost everything that belongs to the husband. A husband even becomes afraid to say anything that will go against the will of this particular senior wife. She often abuses every

member of the family. It is sometimes believed that such situation has to do with African magic or witchcraft.

However, the following has been pointed out as some of the deep causes of abuse amongst the women within this polygamous marriage:

- Competition and opposition- there is a strong contest for love by the husband. One uses every kind of powers to win his love. They often become enemies and oppose one another as a way of pulling off from the marriage relationship. They also tell their children bad things about the other women.
- Greed and envy for possession, that others should not get hold of that which she has. Everything has to be controlled or done her own way as the first wife and the rest should not get anything.
- Tribalism or clans: tribalism or clan loyalty is one of the causes of the fights. They often say to those who do not belong to the man's

culture, ‘you came all the way to take my husband’. They conclude by saying children born out of this marriage are combination of two cultures. Therefore, they cannot be pure Vendas. They are called in “Tshivenda” “khanga mutupo” which means a child born by parents from different cultures.

- Gossip - is also mentioned as one of the weakness in polygamous marriage which women do with outsiders or their children talking bad about other wives in their absence.
- Lack of trust - Women in polygamous marriage do not trust each other, in the sense that, when they see one of them with the husband, they conclude that she is talking about them.
- Education - this causes more conflicts amongst women in polygamous marriages because if one wife is educated and the rest are not, it creates hatred and jealousy which can result in women resorting to witchcraft or poisoning the one who is educated. In some instances, if children are to be educated, it has to be all the children in the family in order to prevent

killings of another through this African ‘magic’.

- False accusation - this becomes a norm or standard of living , that if one is not feeling well, the conclusion is that such a person is bewitched by other wives in this marriage. Creating lies about others in order to make them suffer from the misuse of powers by the husband.
- Jealousy and hatred - above all this, the last two things which some African women (Venda women in this regard) love to say when the relationship is sour, “ I will hate you and your shadow until death”. So their jealousy creates hatred to one another that leads to quarrels an infighting.

In dealing with women inside polygamous marriages, one has to examine the nature of the family and the culture of all the people in the family. The above are some of the issues that contribute to conflicts within polygamous marriage.

There is a need to build the relationship between women in

Polygamous marriages. Educating those women who stand at the apex of culture claiming to be culturally rooted in order to put pressure on other women, has to be challenged by both civilized men and women.

There is also a need to deconstruct the meaning of marriage to some African people in order to reconstruct it in a manner that will liberate both men and women. This is what Pollard calls the positive deconstruction, when says that; "The process of positive deconstruction recognizes and affirms the elements of truth to which individuals already hold, but also helps them to discover for themselves the inadequacies of the underlying worldviews they have absorbed. The aim is to awaken a heart response that says, 'I am not so sure that what I believe is right after all. I want to find more about Jesus'" (Pollard 1998:44). This call for reconstruction should not look loosely to cultural understanding, but also to Biblical understanding of this oneness of the flesh.

Patriarchy or the power of men is one of the problems that blinds many women; and as a result they oppressed. They are regarded to be

symbols of dependence who do not need to be consulted in any decision making processes. They are denied of their right assert themselves in society. This goes further in the process of raising children. Boys are taught to be responsible and talk, walk, and act like a powerful man, while girls are taught to be good house wives, respect, silent to their husband, be submissive and adaptive in any situation.

In the suffering of women in their marriages and social life, women are often told in many churches and by many ministers that they should be cooperative in order to prevent these abuses. On the other hand, they are not told what they should do when other women oppress other innocent women.

Ackermann had this to say that “ one hears of powerful women in the African history, but their importance is played down in the same manner in which women in the Bible are played down”. (Ackermann 1991: 383). Perhaps the emancipation of women is becoming a threatening thing which cannot be fought at all cost. Women in the polygamous marriage are equal whether you were married first or

last. They are all human beings who need to be treated with respect. There is a need for these women to respect each other and learn to share the life of their husband.

The whole issue of polygamy, its causes , the challenges that are faced by women and children, is the responsibility of the church and community leaders to challenge men who think that marrying more wives is the solution to their problems and a means to get wealth, thus forgetting the responsibilities that comes with it.

Women in this kind of a family have a responsibility to accept first that it is true they are married to this man and cannot change it. they also need to accept that their children share the same father, that they share the same husband and work towards bringing harmony in the family. If the relationship between wives is good, it will also be possible for the children to accept each other . It is also the role of women to speak out and show the husband that he must not show partiality between them as his wives and treat his children equally.

3.7. THE IMPACT OF POLYGAMY

3.7.1 Psychological problems

Among psychiatric patients, a polygamous marriage is associated with depressive disorders, anxiety states. Polygamous wives may live together, although they most commonly have independent households, where each lives with her children (Broude, 1994). The literature indicates that there are differences between senior and junior wives in a polygamous marriage. For example, marital satisfaction is related to wife order in polygamous

Elbedour, Onwuegbuzie, Cardine, and Abu-Saad (2002) further indicate that quantitative and qualitative studies have been conducted regarding the impact of polygamy on the behavioral, emotional, and academic adjustment of children. It has however become evident that contextual studies on the impact and extent of polygamy on children are necessary. The extent to which polygamy could benefit or be harmful to children in comparison with children raised in monogamous marital structures also needs to be determined.

What is quite apparent is that a considerable body of research from diverse perspectives suggests that family structure has a substantial impact on the mental health of children. In this regard, Elbedour, Onwuegbuzie, Cardine, and Abu-Saad (2002: 257) indicate that there is a growing interest in family characteristics that reduce the risk of child development disturbances and psychopathology. It is in this context that they argue that a supportive family can offer a protective factor against developmental risks. Several studies have stressed that an intact family with two biological parents provides the optimal developmental environment for children and plays a crucial role in reducing psychological distress in children.

Compared to their counterparts living in intact families with both biological parents, researchers have found that children living in nontraditional family structures exhibit poor adjustment, as indicated by aggressive and antisocial behavior, conduct disorders, communication difficulties, adjustment problems, poor self-concept, high school-dropout rates, sexual activity, drug abuse, and alcoholism (Elbedour, Onwuegbuzie, Cardine, and Abu-Saad (2002:257).

3.7.2 Marital conflicts

Researchers and developmental theorists have developed hypothesis on a number of risk factors associated with polygamous marital structure. These factors include marital conflict, marital distress, absence of the father, and financial stress. It is important to note that the relationship between marital functioning and child level of adjustment is much stronger when marital conflict exists, compared to general marital distress (Elbedour, Onwuegbuzie, Cardine, and Abu-Saad, 2002:258).

Elbedour, Onwuegbuzie, Cardine, and Abu-Saad (2002: 259) further state that the main challenge is that polygamous marriages often lead to family dissolution. In some instances, men may leave their first wives and their children in order to live with their second wives and their children. In these cases, the father may not participate in the upbringing of all of his children, and those left behind may experience feelings of grief and abandonment, as well as lower levels of parental supervision. It is evident that the father's absence is often negatively associated with poor academic performance, teenage pregnancy, and a higher incidence of high-risk behavior. Often, the effects on male children are strongest as boys often experience difficulties with self-control, sex role, gender identity, and academic

performance.

3.7.3 Financial problems

According to Elbedour, Onwuegbuzie, Cardine and Abu-Saad (2002: 260), economic stressors have a negative impact on the happiness of a marriage. As such, polygamous families produce more children than do monogamous marriages. This increases the financial pressures on the family unit. In most instances, women in polygamous marriages are less likely to work outside the home than are women in monogamous marriages. This often results in fewer economic resources being available to invest in their children. For example, Agadjanian and Ezeh (2000) compared communities with low and high levels of polygamy. In the polygamous areas, they found that 71% of the wives had no education, and only 2% had at least a secondary education. In monogamous areas, they found that 35% of the wives had no education, and 17% had at least a secondary education. In addition, the husbands in polygamous marriages also were likely to have achieved a lower educational level than those in monogamous relationships (Elbedour, Onwuegbuzie, Cardine and Abu-Saad (2002: 260).

According to Beall (2010), women and children who have escaped polygamous families have been affected in all aspects of their lives. Because of the secrecy that conceals polygamous relationships, this information is not public knowledge, nor easily obtained.

In general, it takes an unusually strong and resourceful woman to successfully leave a polygamist relationship. According to Beall (2010), one of the most challenging obstacles may be the mental and emotional conditioning which makes the negatives of the experience normalized by the doctrines and teachings. These include the expectations and social mores that women have most likely grown up with since childhood and there is the stigma of breaking loyalties and secrets. What further compounds problems that women encounter are the emotional wounds with which she and her children must deal Beall (2010).

In this regard, Beall (2010) further states that it must be understood that the basic structure of polygamy is generally authoritarian and secretive. The men who practice it believe they have the authority to govern and control their wives and children in the family relationship. This form of control can take extreme forms as it is maintained through secrecy.

3.7.4 Power relations

In some instances, in polygamous communities there is a hierarchy of polygamous marriages existing under the leadership of a central leader. This leader is generally referred to as "the prophet" and is the leading patriarch of the community. One of the problems with a hierarchical structure has to do with the effects of power and control. Absolute power tends to corrupt, and it is not unusual for the patriarch or prophet in a polygamous community to become corrupted by the sweeping power he possesses (as evidenced by the history of these polygamous cults). This corruption extends into the power and control of polygamous husbands and fathers, who are not uncommonly guilty of abuses that could properly be described as domestic violence and child abuse. This corruption is also manifested by "child brides" (girls fourteen or fifteen and sometimes younger who are given in marriage) (Beall, 2010).

3.7.5 Children

What is evident is that generally, women in polygamous marriages report significantly higher psychological distress and other psychological problems. These are in addition to significantly more problems in the family

set up, marital relationships and low life satisfaction. One possible reason that the polygamous family structure was not associated with a negative child outcome may derive from the societal framework in which it is rooted. The literature suggests that in collective societies, individuals define themselves in terms of their relationships with others, and their self-esteem and self-evaluation are drawn from the collective and from a sense of belonging (Hamdan, 1999).

