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**Strong family bond.** One theme that emerged in the experiences of the respondents in their family relationship is that they have strong family bonding with their father, mother, siblings, and stepfamily. This affirms some written literature about having a strong bonding in the family. According to the study by Ibrahim et al (2017), "the favorable relationship between the husband and his children with his wives, on the other hand, is expressed in terms of their father's fair treatment among his children". Although there are respondents who expressed to have a weak bond with their fathers, there are two respondents who are experiencing a close bond with their father and family and spend time with them most of the time where they get to eat out together, visit different places, help their siblings with their homework and etc.

*"Dahil magkakasama kami lahat sa isang bahay, most of the time ang bonding namin ay yung kumain lagi ng sabay sabay, makipaglaro sa mga kapatid and tulungan sa school work nila, magtulungan sa gawaing bahay at minsan mag out of town kami pamilya. Minsan, isama kami ni Ama sa palayan niya."* (Because we are all living in the same roof, most of the time our bonding are eating together, play with my siblings and help them with school work and help each other with house chores and go out of town. Sometimes, Ama would bring us to his rice field.)

Samir

Some respondents expressed their closeness with their father and their family, which makes them, have a strong bond within the family. Although there are respondents who expressed their weak bond with their fathers, there are two respondents who shared that they maintained a strong bond with their father. These respondents are the ones who grew up with their father being with them and able to live having a complete family and able to experience life having to see their fathers all the time and these respondents are also the ones whose father and wives had their mutual agreement even before the polygamous marriage of their father which resulted in having their family accepted by each family member.

It shows that contrary to most of the respondents who expressed their weak bonding with their father, there are respondents who managed to maintain a strong connection with their father and the whole family. These respondents most of the time spend time with their family, bond with them and do family things together like eating outside and help their father with their business and help their siblings with their homework and house chores. This shows that despite the situation of their family of having multiple families, their family still managed to bond with each other and make time for one another. This situation can be related to the take of Symbolic Interactionism with families where its states that symbolic interactionist perspective emphasizes that families reinforce and rejuvenate bonds through symbolic mechanism rituals such as family meals, time together and holidays. A person's interpretation of their situation is in line with how they bond with their family in their home which greatly affects a person's growth and how he deals or understands his/her environment or situation.

**Feeling secured with mom and siblings.** Another theme that emerged in the experiences of the respondents in their family relationship is that they feel confident and contented with just having their mother and siblings who were with them ever since they were children and who supported them in every step of the way. This affirms some written literature about children in polygamy who are most likely to be close to their mother and siblings. Some respondents shared that the only people that they only have a strong bond with their birth mother and birth siblings. Due to the division of social and economic resources of fathers, children form closer bonds with their mothers (Al-Krenawi et. al, 1997) and according to a study conducted by Pervez and Batool (2016), children's relationships with their siblings were largely characterized by love, support, care and sense of independence.

*"Ever since, kami na lang talaga nila Ina at mga kapatid ko ang magkakasama. Sa lahat ng bagay, kami lagi nagtutulungan pati mga kapatid ko."* (Ever since, it's just me, Ina and my siblings who are always together. We always help each other in everything.)

Ali

*"Sa bahay kasi ako, si Mama and kapatid ko na babae lang lagi magkasama. Kapag may gusto puntahan si Mama. Sinasama niya kami o tulungan namin siya sa tindahan niya kapag wala kaming pasok. So kami yung laging magkasama sa lahat ng bagay."* (In our house, it is only me, Mama and my sister that are living together. When Mama wants to go to places, she will let us go with her and sometimes help her with her store whenever we do not have class so it is really just the three of us who are always together.)

Aira

Three of the respondents shared that they have a solid bond with their mothers and birth siblings only. They always get to spend time and built a strong relationship with their mothers and birth siblings only for they only live with them for a long time without their fathers didn't support them and only see their fathers rarely. These respondents grew up having their mothers and siblings with them but not their fathers and that is why they only see and feel their mother and siblings as they go to persons but not their fathers because these respondents are the ones whose fathers took their for granted and are not being responsible for their role to their families and that is why these respondents are only used to sharing time and bond with their mother and siblings most of the time. Most children from polygamous family are experiencing detached and distant relationship with their father, while sympathizing and relying more on their birth mothers for love and support (Al-Krenawi et. al, 1997, 2008, 1990) and "Due to marital conflicts in the family, children may have to undertake the responsibility of the family" (Elbedour et al, 2007).

