

Polygamy - Rights and Wrongs

Author: [IWPR](#)

Long denounced as a violation of women's human rights, polygamy is however seen by some women as a legitimate practice.

Yasemin Ahmed featured a vox pop in Mosul in which lawyer Dlovan Barwari described polygamy as a form of discrimination against women, civil servant Mohammed Ibrahim urged every man to marry several women, while Noora Hasan, also civil servant, opposed the practice, saying it created problems between couples and had a bad effect on children.

The show invited three women activists - Ala Talabani, a parliamentary deputy; Hanaa Edward, head of Iraqi Hope Association; and Kurdistan Salim, Editor-in-chief of the Islamic weekly *The Future* - to debate polygamy.

Talabani highlighted reasons for polygamy, citing tribal traditions that guarantee male dominance, Islamic strictures which allow men to be married to up to four women at any one time and the current situation in Iraq where there are thousands of widows and old maids who have no income or other economic resources.

Edward disputed attempts by intellectuals and sociologists to present polygamy as a solution to social problems, pointing out that most men who get married to several women prefer young ones to old maids and widows.

Salim defended polygamy, saying that it was right to allow a man to marry more than one woman, especially if his wife is sterile or can't satisfy his sexual needs. She said it was better that a man had lawful relations with women than use prostitutes.

Location: [Iraqi Kurdistan](#)
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