Thus, collectivity may constitute a buffer against adverse effects of a polygamous home environment. Another variable that may act as a mediator between the polygamous family structure and the child's development is the commonality of the practice of polygamy in the particular society. Thus, in order to assess the risks and advantages of polygamy to children, the values and norms of the community or ethnic group in which it exists must be taken into account. Apparently, many polygamous cultures play a protective role in moderating the disruptive effects of the family structure, especially in the case of older children.

The additional children that polygamy provides are valued for their labor, emotional support, and ability to provide security for their parents in old

age. The higher the number of children, the greater the family's potential for economic productivity. Some sociologists view polygamy as "a reproductive strategy by which men maximize the number of their offspring but minimize investment in each child". The implication of this practice is that children are deprived of the basic development needs given the extent to which they are required to assist in income generation for the family.

The lack of resources has also proved to be a limiting factor with regard to access to modern health care. Strassmann (1997) has also theorized a harmful effect of polygamy on child survival through the idea of paternal investment. She argues that because polygamous fathers produce many offspring, each particular child is less important unlike monogamous fathers who actively participate in the upbringing of their children. This means that emotional attachment which is important in promoting active childcare may be lacking. The implication is that children in polygamous households may be less catered for and therefore exposed to a higher risk of death than their monogamous counterparts.

In a prospective study of the Dogon of Mali, for example, she found that the odds of childhood deaths were 7-11 times higher in groups with polygamy.

Similar findings have come from studies in Uganda (Brambhatt et al, 2002; Ntozi & Nakanabi, 1997). The main tenet of the selectivity thesis is that rural residents and less educated women are more likely to be in polygamous marriages (Hayase & Liaw, 1997; Westoff, 2003). Women with these characteristics tend to be more traditional in outlook and traditionalism is associated with low status of women. Such women are often less likely to participate in modern health care including maternal and child health programs (Gyimah, 2005).

In Kenya, Gage (1997) found that children in polygamous marriages were less likely to be fully immunized than their counterparts in monogamous unions. Such mothers could thus be holding to customarily childcare practices that may be inimical to the welfare of their children. This is particularly true in Ghana where there are customs and rituals that impinge negatively on children's nutritional status and health (Adongo et al., 1997; Ghana and UNICEF, 1990; Gyimah, 2002).

The other school of thought associates polygamy with an enhanced child survivorship primarily through proximate factors such as longer breastfeeding patterns and inter-birth intervals as well as co-wife social and

economic cooperation. Amankwa (1997) argues that polygamy reduces the risk of infant mortality through a complex web of intermediate factors such as prolonged breastfeeding and longer durations of the inter-birth intervals which are relevant for child health and survival.

A major limitation of previous research on the effects of family structure on child outcomes in the context of sub-Saharan Africa is the implicit view of marriage as monogamous. It is important to ensure that in societies characterized by widespread polygamy, it is useful to distinguish between monogamous and polygamous marital structures to unravel their effects on child outcomes. Among others, the need for this distinction derives from the remarkable differences in household resources which could significantly impact on child outcomes (Gyimah, 2005).

Gyimah (2005) indicates that although previous studies have assessed the link between polygamy and child survival in sub-Saharan Africa, they have been mostly based on qualitative work without controlling for potential confounders. Additionally, given that the presumed protective effects of polygamy are age dependent, the effects of polygamy are generally more pronounced in later childhood. Overall, the empirical results support the

arguments made that it is important to distinguish between two types of marriage forms in cult. Gyimah (2005) further states that the resource stress may lead to overcrowding and poor living conditions. This could potentially increase the vulnerability of children in polygamous families to diseases and perhaps death. In a recent study in Ghana, for example, the risk of diarrhea was found to be 43 percent higher among children in polygamous households compared with their monogamous counterparts.

According to Alean Al-Krenawi (1999), polygamous marriages are often associated with stress, tension, conflict, and disequilibrium in the family structure. Several studies have focused on the phenomena of polygamy from an anthropological perspective, which often relies on the men's perceptions of the practice of polygamy (Ware, 1979). Polygamy has also been studied in terms of fertility (Caldwell & Caldwell, 1990).

A majority of the children of first wives also demonstrated negative emotions towards their fathers marrying again. Up to 60% said they were disappointed when they found out about their fathers' polygamy. More than half were angry and sad. Hardly any felt happy, proud or loved upon hearing the news. Interestingly, the study also revealed that in time, the children of first wives recorded "indifference" as the dominant emotion

towards their fathers' polygamous marriages (Ding Jo-Ann (2010:2).

Children develops different attitude towards the life within the family in which they observe from their parents. In the process of growing or aging, the life in which their parents lived is being copied or taken as the ultimate life style in which they ought to live with. In other words, children become learners or students of their parents, as they are teachers within their families. When children behave differently, they have adopted different culture, values, and finally embrace aggressiveness or even goodness from their parents.

According to Willard Gaylin, “ human development- is the process by which people emerge from childhood in order to become the divers kind of adults we observe- has occupied students of human nature for centuries” (Gaylin 2003: 151). In concurring with Galylin, this is the process by which people emerge from childhood in the sense that their life style is paved by that of their parents. In the development of a person, they copy and strive towards the originality of their parents. For a child to adapt to certain style of living may not even take sometime, but to detach from that it may be difficult if not

impossible.

The strife and hatred within the family, is carried by children during their aging, becomes the norm of the house in which they are adapted and controlled by it. Why people behave differently, has been traditionally attributed to genetic endowment or environmental impact on the basis of culture. The inability of the husband to bring stability within the family, it impacted the life and the character of children in a negative way. The relationship of children and their mothers is also affected, the father usually take sides and favor the children of the most favored wife, and that in itself fueled anger and hatred towards himself. When children discovered that they are not loved, the easiest thing to do is to turn to the street, they become rebellious, they feel rejected and unloved. They behave as misfit in the family and in the community.

Another effect that goes with street life is that , the children suffer lack of love and they experience a high sense of rejection. They feel unwanted and harbor the feeling that nobody cares for them. They also look at the society and those who are able with bitterness and as "enemies". When children are not valued and not cared for by

their parents especially the father, when their needs are not met, they survive by means of theft and expediency- they pickpocket and mug, they snatch handbags and money from other people. They are abused physically and sexually. Rich people use them for criminal activities such as peddling drugs stealing or even killing.

Instability at home, such as strife in a polygamous situation or large family contribute to the frustration of many children, when the father forgets that he married many wives in order to have many children it end up contributing to the presence of street children, and this children hates each other in such a way that they wish each other dead. Mulaifa is one of many children who wished other children from the other wife dead, as he saw them as the cause of his suffering.

Case study 2

I was brought up in a polygamous family, my father married two wives including my mother. My mother happen to be the first wife and I was the first child in the family , I enjoyed to be the only child and the beloved of

my father more as especially because I was a boy. My parents loved me so dearly that is why the name Mulaifa which means an “heir” .In Vhavenda culture, it is only a boy child who becomes an heir of the family, even if you are the last born in the family, girls never inherit the wealth of the family because she will be married.

My father was a business man, life was easy for us because we lacked nothing. We used to spend most of our time in the shop, I started schooling when I was six, it was during that year when my sister was born. The business was flourishing and demanding. When my mother was still nursing the my sister, the work load on my father was too much, instead of looking for somebody to help him, he decided to marry the second wife. To me because I was still young, I did not see any problem in that, I saw somebody who is helping my parents in the business. Since this “ helper” came, my mother never went back to the shop even when my sister was of age. When I asked my mom why are we no longer go to the shop, my

mother told me that, there is somebody helping your dad, and that my sister will break some small breakable stock in the shop. Though I was young, but I noticed that there is something that is bothering my mother. After a year the “helper” was bringing a child with her to the shop, I was doing grade ten by then, when I asked why is she allowed to bring the child to the shop, I was silenced and told not to set a foot in the shop premises, it was a painful experience because I was not used to be shouted at, the silence of my mother made things worse because no one was telling me what was going on. Finally my father end up not coming home in the evenings, I was afraid to ask. We started to lack some food at home, when I asked for money for school fund, I was given by this “helper” and when she gave me she will tell me not to misuse the money as my mother is not working.

One day when coming back from school, I met my father, I knew he was going to town, I ran to the shop knowing

that he is not around, on my arrival, I found the “helper” and her child enjoying themselves drinking some juice which I have long tasted, before I even say a word came in and greeted us by saying “ Aa wee mmane wa Mulaifa”. (How are you Mulaifa’s aunt) I was shocked and she was embarrassed. It was the day I discovered that she was not the helper, but my dad’s second wife. I ran as fast as my body allowed me to confront my mother. My mother confirmed that she is the second wife in the family. She told me not to confront my dad about it as it will cause more conflicts in the family, The second wife hated my mother as the first wife and us as her children, and told my dad not to allow us to set our feet near the shop, she had an abusive character which even my dad was unable to challenge it, and even to challenge her decisions. He kept quite at the expense of our pain and frustrations . I respect my mother in such a way that I didn’t want to disobeyed her and to add more frustration to her.

The attention and the love and care that I use to get from my father was on the second wife's son, my dad finally moved with the second wife and bought a town house . He totally forgot about us, my mother was unemployed, nobody was taking care of us, I drop out of school and started looking for the job to support my mother and my sister. it was not a simple task, I was filled with anger and hatred. Hating the second wife and her kids. At the age of fifteen, the son from the second wife was allowed to drive cars around. I asked myself what was our sin, I asked my mother where did we go wrong to deserve this kind of treatment and rejection from my father, but she didn't have an answer. My life was filled with anger and vengeance towards my father, his second wife and their children as I saw them as the author of all pain and misery in my life and that of my mother and my sister. I tried to think of something that can bring destruction to the second wife and her children, but to no avail. Until today I still live with that anger and hatred which is continually traumatize me and my mother.