This shows that the respondents who grew up without their father with them most of the time and whose fathers took them granted and can only see them rarely are more comfortable with just having their mother and siblings who have been with them through thick and thin. The respondents always choose to spend time with their mother and siblings who were there when they needed them and who raised them ever since they were young. This shows that there are respondents who are used to not having their father with them and just always spend time with their mother and siblings.

**Resilient bond with stepfamily.** One more theme that emerged is the strong bond between the respondents and their stepfamily. Some respondents shared that despite their father's multiple marriages, they were able to maintain a strong bond between them and their father's other marriages. Respondents are being treated nicely by their stepfamily and treat them as their own family. The same result came out from the study conducted by Sumagka et al (2016) where the children were treated cared well by their father's other wives and experienced to have a good connection with their siblings.

*"Sa ngayon kasi ang kasama namin sa bahay ay si Ama, mga kapatid ko, yung pangatlong asawa ni Ama and mga anak nila. Siguro kung bonding, minsan sabay sabay kami magkain sa labas, magbyahe sa ibang lugar o magpasyal."* (Currently, we are living in the house of my father together with my siblings and third wife of my father. When it comes to bonding, we eat out together, travel to different places and visit places.)

Nasser

*"Mahilig kami kumain sa labas na initiated din ng mga nanay namin tapos attend ng special occassions together like graduation tapos yung mga kapatid ko kung may mga kailangan sila for school like homework tinutulungan ko. Mas close ako sa 2<sup>nd</sup> wife kesa sa 3<sup>rd</sup> wife kasi andyan na siya bata pa lang ako tapos parang nanay ko na talaga siya and nakadagdag na din na close kami ng mga half siblings ko, parang hindi step mother and turing ko sa kanya, nanay na talaga. Kumbaga, parang dalawa na ang nanay ko talaga."* (We use to eat outside which is initiated by our mothers and attend special occasions together like graduation and whenever my siblings has homework from school, I always help them. I am more close to the second wife of my father than the third wife because the second wife was already there ever since I was a child and she is like a mother to me and it added also that I am close to my half siblings. Growing up, I'm used to having two mothers.)

Aira

The respondents shared that despite their situation with their father having multiple marriages, they still managed to have a strong bond with the other families of their fathers whom they also treat as their own family where they eat out together, visit places, attend special occasions and etc.. Although there are respondents who are not living together with the other families of their father, they still built a good bond with the other wives and children of their fathers. According to Symbolic Interactionism, the interactionist perspective emphasizes that families reinforce and rejuvenate bonds through symbolic mechanism rituals such as family meals and holidays.

This appears that the respondents established a good relationship with their stepfamilies because their mothers managed to establish a good relationship among other wives of their father. These respondents are the ones who already met their stepfamilies since they were young and that even though they do not live in the same roof, they managed to maintain a good relationship with each other and treat each other as a family because their parents especially their mother has a good relationship with the other family or other wives of their family which allows them to get closer to their stepfamily and bond with them with the help of their parents.

**Weak bond with stepfamily.** Another theme that emerged in the experiences of the respondents in their family relationship is that they were not able to build and establish a good connection with them because of jealousy, attitude problems of stepmothers, bitterness and the like. This affirms some written literature about the weak connection between children and their stepfamily. According to a study conducted by Elbedour, Bart, and Hektner (2007), "the

relationships between the children and their step-families are undermined by emotions such as anger, jealousy, and detachment". Some of the respondents shared that although they have met the other family of their father, they haven't made a bond with them instead chose to be casual towards them.

*"Although may times na nagkakasama kami ng tatay ko at iba niyang pamilya kasi pinakilala kami ni Ama sa kanila, hindi rin talaga kami ganun ka-close. Hindi kami talaga nag-uusap. Basta lang magkita kami pero wala gaanong usap."* (Although there are times that our father, his families and us are together because Ama introduced us to them, we are not really close with each other. We don't really talk, we just see each other but no long talks.)