Reflection on Mulaifa's story: Mulaifa grew up in a promising and prosperous family which was capable of raising children with brighter future . A family which any child would like to have parents like those of Mulaifa, where food, clothing and medication was not a problem. This was a family where Mulaifa had peace of mind, because it is every child's pride to enjoy and have the love and the ever presence of both parents.

When that peace is disturbed by the coming in of other children due to polygamy, of which those children has the same value with that of the first child, it has negative effects to children more especially when children were taken for granted that they will just understand and accept that we are children from the same father. Children within the polygamous marriages they find themselves being the victim of circumstances, because they are the ones who are affected the most by the ill-treatment within the family, wrong decisions of their fathers, poverty that

comes with polygamy and the negligence of the father in meeting the needs of this children .

The anger of Mulaifa calls for a serious consideration from the fathers, to think about their children, on how their decision of marrying the second wife will impact the future of their children. The anger and bitterness that Mulaifa experienced, lead him to violent actions towards the second wife and her children. He was angry with everybody. The researcher can see how anger and hatred develops within polygamous marriage. Tension becomes part of life . when the father dies one can imagine what will happen.

3.7.6 The effects of trauma on husbands within polygamous marriage.

Polygamy leads to many traumatic experiences. The problems that arises within the polygamous marriage causes several pain in the life of the whole family particularly the husband. The conflicts and the rivalry of the wives affects the husband and the children, and the

enmity among the children also is another cause of trauma in the family, which boils back to the husband as the head of the family. Though the author is aware that the trauma caused by polygamy affects even other people in the family, in this research the author will be limited to the effects of polygamy that traumatizes husbands as I have mentioned in my topic. When dialoging with her co researchers, the researcher has discovered that one of the causes of trauma is depression which comes out at Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

The author find out that men who are survivors of polygamous marriage suffer from post traumatic stress disorder. It occurs mostly when these husbands do not receive help or trauma counseling after the disappointment they got from their marriage which didn't work they way they planned it. These men no longer or capable to solve any problem in their lives, even if the problem is not in connection with the past experience. They connect it to their trauma which was caused by the betrayal that they went through in the past.

The readers have to take note that, PTSD occurs mostly in

situations where trauma counseling has not been done. Therefore, has to be considered as a vital instrument in any traumatic experience, and for this research, men who are survivors of polygamous marriage have to go through serious counseling. There are symptoms of PTSD which can be seen from men who are survivors of traumatic experiences in their polygamous marriages. Some of the symptoms are listed below:

- **Survivor's guilt.**

Guilt is one of the common symptoms of PTSD. Most of men within the polygamous marriages that the author dialogued with indicated that, they felt guilty for betraying their first wives by marrying the other wives, life was manageable when they were two. They live with this guilty feeling for the rest of their lives if pastoral care is not offered to them. Projection feelings of guilt may develop to suicidal thoughts. Suicide will lead to further complication of leaving the children being fatherless which can contribute to street children and widows. The symptoms can be seen when pastors or care givers is working with these men who are survivors of this phenomenon. When survivors of polygamy feel guilty they will be

blaming themselves for everything bad that is happening around them and even in the family. Wimberly writes on how conversation with God can be of vital importance on bringing value and worth to the traumatized people, which the author think even the traumatized husbands can reclaim their dignity by reauthoring and sharing their story with God and other people .a great insight is from Paul's quotation when he says " I forget what is behind me and do my best to reach what is ahead " (Philippians 3:13). The author agrees with Paul because traumatized husbands needs to forget about their failures and brokenness and focus on reclaiming their dignity and get healing from their past.

- **Anger**

Survivors of polygamy especially men, ended up being angry upon themselves and those who influence them to marry more than one wife. They become enemies to their mothers and aunts who encourages them to marry the second wife as a way of solving the problems between him and his first wife. They are angry with themselves because , of their failure to manage their wealth and their

property , failure to resolve their differences with the first wife and lack of patience which lead them to see marrying a second wife as the solution to solve problems. They also become angry with women and see them as bad as those wives who ill-treated them. However, according to Kubler –Roos (1969) anger is important as a process of healing in trauma counseling especially when handled properly. Therefore, pastoral care givers should accommodate feelings that shows anger in order to be helped by care givers.

- **Anxiety**

According to Means (2000) in his book trauma and evil, anxiety is seen as a feeling of fear which traumatized a person when something strange happens. A survivor of polygamy experiences anxiety. Mostly they ventilate and verbalizes things which shows that they are afraid to enter into marriage or fears marriage because of their past experiences that traumatized them.

- **Where is God when it hurt most?**

Where is God when it hurts? This is a common question which traumatized people ask. In this research the author learned that survivors of polygamy don't even identify themselves with God, because these are the people who are refused membership in the church as the author mentioned it in the introduction and these are the people who are not even given any position in the church if they happen to be members. They see God as somebody who doesn't even think about them ,as they are people who are reaping what they sow .if indeed he knows them, why don't he save them from this kind of trauma. These are the people who think that, because they have been rejected by the Christian community even God has rejected them. It only the pastoral care givers who can give an ear and come up with an answer which will bring healing to the survivors of this kind of trauma.

These theological questions are extremely important, if not attended to they may continue to traumatize these men within their polygamous marriages. The researcher see the need from the pastoral care givers to address this kind of theological questions

from the survivors of polygamous marriage.

3.7.7 Impact of polygamy on wives

Ding Jo-Ann (2010) indicates that a landmark study on polygamy in Malaysia has cast doubt on whether husbands in polygamous marriages are able to treat their wives and children equally as required by the Quran. The study, conducted by Sisters in Islam in collaboration with academics from several local universities, found that while almost 80% of husbands interviewed said they could be fair, their wives disagreed. Researcher Masjaliza Hamzah said just over half of the second wives interviewed in the study said their husbands could be fair. Among first wives, only 35% shared this view. “Among the wives, the first wife is the most dissatisfied. She experiences the strongest effects as she is able to compare the polygamous marriage with when she was in a monogamous marriage.

Ding Jo-Ann (2010) further states that even though in the Muslim communities polygamy is seen as a male right provided for in the Quran,

there are other interpretations of what is permissible in Islam. Several Muslim countries either restrict or ban polygamy and cite Surah al-Nisa 4:3, which states that if a man fears that he cannot deal justly with several wives, he should only marry one.

In general, as Ding Jo-Ann (2010:2) indicates, most of first wives suffered negative social impacts after their husbands' second marriages, although there were others who were satisfied with the situation. Of the first wives interviewed, 45.6% were dissatisfied with their polygamous marriages, compared with 39.3% who were satisfied. This was in sharp contrast with second wives, 68% of whom were satisfied with their marriages. Only 18.8% said they were dissatisfied. Additionally, when a man took a second wife, his first marriage was often put under strain. Over 40% of first wives in the study said they argued more with their husbands after finding out about their husbands' intentions to marry again. A majority of them also indicated that their love, respect and trust for their husbands deteriorated after discovering their intentions.

3.7.8 General observations on the impact of polygamy

It has become apparent in this study that the fathers in the polygamous marriage survive at the mercy of their children, more especially when they grow older. Children tend to shift the responsibility of taking care of their father to the children of the other wife whether from the first or the last one. Children in polygamous marriages would often argue that "because he is staying with the second wife and her children, they have to look after him and meet his needs because if we buy food for him, we will be supporting his second wife and their children.

When all these things happen, the husband suffers because children will be taking care of their mothers and meeting their needs. He will feel lonely and neglected in his own household. In Vhavenda culture there is a saying that "*munna ha teti*" which means that men are not suppose to cry or say a word even when he is in pain. Men are trained to be strong even at times when they are weak. This research also discovered that, if her father could have married one wife, he would not have been in this kind of trauma. Pressure comes from both sides to such an extent that it affected children.

In a polygamous marriages even when the wife happens to get some money, she would not spend it on the family. This is because she expects the husband to share the little he has among his wives. The other household may suffer hunger while the other have plenty, because of the rivalry and enmity between the wives. All this end up traumatizing the husband the rest of his life.

The other problem of polygamy is the age gap between the husband and the younger wives. When choosing the second or the third wife, they don't consider the age gap. The younger the girl, the more they are attracted to them, forgetting that this younger women are not marrying them because they love them, but they do so because they want what they have. The problem arises when he fails to satisfy them sexually, the elderly wife will not have a problem because she might have menopauses, but the younger wives will satisfy themselves out side which will be unfaithfulness to him, and sometimes he will not understand the cause of this unfaithfulness as he sees himself strong. The researcher had a privilege of meeting a friend who happens to be the first wife in the family of four wives,

who has this to say as a way of seeking help:

I am the first wife of John(pseudo name) as you know, he married other three women and move out from his original family and left me with five children to raise, which was not easy for me to meet their educational and their daily needs. My husband have four households, because when he married the second wife he moved out with her, and when he marries the third and the fourth he deed the same. I am sixty years old, and my husband is seventy and he is suffering from sugar diabetes , and I can see that he is no longer active sexually, but he is refusing to accept that he is of age and blaming the wives. Last week the family was protesting against him because he wanted to move to the fifth wife, younger than his first born daughter. Everybody in the family was against his plan, because of that, as I am writing to you, he is in hospital because he is affected by the refusal of the whole family to support him in his decision. My problem is, he is refusing that he is no longer active sexually because of

age, and when the younger wives cheat on him he comes to me for solution .which I don't have. These are some of the after effects of polygamy.

The husbands in polygamous families continue to suffer in their families because of ignorance and lack of consultation in seeking advice. Their pride and power continue to traumatize them in their silence.

Another problem with polygamy is that the elderly husband usually dies still having small kids to raise. This remains as a burden to the young mother to raise the kids alone. When he is aging, he sees this reality of him going to die and leave his children alone without a father, and this reality traumatizes him while still alive. Though some of the men enter into polygamy due to their economic power and the power they have , some of them enter this kind of marriage due to the situation they find themselves in. i.e. waiting for a boy to be born. The reader can realize how these men may need a shepherd in order to care for them. The pastoral care giver thus becomes a listening ear.