Ali

*"Nakilala namin siya(2<sup>nd</sup> wife) kaso never kami nagkasundo. Nung napangasawa siya ni Ama, 19 years old siya nun kaedad lang siya ng ate ko. May ugali kasi siya na sumbongera, inggitera tsaka selosa."* (We got to meet her (second wife) but we never had a good relationship. When Ama married her, she was only nineteen (19), she is just the same age with my sister. She also has attitude problems like she easily gets jealous and envy.)

Nasser

The respondents said that although they have met some of the other families of their fathers, they do not have a steady relationship with them because of several reasons such as they lived separately for a very long time and due to their parents conflict, their mothers chose to live on their own and avoiding the other families of the respondents' father and another reason is that even though the respondents are living with their stepmother, they do not have a good relationship due to unwanted attitudes such as being jealous and envy. This can be related to the result of the study conducted by Pervez and Batool (2016), which suggests that the children had an uninterested and negative relationship with their stepfamilies which is defined by feelings of jealousy, dislike, hatred, condemnation, indifference, disownment and an effort to empathize with the stepfamily.

With respondents who were able to meet the other families of their father, it is evident that they chose to act civil towards their stepfamily for the sake of their parents and respect to each other. Even though they met their stepfamily, they do not have a close relationship with them because they didn't live together and only see each other rarely and the respondents also chose to live on their own and still show respect for each other.

### **Communication Patterns**

**No deep communication with father.** One theme that occurred in the respondents experience in their communication patterns in the family is their weak communication with their father due to several reasons where most of them where they rarely see their father and their father being a hindrance of their attempt of being open to them because they are strict and not expressive. This experience affirms some written literature about having distant communication with their father. "Separation and individuation may precipitate conflict and diminished feelings of closeness for a time, but the magnitude of these changes and their impact on the relationship should reflect prior to the history of the relationship" (Allen & Land, 1999). Most of the respondents don't talk to their father most of the time and doesn't share deep conversation with them because of the feeling of being away from them and seeing them rarely.

*"Sa tatay ko naman, dahil nga strikto siya, dominant, hind kami ganun ka-open sa isa't isa. Parang laging may pagaalinlangan kasi baka magkamali ako tapos pagalitan ako."* (When it comes to my father, because he is strict, dominant, we are not really open with each other. I am always to scared to make mistakes because he easily gets mad at us.)

Nasser

*"Kapag umuuwi si Papa, hindi din kami talaga nag-uusap. Madalas, tahimik lang ako kasi siguro nasanay na ako na hindi ko naman siya lagi nakakasama and kapag umuuwi siya, hindi rin kami expressive sa isa't isa."* (When Papa comes home, we barely talk. Most of the time, I stay quiet maybe because I'm used to not being with him most of the time and when he is home, we are not expressive to each other.)

Aira

*"Kapag nasa amin siya o umuuwi siya sa amin, saktong batian lang tapos wala na dun lang ako lagi mag-stay sa kwarto ko. Parang ako kung magdating siya, magdating siya. Kung mag alis, mag alis."* (When my father is at home with us, we only greet each other and then I would just

stay in my room. Its like me being used to having my father coming home and going out.)

Naida

Most of the respondents shared that they rarely talk to their father because they feel distant from them. Some shared that they are used to not having their fathers with them most of the time so if there are chances of seeing them, they feel shy and awkward. Some shared that they have wrath against their father for a very long time because they neglected them and some are afraid to voice out because their father is dominant and strict. These are hindrances that make the respondents have distant communication with their fathers. This situation can be related to two types of families. One, "Protective families are high on conformity orientation and low on conversation orientation. Within these families there is no room for open discussion, parents are in power and children must obey" (Fitzpatrick & Ritchie, 1994) and two, "Laissez-faire families are low in both conversation and conformity orientation. Within these families, children will have little interaction with their parents and be influenced more by outside forces and peer groups" (Fitzpatrick & Ritchie, 1994).

It appears that the respondents have a weak communication towards their father and doesn't share deep conversation with them. Most of the respondents does not have a good communication pattern with their father because they felt that their fathers are not expressive, took them for granted, strict, dominant and doesn't give time for them which makes them have second thoughts of talking to their father and hinders them to be open to their father and share their stories and problems to them.

**Open communication with family.** Another theme that emerged in the experiences of the respondents in the communication patterns is that they open to their family. This affirms some written literature about the family having open communication in the family. Adolescents and parents with a history of sensitive, responsive interactions and strong emotional bonds may experience only temporary communication difficulties, whereas those in poorer quality relationships are more likely to sustain disruption and unresolved issues (Allen & Land, 1990). Two of the respondents the despite their situation being in a polygamous family, they have maintained a good communication towards their family.

*"Open ang relationship namin sa pamilya na pwede kami magshare ng mga problems namin. Andun lagi yung respeto sa lahat, sa mga stepmothers namin, mga kapatid, sa tatay ko at nanay ko. Andun yung respeto at pagmamahal kasi siguro growing up, nasanay na kami na ganito ang set-up ng pamilya namin."* (We have open relationship in our family that we can share problems with each other. Respect with each other is there, respect to all our stepmothers, all my siblings and my parents. There is respect and love because growing up, we got used to this kind of set up in our family.)

Samir

Although the majority of the respondents shared that they do not have a good communication pattern with their family, there are also respondents who expressed their closeness towards their fathers. This can be related to one type of dimension of the family, which is the conversational orientation. "It is the degree to which families encourage open communication and expression of thoughts and feelings" (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2004). The respondents has a good communication with their fathers where they can share their stories, problems and anything to their father because their fathers managed to maintain a close tie within their family where they are free to talk to each other without awkwardness and second thoughts because their family are also open to them and also exerts effort for them to feel comfortable with each other.

**Rare communication with stepfamily.** Another theme that emerged in the experiences of the respondents in their communication patterns is that they only communicate with their stepfamily rarely. The respondents who shared about their stepfamily whom they have met and have a good relationship with shared about the communication pattern they have towards their stepfamily. The respondents, although met their stepfamily, didn't live in the same room and only see each other rarely and doesn't have constant communication with them but treats them respect. This affirms some written literature about individual paying respect to other people even if they are not blood-related. In our society, when an individual shows respect to another individual, it generally means that the person has some value for that other individual and at the very least because that individual is human being regardless of who that person is or what they have or haven't done (steppingthrough.com.au). The respondents still show respect to their stepfamily despite the conflict between their parents and their stepfamilies.

*"Hindi rin(referring to siblings). Kapag may problema man, kay Mama ko lang yun dinidiretso. Hindi rin naman kasi kami(half siblings) palagi nagkikita ng mga kapatid ko kaya hindi rin talaga ganun ka steady ang communication."* (No. If there are problems, I will tell everything directly to

Mama. We rarely see each other that is why we do not have steady communication.)

*Sadam*

*“Kahit nagkita na kami, hindi naman kasi kami close. Kumbaga, respeto yung sa amin kaya nakipagkilala kami.”* (Even though we see each other, we are not really close. It was all out of respect that is why decided to meet with them.)

*Khalil*

Some of the respondents shared that even though they met some of their stepfamily and able to bond with them, their communication with them is rare and they cannot open personal problems with them. They would either keep it with their selves or would go directly to their own family. The casual relationship and a few times of seeing each other makes the respondents have a rare communication with their stepfamily. The casual treatment to each other hinders the respondents to share deep details about them but still show respect to them as the family of their father.

**Only open to mom and siblings.** Another theme that emerged in the experiences of the respondents in their communication patterns is that they are only open to their mother and siblings whom they can share their problems and stories with. Their mothers and siblings were the ones who since childhood supported and cared for them. This situation affirms some written literature about how a constant relationship or people who grew up from childhood to adolescents are the ones you give most of your attention to. “Some relations or interdependence models emphasize the inherent stability of parent-child relationships. In an interdependent relationship, partners engage in mutually influential exchanges and share the perception that their connections are reciprocal and enduring” (Reis, Collins and Berscheid, 2000). The respondents find more comfort in communicating with the persons they grew up with closely.