3.8. CONCLUSION

The effects of polygamy were also found to time-dependent with the effect being more pronounced in the later childhood. In much of the literature, differential household resources have been identified as the major pathway through which family structure affects child outcomes. It has been argued that children in married families have a larger pool of resource than those in other families, hence the better outcomes for such children. It appears that residing in a polygamous household is associated with lower child survival probabilities regardless of parental and household resources.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, case studies will be presented of husbands who are being traumatized in their polygamous marriage. I will also outline the caring methods that the church may use in addressing the situation of men who are in this kind of trauma.

4.2 STORIES OF THE SURVIVORS

The author came across a number of men who are being traumatized by their polygamous marriages, most importantly being a witness of the suffering and trauma of their fathers in this kind of family setup. These are the men who firstly enjoyed life in their families before marrying more than one wife.

4.2.1 Case studies 1 This is the story of Ratshilumela (not the real name)

Ratshilumela was a man who was born with disability, by disability I mean physical challenged. He was a man of great courage

because, his disability never stopped him from looking for employment in the urban areas. He worked there and manage to build his three roomed house back home. He married the first wife when he was thirty four years old, It was a wonderful experience to both of them as it was their first marriage. After marriage, Ratshilumela went back to the urban areas as he was employed there. He worked for that company for more than ten years. As he was growing older, the disability became a challenge to him and he decided to resign from the company and look for easier employment of which he was unable to get. He went back home.

Seeing that there is nothing that brings food on the table, he requested for a piece of land from the chief and he was given five hectors. Ratshilumela together with his wife, started working in the field which was next to the river. He was the first farmer to produce different types of vegetables and maize in that area. Because of the abundance of production, they started selling the surplus, and the demand was growing bigger.

Ratshilumela and his wife had four children, who happen to be girls

only at that time, according to Ratshilumela's culture, one is not regarded as having children when he has girls only, as they will all be married, and were regarded as weaker vessels to help him in the fields. As the field which he had was big, he needed more man power to help him and his family in the field. Instead of hiring other people in the community to help him, Ratshilumela decided to marry the second wife, with the view that she will bore him more children especially boys. Indeed the second wife had seven children, but most unfortunate thing was that the two boys who were born with the second wife happen to be physically challenged together with two other sisters, and that affected his plan because as they are physically challenged, they won't be able to help him in the field as he planned.

When Ratshilumela went to urban areas for employment, he was a member of an independent church since his early age. He belonged to a church where polygamy was not regarded as a sin, as most of the church leaders were polygamist and it was their pride to marry more than one wife and have as many children as they can. Not one of them shared their challenges within their big families, even to

Ratshilumela marrying the second wife was for him to keep the status quo and a way to strengthening the working force in the family. After the marriage of the second wife, the first wife was again bore two baby boys who brought joy into the family. The physical disability of the second wife's children lead to conflicts in the family as the second wife was blaming the first wife as the cause of her children's disability through witchcraft, as a result of that trauma and abuse became part of the family.

As a way of solving the conflicts and enmity which was developing between the two wives and their children, Ratshilumela build a second household for the second wife away from the first wife. The moving away of the second wife, created a lot of responsibility to Ratshilumela as he has to provide for two households. The field which was bringing wealth in the family was also dived into two. The second wife was lazy and that lead to the collapse of the production from the field which was the main sauce of economic power in the family.

Ratshilumela started to feel the pressure of providing for the two families. The first wife and her children started to blame him for bringing the second wife and her physically challenged children who are not even helping, because to them, they are the cause of the problems and instability in the family. By nature Ratshilumela is a man of few words, he was unable to defend himself against all the accusations from the first wife and her children. He had no one to turn to as the second wife was blaming his first wife for the disability of her four children.

One day the old man and his two sons from the first wife fell sick simultaneously, same day and same hour and were carried to the hospital. The doctors, discovered that it was food poisoning . The younger son could not survive the poison. he died. The old man and the elder son survived. It was suspected that the poisoning was from home because the speculation of gossip and rumors that this was as a result of cholera which they got from the water it surprised the family because, the neighboring households members were not affected by this cholera and everything in the surrounding were tested and nothing faulty was found. Everybody in the family was

surprised as to who might have brought the poison in the family. As I began to intervening it came to my realization that the food poisoning came from the second wife to the husband. She wanted to eliminate the husband because she was pregnant with the child of another man. Since then the old man could not trust the second wife at all, but what must he do? He could not chase her away.

The situation forced him to decide to settle at the second wife's house and pretend as if he deserted the first wife as a way of protection to the first wife and her children. Even though it was painful, he took that decision in order to protect them. This he discussed first with his first wife. Though it was painful for her to be left alone, she understood the system. He would only visit her during the day.

Another big problem that arose was, who will inherit more of the old man's cattle and property when he dies? It was a daily question he should answer from the second wife and her children. To solve the problem, he divided the cattle amongst all his children and amongst his wives. The eldest son received less than the rest. He did not worry because he was by then employed and was earning a good salary

and the mother made him understand that this was for his protection. When all this arrangement was happening, the trauma within Ratshilumela was growing day by day.

It was even difficult for the two households to visit each other after the poisoning. This is what happens when there are conflicts between the two wives the relationship breaks and the husband is the one who will feel the pain. In this case the second wife and her children started to neglect the old man, in such a way that he will struggle to get some food, his clothing was not washed, the room was always untidy as she was no longer share the room with the wife. Due to lack of proper nutrition and care, it happened that Ratshilumela got ill while the second wife was visiting a relative, the first wife was notified by a neighbor, and she came and he was taken to hospital where he was admitted for a week, he was diagnosed that he was suffering from high blood pressure and stomach ulcers, and that came as a result of the trauma he was going through. When he was discharged, he was given a diet to flow in order for him to recover and for the condition to stay under control. To Ratshilumela it was also a trauma because he knew that the second wife will not

bother to follow the diet. While in hospital the elder son requested him to come and stay with them as he will get all the care he needs, as the first wife will be able to follow the diet. Ratshilumela refused the offer in fear of the second wife . The children of the first wife requested a close friend to him, to talk to him and also to persuade the second wife to allow him to go and stay with his first wife for a time being . They even told the second wife that pension fund will still be spent by her and her children as it was another thing that can cause problems and conflicts.

Fortunately the second wife agreed that he be looked after there as long as she will get the pension fund money. This was agreed just to save the old man's life. After recovery, the son requested the father to stay with him for good. He told him he is going back to the second wife for their safety. He said that he is telling him (his son) because he is now older he can understand what is going on between his mother and the second wife, and after the whole issue of poisoning. He told him that the second wife is capable of wiping the whole household of the first wife and her children. Everybody understood him and he went back to his second wife. after everything that has happened, the

author realized that indeed Ratshilumela was living with an untold trauma because he even told the author that, if he could be given a chance to go back to his youth days, he would never marry more than one wife as he did. Ratshilumela lived a life of pretence all his past years, no one knew that he is living under such trauma within his polygamous marriage.

4.2.2. Reflection on Ratshilumela story

The story shared highlights the traumatic experience that were created by the hatred resulted from the polygamous marriage, the physical challenged children also became a source of trauma as they live to be cared for as a result of their disability. The issue that the researcher has picked in relation to the above case studies are as follows; Ratshilumela was a courageous man who has greater responsibility for his family. He has heart for his family and wanted it to have a prosperous future. He had a wonderful wife and children. When Ratshilumela married the second wife, he thought is doing it for the good of his whole family. I wonder if he was marrying his second wife because of love and the intention of making her happy

and build a strong family. I wonder if he ever thought of the demand that the bigger family brings , the ever present father and undivided love for both wives.

Ratshilumela never mind about the feelings of his first wife, he thought because she is a woman she will cope with whatever happens in the family. Ratshilumela took advantage of his unchallenged authority knowing that his wife as a Venda African woman will not challenge his decision. According to Kanjoro referring to African woman he wrote to say “ they tell African woman to be African meaning, to be silent and submissive in the face of injustices and oppression” (1997:178). the most painful situation, was the disability of the children he thought they will be his joy and the working force in the family which turned to be a dividing force in the whole family. The division that happen in his family cost him his wealth he intended to have breakage of relationships and brought trauma in his life and when trauma comes, it causes what Judith writes “ Traumatic events calls into question basic human relationships. They breach the attachments of family, friendship, love

and the community" (1942: 50).

The church as a therapeutic community must stop to be judgmental and seek to heal guide and care for these traumatized husband within their polygamous marriage. Christ said “ the Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed “ (Luke 4: 18). the traumatized husbands needs to hear such kind of words from the therapeutic community, to build their broken hearts, their broken relationships . when he relationships are broken it affects the husbands economically and even the conjugal rights are affected.

The researcher also discovered that, Ratshilumela suffered from split personality, he sided with the second wife and choose to resides with her as a way of protecting the first wife . In all those things he was trying to deal with the trauma he was going through. The author went an extend of questioning the role of the church and its ministry towards the polygamous marriages, and how do they care

and educate the survivors of this trauma. Is the church being aware that it is her responsibility to offer therapeutic counseling to these traumatized husbands whether in the church or outside the church. Perhaps these are the other area in which other people can research on.

It is the responsibility of the church to teach the younger generation the best way of building a happy family, they have to be taught by the church that marriage is about love not out of selfish ambitions. Family is about love and making each other happy and enjoying the life together. Solomon writes to say “ *Enjoy life with your wife whom you love all the days of this meaningless life that God has given you under the sun all your meaningless days*” (*Ecclesiastes 9:9*) .

4.2.3. CASE STUDY 2 “Verbatim story of Thinawanga”

This is the verbatim story as told by Thinawanga himself.

“It was a lovely experience when I married my first wife Maemu. We settled together with my aunt who was like my real mother, since my real mother passed away when I was fifteen years old. We had our first born son. Everything was so fine. When we were about to have our second child, my aunt started to behave in a strange way towards my wife Maemu to an extent that she even told her that she is not her husband’s mother. My wife after knowing that, my aunt was not my real mother, she no longer respected and take good care of her especially when she was behaving like she was doing.