*“Sa family namin, ang nanay lang namin ang nakakausap talaga namin magkakapatid kasi siya lang din naman ang lagi namin kasama. Sa kanya ako nakakashare ng mga kwento ko pati sa mga kapatid ko. Close kami magkakapatid talaga sa kanya.”* (My mother is the only one we can really talk to because she is the only who’s been there for us ever since. I share my stories to her and to my siblings. We are really close to her, my siblings.)

*Ali*

*“Sa bahay, open relationship naman kami nila Ina and kuya. Maayos naman ang communication namin kasi as much as possible, magtulungan at mag-open kami sa isa’t isa ng mga problema namin or kung may gusto kami i-share sa isa’t isa.”* (I have an open relationship with Ina and Kuya. We have good communication because as much as possible, we will help each other and we are open with each other when it comes to problems or if there are somethings that we want to share.)

*Mariam*

The respondents shared that they only have their mothers and siblings whom they can share their problems with and share their stories. They expressed that it is their mothers that they look up to whenever they have problems and their mothers are the ones whom they talk to most of the time including their siblings. This can be related to the study conducted by the Pervez and Batool (2016) that suggests that mothers are the primary caregivers of children and that their siblings are undertaking the responsibility of the family.

The reality of living with only their mother and siblings makes the respondents feel more comfortable with only their mothers and siblings. For years of living with them as they grow old to make them feel restful and trust their mother and siblings with the happenings in their life, may it be big or small event in their life. These respondents are the ones who grew up with only having their mother and siblings with them that is why they are only used to communicate with them only most of the time. These respondents are the ones whose father failed to portray their role as a father to them where they are left with their mother and siblings when they were growing up.

**Friends are my go-to persons.** The last theme that emerged in the experiences of the respondents in their communication patterns is that in times of need or problems, they would prefer to go to their friends and share their problems with them. That despite the presence of their family, they still choose their friends in order to remove the guilt of adding burden to their family. This kind of situation affirms some written literature about growing children who find comfort in their friends. “Patterns of communication established during childhood are likely to be carried forward into adolescence by both partners, but cognitive advances provide adolescents with a realization that the rules of reciprocity and social exchange that govern with friends are not similar to the interactions with parents” (Youniss, 1980). The amount of comfort that the children get from their parents differ from the ones they get from their friends.

*“Sa totoo lang, mas gusto ko pa i-share ang problema ko sa bestfriend ko and family niya kasi mas makadare pa sila mangamusta sakin kesa sa sarili kong pamilya. Sila yung mga tao na mas pamilya pa ang turing sa akin.”* (Honestly, I would just want to choose to share my problems to my bestfriend and his family because they have more initiative to ask how I am doing than my own family. They are people that made me felt at home.)

*Naida*

*“Honestly po kung may problema ako tulad sa school or personal man, mas nakakashare pa ako sa mga kaibigan ko.”* (Honestly, in times of problems like school or personal, I can mostly share everything to my friends.)

*Rayah*

Some of the respondents shared that they communicate more to their friends when it comes to problems because one reason is that they do not want to be a problem to their family and another reason is that they do not feel any support from their own family that is why they felt the love and support from their friends. According to Degges-White (2018), “When it comes down to it, the people we like to be around are those who make us feel good about who we are, what we believe, and what we enjoy doing. Although not every friend will meet all of those preferences all of the time, the ones who support the aspects of our identities that matter the most are the ones we are most likely to count among our collection of good friends.”

It appears that there are respondents who choose to share with their friends than their own family. The respondents mostly choose to connect and communicate with their friends because they feel more comfortable with them than their own family. They feel that if they share their problems with their family, they will just add on to their family’s problem so they will, as much as possible, share to their friends than their own family and they also feel that they lack support from their family especially their parents that is why they found their home in their friends.