The disrespect of my wife towards my aunt, brought conflicts and quarrels in the family. Since my aunt was the one who brought me up, I respected her very much to an extent that I found myself taking sides. I protect my aunt rather than my wife. After a year, my aunt influenced me to marry another wife in order to discipline my first wife. I viewed it as good and wise idea as it was culturally not wrong to marry more than one wife. The issue was discussed between myself and my aunt and it was finalized that my aunt will look for a girl, one of her

relatives, from the village where we were staying. The arrangements of her coming in the family were finalized without Maemu's knowledge.

When the second wife came, I was happy thinking that it was the best way of solving the problem of Maemu's disrespectful behavior or she will pack and go. Maemu was called, and the new wife was introduced and ushered in to her by my aunt. Maemu had no choice but to accept her as her co-wife in the family. After some months of living together as wives of the same husband, my aunt started to influence the younger wife to compete with the first, by giving her money to buy new clothes for me, grocery, perfumes and prepare good meals that will make her favorable to me. The treatment that I got from my second wife indeed made me feel very special in her hands, I was unable to hide it from my first wife Maemu. I used to scold her telling her that she is very irresponsible why can't she do like the other wife because I gave them equal amount of money. That brought conflicts between them. Little did I know that the money my second wife is using to attract me was that which I gave my aunt for her own pocket money.

It started to be a serious problem to me when I was unable to settle the conflicts, which were growing everyday between my wives. When I turn to my aunt who influenced

me to marry the second wife, she told me that I am a man enough to be able to solve my own problems. The situation went worse, when even the children were being affected by the enmity that was between their mothers. The mothers speak badly about another with their children and the children would always fight because of what their mothers said behind closed doors. I found myself being unable to take sides on my children, and beating them every day when I know why they were fighting was useless and the reality of the mistake that I have committed started to dawn, and that brought pressure and loneliness to my life. I could not befriend any of my wives anymore because they will say I love another and hate the other. "Life is tough for me" said Thinawanga looking up trying to stop the tears from his eyes.

It traumatized me because the person to turn to in this time of frustrations is the one who led me to the problem and she say she cannot help me anymore. I became depressed to an extent that stress took over my life. One day I had a nervous breakdown and I found myself being hospitalized. The doctor told me that I survived a stroke. I tried to look for a way of chasing away one of the wives, but it was not possible, because each one of them was ready to face the challenges in the family. This is the reality of life that I am living in, with no one to turn to. I cannot go to outsiders for help because it will be a sign of failure to solve my own problems displaying myself to be unable to

run my family.

4.2.4 REFLECTION ON THE STORY OF THINAWANGA

The author's reflection to the story of Thinawanga, the author was also shocked to find out that, some men entered into polygamy not willingly, but by the influence of the family members and those closer to them. The trauma of Thinawanga is also affecting his health and because he does not have a solution to his problem, he will continue to live with this problem the rest of his life. What is also painful is that in this trauma, there is a person who is continuing to inflict it, who is not helping him to bring solution to the problem as long as her desire to hurt the first wife is fulfilled.

The author also discovered that there is a problem when two people who are getting married when they don't tell each other the truth about their background. Thinawanga should have told his wife from the beginning that his aunt was not his biological mother, that also meant that the husband must be able to manage and create a good

relationship between his wife and the in - laws.

The enmity between Thinawanga's wives also affected their children, the author discovered that the challenges of polygamy does not affect the husband and his wives only, it also affect the children who end up being traumatized badly. It would affect their education and their relationship with other children. Sometimes it may lead them to commit suicide. The silence of these men also deprived even the children to get any help from the pastoral care givers, because even when they see the trauma that their father is going through, they find themselves helpless, which continues to traumatize this men and the whole family hence the aunt is continuing fueling the conflicts and he cannot chase her aunt away.

4.2.5. CASE STUDY

This is a story of "Wanani" (pseudonym) "Wanani" was born in monogamous family, his mother was the only wife to my father, he grew up in a stable family with lot of morals which where instilled in him as small child .he went to school and become educated like any other child, and become a professional male nurse . After a year of

his employment, he decided to get married. When he married his wife , she was not as lucky as he was educationally, she had only grade twelve when he got married. They were blessed with a set of twins as their first born.

When their kids were one year old, they agreed that his wife must continue with her studies, he sacrificed every cent of his salary for the sake of his wife to have a profession, which in turn will benefit the whole family. On her own, she chose to be trained as a teacher, of which she was successful after three years. For those three years, Wanani was looking after the kids in the evenings, as the one who was looking after them, works during the day only. After completing, she started working, unfortunately she got her employment far from where they were staying, and that forced her to seek for the accommodation next to where she was working, she took the children along with her , and that forced her to come home every weekend.

As times goes on, his wife started to skip some weekends, and she will not come home. When he inquire , from her the reason of her not coming home, she will put the blame on workload, of which he understood a t first. He started to be suspicious, when she refuse him to go where she was staying, to spend the weekend with her and the kids, and she told him to move from where we were staying and come where she was working and build a new house there , when he ask her about his mother, she said ; she will remain in the old house, to him it was uncalled fore to leave my mother alone and settle somewhere, when he refuse , she decided not to come home at all.

When he went to visit her, she decided not to share a bed with him, she influence the children not to communicate with him, and even to take anything from me. He tried to find out from her what was the problem, but she would not say a word, Wanani tried to send elderly people thinking that she will open up and share her problems but to no avail.

Wanani was so frustrated by the strange behavior of his wife , thinking of the sacrifices he has made for her, when he took her to the college to further her studies, the situation brought so many questions without answers to Wanani. As times goes on , he discovered that his wife was cheating on him their marriage was in a state where it was not possible to be repaired. Wanani decided to move on with his life though it was not easy to part with her and his children whom he loved as much as they where his first born.

After a year, he decided to marry another wife , as it was hard for him to look after his mother and doing all the household responsibilities. After two years with his second wife, the first wife decided to come back, as she was unable to raise the kids alone, at first he refused, because he had already married another wife, but with the persuasion of elderly people and the love of his kids, he accepted her back against the will of his new wife.

When the first wife came back, he thought she will understand that the new second wife came because of her decision she has taken of chasing him away, and accepted her, but to his surprise she wanted

he r to leave , as the owner of the husband is back, that's where the hell break loose because each one of them was claiming the ownership of the husband. It was after the intervention of elderly family members who took a decision that no one is leaving the family, but the decision is upon each one of them to leave or to stay and be prepared to share the husband. Waning found himself in a dilemma, because if I chose to stay with the second wife only, I will lose my children, to take the first wife back, I will be creating a problem to my second wife ,because she married me knowing that she is the only wife, and that brought trauma to Waning thinking of the responsibility and challenges of maintaining two wives and their children.

Finally, the two wives agreed to share his life because he promised them that ,he will build the other house for the first wife, of which he failed to build, and that created lot of conflicts in the family. To him, it appeared as a wise decision to take them as his wives without thinking of the responsibilities that comes with it. Today he is living with new challenges which are brought by marrying more than one wife which is a life time experience.

4.2.6. AUTHOR'S REFLECTION ON WANANI STORY

From Waning story the author discovered that the issue of employment or economic reasons had an influence on Wanganui's decision of marrying more than one wife. The going away of a wife or husband because of the employment contribute much on the polygamous marriage.

The family setup of Waning also contributed, because in African family, the son must stay with the mother even after marriage, his wife must accept her as her second mother. She has to look after her, she must make sure that her room is clean her clothes are clean and sufficient. Before she feeds herself and the husband, she must first serve the mother-in law. In the typical Venda culture, the mother –in law is revered than the husband. When a girl is getting married, one of the most issue which is stressed for the girl to do is to respect and taking care of the mother- in law. If she doesn't do that, she can be sent back to her parents to be taught again on how to look after her in- laws.

In our culture, it is a taboo to find a man cooking, washing the dishes, sweeping the floor or washing clothes, if he does that they will say, “o laws gaputshete” which means he has been given a muti so that he be obedient to the wife. That is why Wanani find it so difficult to look after himself and his mother and resorted on marrying a second wife. And also the belief that, when a man is grown up, he must marry in order to relieve his mother from household responsibilities and duties, though Wanani’s mother was still strong to do the household responsibilities, Wanani had to marry as soon as possible for the sake of the mother.

For many women, to be an African woman is to live under the power of culture and that of man. According to Phyllis Bird, “women, children and servants are referred to indirectly through their duties and property relations to the patriarchy”(Bird 1974:57). Therefore, women end up married for a wrong reason, not because of love but to provide a service in the house.

The after effects of marrying the second wife to Wanani was that it end up affecting his health , instead of enjoying life with his wives he

was enduring it with lot of pain , regrets and lot of responsibility to carry. The question is what does it mean to marry more than one wife if the end product is pain and suffering?. This is a challenge to the church to find a method or a way to counsel man who are experiencing problems in their marriage, so that they may not take polygamy as the solution to their problems which end up frustrating them the rest of their life.

4.2.7 CASE STUDY 4 This is the story of Thavha((not the real name)

This is the story of Thavha, (not his real name).

Thavha is man who grew up in a family which believed in Christian religion. His father married my mother and had four children and he was the first born in the family. Christian values and discipline were instilled in them since their birth. They grew up with that respect and love for each and every person, taking each elderly person as their mothers and fathers. they didn't have problem of sharing their food with any other person. His father was one of the top leaders in the church. As children of the leader in the church, people in the community and even in the church expected them to keep the standard of his

father live as he did, as child Thavha tried his best to keep the faith and the standard of the family. As child I was always home after school doing my home works and my family responsibilities, he was not exposed to a street life, though sometimes he used to sneak out to be with friends but he was always indoors. After grade twelve, he went to the local university and completed his tertiary education.

Due to employment, he left home and stay in the urban area. It was for the first time for him to live away from his parents and friends and away from the church community. It was a big challenge for him to adjust to the new environment and making new friends. During his first months of employment he used to visit home twice a month, but as times went by, he got used to the new environment, and that exposed him to different cultures and behaviors where everybody mind his\her own business. The values and morals that was instilled in him kept him going but the challenge of the different way of life was with him. After two years of his employment, he married his wife, because she was still studying after marriage he left her back home. The remaining of his wife back home, forced him to frequent home every month, but he was no longer attending church as he used to when he was still at home, and that affected his spiritual life negatively, he missed the warmth from the

church community and that of his parents. he find himself living a casual life having no one to challenge his way of life. he was no longer depending on anybody for survival because he was earning a good salary. He started a business and it flourishing very quickly. He hired somebody , a girl who was a dropout from school due to financial problems in the evening she will attend classes doing financial management. After completion of her studies , he hired her permanently and manage the business even when he has visited home, he will come back and find everything in order.

When the business grew, he decided to open a branch at home, they agreed with his wife that she will look after it. As she has completed the studies , she was happy to run the business. The business prospered that there was no need for me support his wife financially because she was earning from the business. They had three children with his wife, everything was in order. When both businesses were growing, even the challenge of responsibility from both sides was demanding, because of the economic power, he decided to marry the second wife which was the girl who was running the urban business. That created a big enmity between his first wife and the new wife. The second wife was happy to have a family and the business. We had also three children with the second which was not a problem as he can meet their needs

with no problem, but life was not easy anymore because his presence was always needed in this two households.

When all the businesses were succeeding, he decided to resign from the company he was working for, and concentrating on the business full time. Life for him was on top of the ladder, he was his own boss and all people respected him because of the economic power. Though he was back home, he did not rebuilt the relationship with the church community or going back to church , his heart was deceived by his wealth . The biggest mistake he did was to marry the third wife who happen to be younger than his first born son. The two first wives and their children got angry with him that they club together against him that no household welcomed him any longer. he was forced to build another household for his third wife, because he was no longer working, it so difficult for him to complete the house. he used almost all the money he had in his personal account.

Life became so difficult when his first two wives decided to open new accounts on their names and that of their children. Money started to be a problem because it was no longer deposited in the business account, but into their personal accounts. There was no money to buy the stock and businesses collapsed. He married his third wife because of his economic power, when his luxurious cars

were started to be reposed one by one, he was no longer able to meet her demands, she decided to leave him. When she left he did not know to which wife to turn to because they clubbed together against him when he married the third wife. he came back to his senses and saw the mistake he had made. It is difficult for him to seek any help, his parents were no more, it was also difficult for him to go to the church to seek any help, because the church he used to be a member refused to welcome him back because he has married more than one wife. It is regarded as sinful when you are a polygamist. There is a Venda saying that says “philiphise a si tshilonda, ndi tshilonda tsha u di todela” which means, it is the pain that you created for yourself, you have to tolerate it. He is the one who left church, he has to suffer alone. his first wives are no longer ready to welcome him back because I have betrayed them and their children.

4.2.8. REFLECTION ON THAVHA CASE STUDY

Thavha was a fortunate man who was raised in a stable family with values and good morals, which he should have taken advantage of, for his good and peaceful future. There is a venda saying which

says “nwana wa mbevha ha hangwi mukwita” which means, children usually become what their parents are. Thavha had parents who raised him in church environment where he is exposed to care givers at the time of frustration and pain, but he turn his back from them. Though we cannot say polygamy is sin, thavha should have copied his father’s family, or even to enquire from him why he has married one wife. His running away from the people who should have been his guided and mentor has resulted in Thavha being a lonely man amidst his good and loving people, his bigger family and the church community.

The church community was unable to help Thavha because he became judgmental to himself thinking that the church or care givers will no longer accept his request of helping hand, and because he has run away from the church. He even forgot about the teachings he received when he was in Sunday school classes of the prodigal son who said ” I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, Father, I have sinned against haven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son, make me like one of your

hired servants, but the father said to his servants, bring out the best robe and put it on him and put a ring in his hand and sandals on his feet, and bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat merry. For this my son was dead and is alive again, he was lost and is found and they began to be merry”.

Isolation is one of the problems of men within the polygamous marriage, instead of Thavha open up for help he decided to isolate himself from the people who are suppose to help him. I think the church has a responsibility of following up those who went away from the church, because most of the people who left the church though they know that care givers can help them, they feel ashamed to go back to them. As the good shepherd. Care givers must go where the broken hearted are found. I believe even the church community new and witnessed what happened to Thavha, the church must not seat down and wait for the sheep to come where she is, it must go to the world and heal the broken hearted. Thavha needed somebody to come to him and say I care, you are my brother, because on his own he cannot make it, because he had already judged himself and told himself that I am reaping what I have sown.

4.3 APPLICATION OF METHODOLOGY

The researcher pointed out in the first chapter that she will use the methodology that is made up of two theories. In this chapter the author will use one of the theories, the shepherding model of Charles Gerkin, where the pastoral care giver (clergy) assumed the role of a shepherd. “This theory is most clearly captured in the imagery of Psalm 23, here God is depicted as the good shepherd who leads people in the paths of righteousness, restores their soul, and walks with them even among their enemies, and the shadow of death” (1997: 27).

Gerkin wrote about the role of a shepherd from his Western perspective, the author will approach the shepherding model from the African perspective. African people respects shepherd(s), a shepherd is someone who cares for flock not only leading them to graze in good place, but also by providing security and also willing to die for his flock. The flock responds only to his commands as they have learned the methods he uses in communicating with them and they know his voice. Far away from home, at night he sleeps very close

to them and defends them against their predators. The relationship between the shepherd and the sheep is important. Like the shepherd , the pastoral care giver, caring for God's people involves care that confronts issues of injustice and moral integrity in the life of people (1997 :25). Like in the case study of Thavha the church refused him his membership back because he is a sinner. Instead of helping him and offer him an ear and their love they chase him away.

The shepherd prototypical image can be applied to both clergy and lay leaders of the church. The clergy assuming the role and being identified as a shepherd is expected not only to pay a lip service but rather actively act out this role and opt to care without discrimination or fear especially for those who are marginalized, poor and the afflicted, this ties well with how Gerkin sees the pastor in the modern world as holding three functions in him/herself , which means he/she has to provide liturgical celebrations, be the mouthpiece of God and help people in their day-to-day life (1997:23). Pastoral care giver assumes the role of a healer, sustainer and reconciler. There is a need of healing in the relationships in all families of survivors, like in the story of Thinwanga and Maemu and

their aunt, because Maemu's relationship with the aunt is broken as she sees her as the one who influenced her husband to marry the second wife, there is a need of reconciliation in order for the true healing to happen.

The shepherd without an understanding of the work he/she does or lack of communicating with the flock will find it difficult to deal with the everyday matters. This is evident in the way clergy and elders have dealt with the issue at hand, they are quick to punish, without even show any form of pastoral love and care.

Shepherd model as a caring model requires that pastors should account for those in their care and not toss out because they have 'sinned', they (pastors) have to lead us to a better understanding of God's unconditional love the sacraments, and lastly, a shepherd should have a knowledge of where the flock graze (community environment and challenge). Though the author has suffered within her father's polygamous marriage, as a care giver, I have forgive my father and everybody in the family and be a shepherd and love

them unconditionally.

A pastor or care giver is the representative of God in serving God's people. A pastor resembles God who is caring and tender. The shepherd is one who leads, guides, natures, heads, seeks out the lost, brings the scattered flock back together and protects it all forms of harm that might come their way. Though the author dealt with caring method in chapter two, here the author wants to integrate this section with the stories shared above in this chapter.

4.4 CARING METHOD

Edward Wimberly when writing about pastoral care and life crises alludes to the fact that, when members of the church community are facing predictable life transitions they often call on a priest and lay people. These transition which occur through the life cycle are sometimes referred to as developmental crises. And these crises usually are growth opportunities, and while they may present some difficulties for those who face them, pastors and caring lay people can respond with empathy and compassion in ways that help those

in crises to grow.(1991:49). He continues to suggest four ways to deal successfully with life crisis and they are as follows, (1) facing the problem head on; (2) working on the various emotional and social tasks presented by the problem; (3)coming to some understanding of what one is experiencing; (4) talking with those who are about the situation (1991: 50). The author agrees with Wimberly, as this step plays an active positive role in assisting the victim of polygamy in crises to be an active participant too in finding a way forward and begin the process of healing.

Pastoral care is fascinating, since it involves relating to people in a very personal way. To deal with people in caring implies entering into their situation in a redeeming and revitalizing manner. In the caring method, we are not dealing with those who are being cared for only, but also with those who care for others, who are pastoral care givers. The author would like to firstly to briefly explain the meaning of care.

4.4.1 The meaning of care

According to Arkel,

“ care is not an exclusively Christian activity. It is a human phenomenon, but also a specifically Christian act. Care takes place wherever people truly listen to each other; where they “ feel” for each other; where they understand what the troubled person is going through; where they comfort, encourage, cheer up and try to support and help others. Care is almost synonymous with warmth” (1991:98).

The author is of the same mind with Arkel because the traumatized husbands needs somebody who is prepared to journey with them in the way of rebuilding their life and their dignity, a person who will always be there for them and who is prepared to listen to them and be part of their pain and understand where they come from. In the United Kingdom there is a form of help called “befriending” which falls under the same heading. The help given by “befrienders” is based on listening, acceptance, understanding and empathy, without any attempt at giving advice or applying counseling techniques. (Varah 1987:11). I am of the same mind with Varah, men who have been traumatized within their polygamous marriage, they need a care giver who will accept them and become their friend , not

somebody who will judge them and see them as the worst sinners.

In this very general sense, care is not only the concern of a few, nor is it restricted to specific persons or professions. People take care of one another. Care is a human attitude towards people in distress. We can expect it from every member of our society and in all life and work situations.

4.4.2 Aim of the caring method

The pastoral work tries to be relevant to a specific situation. In historical overview of the literature on the Christian tradition of care by Clebsch and Jaekle , four basic functions stood out; which is healing, sustain, guidance and reconciling. (1989:32). The author would like to elaborate on the four given functions, as they are relevant to her father's situation and other men who are the survivor of this trauma and in need of wholeness recovery.