## **Synthesis**

Polygamous marriage is common among Islam families where it is being practiced by the Islam believers due to it being legal in Islam under the rule of Sharia or the Muslim law. Polygamous marriage like monogamous marriage has varying positive and negative experiences for the families. Positive experiences include: provided by parents where even though it is expected for their family to rely on their father, their mother found ways to help their family and provide for their children as well, strong bond with family is also observed to be a positive where despite their family’s situation of having multiple families, they were able to maintain a good relationship with each other, feeling secured with mother and siblings because despite the irresponsibilities of the father, the children were able to find comfort and relief with their mother and siblings who were with them to support and love them all throughout their life and having an open communication also occurred as a positive experience because the children experienced to have a close tie with their family where they were able to have an open communication with them where they were able to share stories and problems with their family.

Literature describes that there are positive experiences, the respondents’ experiences yield negative ones such as not experiencing the conditions of polygamous marriage; being neglected and taken for granted; raised and provided by their mother without the help of their father while some were given a very big responsibility of providing everything on their own because their father passed on everything to them. Negative experiences also include having a weak bonding with their father due to being dominant, strict, having favorites and can only see their father rarely. Likewise, disagreement between wives resulted in the conflict within their family that resulted in some children not living with their father and was solely raised by their mother. There are also negative experiences that occurred in the communication patterns of the children with their family since they do not share a deep conversation with the father because of being dominant, which makes the children feel scared of being open to their father. Moreover, there were respondents who pointed out that their father have favorites, which led to not having a deep conversation between the father and their children.

On the other hand, due to conflicts in the family, the children have rare communication with their stepfamily and only talks to them because of respect and because of being irresponsible of their father, the children are only open to their mother and siblings whom they grew up to be with ever since they were children and because of the conflicts of the children’s parents and disconnection happening inside their home, some would choose to share their problems and communicate with their friends whom they believe understands them more.

It can be gleaned that although polygamous marriage is accepted and widely common among Muslim families, it’s the negative experiences that outweigh the positive. It proves to be detrimental in the growth of the respondents wherein resentment, guilt, shame and jealousy, apathy, hatred, lack of trust is quite evident. Not all families successfully integrate into a blended family. The children suffer the most in this setup and they pay the price for parents who decide to enter into a polygamous one. Polygamy marital structures are underlined through interfamilial

conflicts, parental violence and negative emotions such as jealousy and stress that makes the children progressively vulnerable to psychological dysfunction (Al-Krenawi & Kanat-Maymon, 2017; Patil & Hadley, 2008). Children in polygamous marriage experience different kinds of situation that affects their functioning. In this study, it is evident that although there are positive experiences in the lives of children living in a polygamous marriage, there are more children who experienced the opposite and the effects of these experiences together with their constructs of polygamous marriage will be shown in following pages.

## EFFECTS OF THEIR CONSTRUCTS AND EXPERIENCES IN THEIR PSYCHOSOCIAL FUNCTIONING

This deals with the effects of the respondents' constructs and experiences in their psychosocial functioning. This includes their self-worth, role performances, and relationship to their family. Self-worth refers to how the respondents see or value themselves given their constructs and experiences in polygamous marriage, role performances refers to how the respondents perform their roles in the home; roles towards their father, mother, siblings and stepfamily and relationship with the family refers to how the relationship of the respondents with his or her family members got affected by their constructs and experiences.

According to Skidmore, "Social functioning is the inner and outer forces framework of a person. It is a tool to help the Social Worker explain some of the reasons why individuals may not function well in their environment". It is the person's performing of different roles and these roles are influencing their relationship with other persons and their own feeling of themselves. Also, positive and negative relationship with others may affect their role performance and self-worth. Individual's feeling about him/herself may affect the way he/she perform their roles and the way he/she relate with others. Various studies would show that constructs and experiences may contribute to positive or negative and may affect the individual's functioning. The succeeding part discusses the effects of constructs and experiences in the psychosocial functioning of the children in polygamous marriage.

### Self Worth

**Stayed positive through Islam faith.** One of the themes in the effects of the respondents' constructs and experiences in their self-worth is being positive through their faith in Islam. Despite all the negative impacts of polygamy in their lives, they still found the positive side of their situation through their belief in Islam. Some respondents shared their gratefulness being born in Islam despite their situation. This affirms the written literature of Islam believers who have faith in Allah (s.w.t) that despite their obstacles, still knows that there is good in everything. It was stated in the Holy Qur'an Sural Al-Inshirah, Chapter 94 Verse 5-6 that "With every hardship comes ease". The respondents who are experiencing the negative side of polygamy still find their faith as their way to positive thinking.