4.4.3 Healing

The pastoral work denotes the possible positive results which pastoral actions can have on the health and well-being of people in the broadest sense. It is associated with the eschatological implications of Christ's regenerative action through the Holy Spirit. The type of healing which sought, therefore, is not only physical or spiritual, but concerns the wholeness of the person in every area of life. This wholeness is not merely the restoration of former conditions, but an integration on a higher spiritual level than the person had known before.(1983:32). The author is in agreement with Jaekle, husbands who are survivors of trauma in their polygamous marriage, they need wholeness healing because their trauma does affect them physically and emotionally. When the care givers tries to heal them emotionally they should also meet their physical needs. Christ's work on earth consisted of preaching, teaching and healing- the same tasks which he commanded his disciples to perform. There is a saying “a healthy mind is a healthy body“ is extended to include “a healthy community” and even a healthy ecology

Our pastoral work is incomplete if we do not see the social and cultural contexts in which individuals, couples and families live as contributing to their problems, but we must use these insights to contribute to the healing process. An aphorism from the family systems approach expresses this as follows: "By the family you were broken; by the family you will be healed (Wynn 1982: 30). Pastoral care givers has a responsibility to extend a hand of fellowship to the wives and children of the traumatized husbands, because when the husband is traumatized within or outside his family it also affect the whole family. The whole family must be reached for the sake of wholeness healing.

4.4.4 Sustaining

Sustaining “to stand by” involves initiating and maintaining a relationship with the distressed and suffering people, possibly causing them to feel supported and comforted on their difficult way through life. Usually situations cannot reasonably be expected to change or improve. In such cases, a pastor can do little more than be with the other person. in this, being with the other, one often experiences

the presence of God through the closeness of another person. The presence of the care giver with the traumatized husband, brings the sense of worth to him and the brings back the value in his life which will keep him going.

According to Clebsch and Jaekle, pastoral sustaining of people whose situations are beyond repair such as bereavement and divorce took on a fourfold character in the early Christian tradition:

- *Preservation*. people are assisted to prevent the situation from deteriorating further, should new threats and losses occur. These kind of husbands must be helped not to give up on themselves, they need to be shown a way to continue with life in a dignified way whether they are staying alone or forsaken by their loved ones
- *Consolation*. They are reassured that their losses and problems do not mean that they will arrive at their final destination without God. The survivors of polygamous they need this consolation that wives and children may forsake them, but God will not forsake them. In the book of Proverbs 18: 24 Solomon says; A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother .
- Consolidation*. Their remaining resources are consolidated,

regrouped and mobilized, thus forming a secure haven, from which life may be continued even in the face of many losses and problems. Suffering is placed in the context of life as a whole. The fact that those husbands are still alive and have people who are ready to journey with them, they should take courage and allow their lives to get a new meaning.

-Support. support offered to the traumatized men within their polygamous marriage is seen as the most effective way to prevent mental illness and promote mental health. Support and sustaining, is the key word to describe the caring action in mutual care. Sustaining executes the commission of Galatians 6 and Romans 15 to help bear each other's burdens and weaknesses. When men are being traumatized in their polygamous marriages, the need support of those who care for the lives of all people despite of what caused their trauma. Christ died of all the people despite what they have done.

4.4.5 Guiding

Pastoral guidance is the help given to people to enable them to make their own choices and decision based on their deepest convictions. In this way, they will grow so that they can function independently in their spiritual lives. The pastor must help them develop the wisdom to decide what to do in situations that call for

difficult decisions. This implies that useful insights, which clarify the meaning and direction of people's lives, are made available in the context of the helping act (Clebsch & jackleg 1983:49-50). When guiding men who are survivors of this trauma, the care giver must be cautious of dictation because for them to be in trauma does not mean they cannot take decision on their own , pastor's responsibility is to give guidance.

Guiding has a long history in the Bible. The Old Testament wisdom literature (especially Proverbs) is intended for everyday life . wise people are those who comply with God's standards and act wisely in their public roles. Therefore, people can seek counsel from God. In the New Testament, Jesus is addressed and recognized as rabbi or master because of the authority of his demeanor. We are also told that the Spirit will guide us all the truth (John 16:13).

When applying the carrying method to the traumatized husband within their polygamous marriage, there are things that are very much important to be considered by the pastoral care givers, which is the pastoral care givers attitude towards the victim , and the

relationship between the pastor and the victim. As soon as we start to act caringly, we focus on people. But there are different ways of viewing people, and this can influence pastoral work. Eduard writes to say;

“tell me how you conceive of humanity and I shall tell you what of pastor your are” (1946:58).

I agree with Eduard, you cannot help somebody you don't put value on him/her, your attitude towards the traumatized husbands within their polygamous marriage will determine your effort to help him.

- Pastor's attitude. Despite the official nature of the pastor's action and the fact that he or she represents God and the church, there can be no question of talking down from above, as a superior addressing inferiors. A true pastoral approach is required; genuine attention and love; an attitude of humble service ; respect for the other's freedom and responsibility, tolerance of differences; a non-judgmental and accepting manner. The pastor will epitomize the loving , merciful heavenly father. Pastoral care giver when helping the traumatized, must have a caring heart whose aim is to heal and guiding the victims

towards their total discovery, not somebody who will judge and condemn them. He has to bear it in mind that he/she is not better person than the victim, the only difference is that, he/she has been given a responsibility to help the victim of abuse.

- The relationship. The author discovered that the relationship between the victim and the pastoral care givers is of great importance. Unless a good relationship is established, thoughts may be exchanged and important points may be made, but no real dialogue will take place. When the victim opens up to seek help, he wants somebody who will listen and dialogue with him, somebody whom the victim can trust and be free to share his pain and frustration with not somebody who is in hurry, but the one who will give all of his/her time.

When building the relationship between the pastoral care givers and the victims of abuse, one has to look at three fundamental conditions for a therapeutic relationship that is conducive to growth: empathetic regard, the establishment of acceptance and being an authentic person. The author will elaborate on this three conditions.

- *Empathetic regard.* Empathy is sharing another's feelings not by projection, but compassionately. It is an intentional affective (emotional) response rather than a spontaneous or automatic sympathetic reaction (Augsburger 1986:27). Empathy differs from sympathy; it means going through the same feelings as the other person. For the pastoral care giver to be relevant to his work, he must be in the same world with the victim, he/she must feel the pain, the shame and the humiliation that the victim is experiencing. The pastor must be able to hear and experience the problem from the other person's side; to respond experientially to other's feelings.

Where before , the emphasis was purely on the emotive level, it can now be extended to the other's private world as seen though that person's eyes. What is required is willingness and the ability to cross the boundaries of one's own culture and attempt to understand the other's culture. This human empathy in pastoral tradition is explicable in terms of divine empathy: God's empathic involvement in human experience through the incarnation (Oden 1989:8). He continues to say; a profound analogy emerged in the Christian tradition between the human capacity to enter into the experience of another and God's

empathetic engagement in human experience.

In the case of the husbands who are survivors of the trauma within their polygamous marriage, the care giver must have a feeling of the crushed hope of having one big and happy family, he/she must be able to taste the pain of losing his wealth and becoming a burger, the pain of being rejected by the church community and its leadership.

- *The establishment of acceptance.* the relationship between the pastoral care givers and the victims (husbands) of abuse within the polygamous marriage must be built on mutual acceptance if the dialogue is to be dialogical and therapeutic. To the pastors this implies acceptance of others as separate individuals with their own rights and values. This kind of acceptance is also known as unconditional positive regard. Roger describe it as an atmosphere which simply says “ I care” not I care provided you do this or that (1967:283) . no conditions of acceptance are set. If the pastor is to accept people for what they are, this must be done without judgment or prejudice.

This does not mean that the pastors should relinquish their own value systems, or that everything the other does is acceptable. Helping survivors of polygamy it does not mean that we have to accept their selfish decisions of marrying more than one wife, but we have to accept them and help them with their own mistakes. There is a venda saying that says; ari lati nwana nga phadi, which means we don't disown a child because of the ailment he/she has. A polygamist is still a human being who deserve respect and to be loved.

- *-Being an authentic person.* Pastoral care giver should be authentic , open, honest and self- revealing person. They need to be almost transparent. Which means when helping the survivors of trauma, one must be an example of what he is saying, he/she must not have a double tongue. They must be themselves in a relationship with the people; they must not put up a façade, act out a role or pretend. They should not hide behind their authority, clerical office or even professional expertise. One cannot play the role of a pastor, you must be one. Being an authentic person means that pastors must be open to their own experiences; aware of their own emotions. Such awareness of their own experience is particularly important

during dialogue.

The importance of the pastoral relationship, and particularly the significance of a truly mutual relationship, is increasingly recognized. There is a growing awareness that pastoral work never consists of handling people by means of techniques or of talking to people without taking them seriously as people and as creatures of God. Even the authenticity now seen as the cornerstone of pastoral dialogue is not just another technique. Pastoral work is a caring action; it uses dialogue to dispense this care. But care is inauthentic if it is not built on a quality relationship between the pastoral care giver and the other dialogue partner.

Traumatized husbands need a true relationship that will build their confidence on the person who is helping them, and share their stories with all open hearts with no fear of publicity. They need people who mean what they say, not a pastor who is doing the pastoral work because they are duty bound. Let them see a loving and a caring person who is willing to help them.

4.5 SUMMARY

In this chapter case studies were presented to the reader and the reflection were made, the challenge that the researcher have is that, polygamy is not a sin, but she discovered that men within the polygamous marriage, they experience pain and humiliation than enjoyment they intended to have. What kind of advice can be given to men who intended to marry more than one wife. Gerkin methodology redefines the role of a pastor and uses the shepherd as a model, it was important that caring methods be suggested so to empower those pastoral care givers on how to care for the traumatized husbands. The following chapter we will look at answers from the interviews, findings, recommendations and conclusion.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the author is going to share the interview she set out with the three victims of traumatic experiences of polygamous marriage. These are few who were ready to share their experiences as a way of breaking the silence. As the author discussed the different causes of polygamy in chapter three, even the type of questions will differ from person to person depending on their different experiences.

Furthermore , the researcher wants to alert her readers that it was not an easy task to do this research among the vhavenda people because vendas are believed to be the most secretive people who does not want to expose their issues whether good or bad.

5.2 INTERVIEW WITH RATSHILUMELA

Q: How many wives did you marry?

A: Two

Q: What made you to marry more than one wife?

A: It was influenced by status and wanted to have a working force.

Q: Did you get what you wanted in your polygamous marriage?

A; No, instead I got regrets and trauma.

Q: How is the relationship between your wives?

A: There is a lot of jealousy, envy and frustration.

Q: How is the relationship among your children

A: Like their mothers, there is a lot of anger and hatred.

Q: Did you seek any help from pastoral care givers?

A: No

5.3 INTERVIEW WITH WANANI.

Q: Are you enjoying your polygamous marriage?

A: No

Q: Did you plan from your youth to be a polygamist?

A: No, I was influenced by my aunt.

Q: How did you manage the rivalry between your wives?

A: I failed hopelessly, and that affected my health.

Q: Did you get any help or advice from your aunt?

A: No, she said I am a man I must solve my own problems.

Q: Why didn't you seek counseling from pastoral care givers?

A: I didn't want to be judged before time.

5.4 INTERVIEW WITH THINAWANGA

Q: Where you able to love your wives equally?

A: No, I found myself failing to share my love equally.

Q: What is the most challenging area in your polygamous marriage?

A: To bring unity, peace and stability in the family.

Q: Are you able to meet the needs of your family?

A: No, and that is fueling conflicts in the family.

Q: Have you ever regretted why you married more than one wife?

A: Yes, I even told my children that if I can change history, I would not repeat the mistake I committed of marrying more than one wife.

Q: Do you think men in polygamous marriage need any help from the church or pastoral care givers, if yes in which way?

A: By stopping to be judgmental to us.
by befriending the men in polygamous marriage in order for them to be free to share their problems.

- the church can be of great help by offering teachings to young men about marriage and the package that come with polygamous marriage.

-To offer pastoral counseling to the survivors of polygamy.

Doing the questionnaire with the survivors of polygamy, the author found out that there is a lot of shame, disappointment, regret, hurt, resentment and anger towards themselves and those who influenced them to marry more than one wife. They end up isolating themselves from other people because what they thought will become their pride and symbol of power brought pain and misery in their lives.

5.5 FINDINGS.

The researcher found out that men within polygamous marriage isolate themselves from other community members and even from the church and its community. They don't even think about the church and care givers because they are treated as worst sinners, who will defile the “ holy” church of God. The researcher also discovered that much need to be done in order to reach out to this

silent and traumatized group of men and their families. There are deep hidden pains in their lives that need a caring person who can bring healing and acceptance to these traumatized husbands. There is a silent cry for help in this kind of family set up. Though they cannot shout for help, the author discovered that they need a shoulder to cry on not to be condemned.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS.

The researcher will like to recommend to the readers of this research more especially the Christian community, its leadership and pastoral care givers, to start looking outside of our church buildings in order to hear the silent cries of these men within their polygamous marriage. The church has to stop to be judgmental towards the traumatized husbands because of being married to more than one wife, Christ has come to seek for the lost and to heal the broken hearted. It will be helpful to have an academic literature that addresses the role of the church on how to deal with the conflicts inside the polygamous marriage. Much has been done about polygamy, but there is no literature that addresses the trauma that

men experiences within their polygamous marriage. The author pleads with African researchers to research more about this kind of phenomenon.

5.7 CONLUSION.

Through this research, the world of unknown things has been revealed, things that we didn't think that are happening . the pain and trauma inside this kind of marriages, it does not affect the husbands only, but even the children who are products of this kind of marriage are affected, they become victims of circumstances, because the trauma that affects their father, also brings a negative impact on them, because it hinders him to perform fatherly responsibilities. The tool that have been provided in this research will help those who will use them especially the pastoral care givers. The stories that has been shared of survivors of this trauma gives a picture of what is happening inside the polygamous families which needs the church to be proactive.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adongo P. B., Phillips J.F., Kajhara, B., Fayorsey, C., and Debpuur, C. 1997. Cultural factors constraining the introduction of family planning among the Kassena-Nankana of northern Ghana. *Social Science and Medicine*, 45, 1789-1804.
- Agadjanian, V and Ezech, A. C. 2000. Polygamy, gender relations, and reproduction in Ghana. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 31, 427–441.
- Al-Krenawi, A. 1999. Women of polygamous marriages in primary health care centers. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 21(3).
- Amankwa, A.A. 1996. Prior and proximate causes of infant survival in Ghana with special attention to polygamy. *Journal of Biosocial Science*, 28,281-295.
- Beall, L. 2010. The impact of modern-day polygamy on women and children <http://www.traumaawareness.org/id19.html> accessed on 10 November 2010.
- Ben N.1969. *Handbook of Marriage Counseling*. Palo California press.
- Bowman G.W. 1998. *Dying, grieving, faith and family: a pastoral care approach*. Haworth pastoral press.
- Brahmbhatt, H., David Bisahi, Fred Wabwire-Mangen, Godfrey Kigozic, Maria Wawer, Ronald H. Gray and The Rakai Project Group. 2002. Polygamy, maternal HIV status and child survival: Rakai, Uganda. *Social Science and Medicine*, 55, 285-292.
- Broude, G. J. 1994. *Marriage, family, and relationships: A Cross cultural Encyclopedia*. Denver.
- Capps D. 1979. *Pastoral care: a thematic approach*. Westminster press.

Capps, D. 1980. *Pastoral care and preaching: a quest for an integrated ministry*. Westminster press.

Caldwell, J. C., and Caldwell, P. 1993. The nature and limits of the sub-Saharan Africa AIDS epidemic: Evidence from geographic and other patterns. *Population and Development Review*, 19, 817–848.

Camara, S. 1978. African Women, Polygamy, and masculine authority. *Ethno psychology*, 33, 43–53.

Connolly H. 2002. Sin. Continuum publication.

Elbedour,S. Onwuegbuzie, A.J., Cardine,C and Abu-Saad. H.2002. The Effect of Polygamous Marital Structure on Behavioral, Emotional, and Academic Adjustment in Children: A Comprehensive Review of the Literature. *In Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, Vol. 5 (4).

Everett L. 1988. *Marriage counseling: a Christian approach to counseling couples*. Intervarsity Press.

Gage, A. J. 1997. Familial and socioeconomic influences on children's well-being: An examination of preschool children in Kenya. *Social Science and Medicine*, 45, 1811-1828.

Garland D.R. *Family ministry: a comprehensive guide*. Intervarsity press.

Gerkin C. 1997. *An introduction to pastoral care*. Abingdon Press.

Ghana Government and UNICEF. 1990. *Children and Women in Ghana: A Situation Analysis*. Accra, Ghana.

Grossoehme D.H. 1999. *Pastoral care of children*. Haworth pastoral press

Gyimah, S.O. Polygamous Marital Structure and Child Survivorship in Ghana: Age Dependent Effect? 2002 Discussion Paper no. 05-13. Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario.

Gyimah, S.O. 2002. Ethnicity and Infant Mortality in sub-Saharan Africa: The case of Ghana. *Population Studies Centre Discussion Paper*, Number, 02-10. The University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada.

Hamdan, S. Auerbach, S. and Apteur, A. 2009. Polygamy and mental health of adolescents. In *Alan Child Adolescent Psychiatry* (2009) 18:755–760.

Hayase, Y. and Liaw, K-L. 1997. Factors on polygamy in sub-Saharan Africa: Evidence based on the Demographic and Health Surveys. *The Developing Economies*, 293-327.

Heitink G. 1999. *Practical Theology*. Eerdmans Publishing.

Ira S. 1938. *The man takes a wife: a study of man's problems in and through marriage*. The Vail-Ballou Press.

James M. 1966. *Focus on the family*. Association press: New York.

Jo-Ann, D. 2010. Women living under Muslim laws
<http://www.wluml.org/node/6513> accessed 10 November 2010.

Kanyoro M.R.A. 1995. *The will to arise: women, tradition and the church in Africa*. Orbis books.

Larty E.Y. 2003. *In living colours: an intercultural approach to pastoral care and counseling*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Meier P.D, Minirth, B.F. 1991. *Introduction to psychology and counseling*. Baker books.

Michael G. 1972. *The nuclear family in crisis: the search for an alternative*. Harper and Row Publisher.

Ntozi, J.P. and Nakanaabi, I.M., 1997. The AIDS epidemic and infant and child mortality in six districts of Uganda. *Health Transition Review*, 7,189–205.

- Pollard N. *Evangelism made slightly less difficult*. Intervarsity press.
- Robert G. 1950. M. *Marriage and family relationships*. McMillan Company.
- Robert G.F. 1950. *Marriage and family relationships*. McMillan Company.
- Sell C.M. 1995. *Family ministry*. Zondervan Publishing house.
- Strassmann, I. 1997. Polygamy as a risk factor for child mortality among the Dogon. *Current Anthropology*, 38, 688–695.
- Van de Kemp H. 1991. *The family therapy Christian perspective*. Library of Congress cataloging in publication.
- Ware, H. 1979. Polygamy: Women's views in a transitional society, Nigeria, 1975. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 41(1), 185-195.
- Wimberly P. 1977. *Counseling African American marriages and families*. Westminster.
- Warista D.W. 2005. *Pastoral care in African Christianity, action*. Action publishers.
- Westoff, C.F. 2003. *Trends in Marriage and Early Childbearing in developing Countries*. DHS Comparative Reports no. 5. Cavelton, MD: ORC Macro.
- Wimberly E. 1999. *Moving from shame to self worth: preaching and pastoral care*. Abingdon Press.
- Wimberly E.A. and Wimberly P.W. 2007. *The winds of promise: building and maintaining strong clergy families*. Discipleship resources.
- Wimberly, E.P. 2003. *Claiming God reclaiming dignity: African American pastoral care*. Abingdon Press.