*"Thankful ako masyado na I was born in Islam kasi sobrang positive ko lang kahit ganito ang sitwasyon namin ni mama."* (I am so thankful that I was born in Islam because I became very positive despite our situation.)

*Sadam*

*"Siguro sa sitwasyon ko ngayon, I see myself as a thankful being born in Islam kasi naging malawak ang pag-iisip ko at mas naiintindihan ko ang sitwasyon namin."* (In my situation, I see myself as a thankful being born in Islam because I had a wide thinking and understanding about our situation.)

*Samir*

*"Okay basta andyan ang God. Hanggap kaya maging positive, maging positive lang. Kung hindi man maprovide ang responsibilities, ang important ay andyan ang Allah (s.w.t)."* (Okay as long you have God. As much as you can stay positive, be positive. If not all responsibilities can be provided, what is important is that you have Allah (s.w.t))

*Aira*

The respondents expressed their gratefulness of being born in Islam and relying on Allah (s.w.t) despite the happening in their lives being in a polygamous family. They expressed that Islam taught them to be more understanding and patient with their situation and remained positive despite everything. "Religious coping encompasses religiously framed cognitive, emotional, or behavioral responses to stress. It may serve many purposes, including achieving meaning in life, closeness to God, hope, peace, connection to others, self-development, and personal restraint" (Argument, 1997).

It is evident that the respondents still found a positive aspect of their situation despite their experience and remained positive despite their situation and struggles within their family. They are still grateful for having born in Islam that allows polygamy because it teaches them to



be positive and understanding of their situation and hold on to their faith to keep positive with their life's situation.

**Absence of father makes me incomplete.** Another theme that emerged in the effects of the respondents' constructs and experiences in their self-worth is their feeling of longing for their father's love, care and attention makes them incomplete. The situation of the respondents being away from their father and rarely see them, who makes them feel that their father has favorite makes the respondent long for their father. This is in contrast to the written literature where an individual needs to feel protected and loved to in order for an individual to function harmoniously. According to Carl Rogers (1951), an individual needs to be regarded positively by other people where an individual can feel valued, respected, treated with affection and loved. The respondents didn't feel their father's love, care, and attention that resulted in them missing their father and a feeling of being incomplete.

*"Pakiramdam ko ngayon sa sarili ko, incomplete ako. Yung may tatay naman ako pero hindi ko naman maturing na tatay talaga kasi hindi naman kami lagi nagkakasama and mas may time siya sa ibang pamilya niya"* (I feel incomplete. It is like, I have a father but I can't treat him as a father because I rarely see him and he gives more time to his other family.)

Ali

*"I feel incomplete siguro kasi hindi ako lumaki na may tatay. Parang kulang kasi kunwari may pinagdadaanan ako o problema, yung gustong gusto mo mag-share sa magulang mo pero hindi mo magawa."* (I feel incomplete because I didn't grow up having a father figure and my mother isn't always with me. I feel incomplete because in times that I have problems, I always want to share it to my parents but I can't.)

Rayah

The respondents shared that they feel incomplete because they do not have a complete family with them especially due to their father's absence. Although their parents are married, they have a father and mother but they are not in good terms. It affects their feeling of a sense of completeness. They cannot call their family complete because they do not have their father or mother with them. They expressed that even if they wanted to share things with their parents, most of the time, it is impossible to happen because of their parents' conflict. According to Dale (1981), incomplete families that were originally complete may change functioning and homeostasis in a family arising from structural causes. It may involve the loss of a member or a loss of function or change in the role of a member who nevertheless remains present.

The respondents feel incomplete because they didn't grow up having their father with them that even though their father is still alive, they do not share time with each other most of the time and just see each other rarely which hurts them and make them feel incomplete because there are instances that they need their father's support but they cannot have it and it also makes the respondents have the feeling of low self-esteem because they feel that they are not complete knowing that they cannot spend much time with their father because their father give much of their attention to their other family and ignore their needs. This feeling also was the result of their parents' quarrel and conflict, which makes their mothers, chose to live separately from their father and only allows them to see their father rarely. Having to grow without their father with them can greatly affect their development as they grow older. There can possibly more changes when they experience growing having their father with them and can feel the love, care, and attention that they are longing for.

**Father's irresponsibility affects my view of other men.** Another theme that emerged in the effects of the respondents' constructs and experiences in their self-worth is having a different view of men due to father's irresponsibility. The experiences of the respondents greatly affect their view of other men and their interpersonal relationships. This affirms some written literature that children in polygamous marriage tend to have more interpersonal problems than the ones in monogamous. According to Elbedour, Bart, and Hektner (2003), "Children from polygamous households face greater difficulties in socializing and interpersonal relationships when compared to their counterparts from monogamous households". Respondents became frightened of socializing and committing because of their experiences with their father who became irresponsible.

*"Dahil sa pagiging iresponsable ng tatay ko sa amin na pinabayaan niya kami, naging man hater ako. Takot ako magcommit kasi baka mangyari sakin ang ginawa ng tatay ko"* (Due to my anger towards my fathers because of his irresponsibilities, I became a man hater. I'm afraid to commit because I might experience the same thing my father did to us)

Mariam

The respondents whose fathers became irresponsible of their obligations to them made a big impact on how they view other men that resulted to be frightened of committing to any man because of the thought of possibly experiencing the same thing that their father did to them. According to Bob Alabudra, on the effects of the relationship of a person to his or her father to his

romantic relationship, one of the hardest parts is de-emphasizing the father's influence over the impression of men.

For the respondents whose fathers became irresponsible of their obligations to them resulted to being a man-hater and being frightened to commit to other men because their father didn't portray their role as a father to them by taking them for granted, by not showing care and for being the reason of their parents' gap and misunderstanding which makes the respondents think that they might possibly experience the same thing. According to Mackey (2001), the relationship of a father and child is a unique bond and attachment. And this can be one of the most important and influential relationships in a child's life (Rohner and Veneziano, 2001). Having to grow without their father with them can greatly affect their development as they grow older.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The socio-demographic profile of the children aged 15-24 years old in a polygamous marriage in Cotabato City consists of ten (10) respondents where five (5) are male and five (5) are female and all of them are Islam by religion, single and still living with their family. Most of the respondents are from Maguindanaon tribe and the highest educational attainment of the six (6) respondents was college graduate and half of them are students and half of them are working in government and private companies. More than half of the respondents belong to a number of three (3) marriages and half of the respondents belong to the first family.

The overarching theme in the respondents' constructs in a polygamous marriage is being legal in Islam to marry up to four wives but with conditions such as equal treatment to all family, equal provision to all family and equal emotional support for each member of the family. This is the rule on how polygamous marriage should be implemented in Islam by the Sharia or Muslim Law. But on the other hand, there is another theme that emerged in constructs of the respondents about polygamy which having one mate at the same which is supported by the general definition of polygamy where a person is polygamous when he or she is having one spouse at the same time.

## IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The respondents' definition of polygamous marriage mostly came from the meaning of polygamous marriage in Islam where all of the respondents belong to but there are also some who defined polygamous based on the general meaning of polygamy where a person is having more than one spouse or mate at the same.
2. Findings show that most of the respondents didn't experience the conditions of polygamy because of their father's irresponsibility which resulted in conflicts among parents and affected their relationship with their father.
3. The respondents grew up only having their mother and siblings with them which resulted in the distant relationship of the respondents to their father and feel more comfortable with just having their mothers and siblings with them
4. Father's neglect, being unsupportive, dominant, unexpressive and having favorites made the gap between him and their children.
5. Regardless of the order of marriage, a child came from, they share the same pain with regards to their family's situation.
6. The respondents try to hide and keep everything on their own to protect their mothers and siblings.
7. The respondents still remained positive and understanding because of the knowledge they gained from Islam.
8. The respondents still respect their stepfamily regardless of the conflicts and disagreement of their family.

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