



Christian Polygamous Marriages in Zimbabwe, Women's Experiences and the Dual Scourge of HIV/ Aids and Poverty: The Case of 'Apostles'/ Vapostori of Marange

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Abstract

This article interrogates the practice of Christian polygynous marriages in Gutu district among the *vapostori* of Marange sect apropos poverty, HIV and AIDS. The study assesses the perceptions of the *vapostori* vis-à-vis polygyny, effects of their lived experiences and the coping mechanisms employed by women of the sect. The findings made herein show that there exists monogamy in the context of polygamy that alleviates the diet of mates and children, as lifestyle of the Marange men. The chief characteristics of the *vapostori* polygyny in a traditional standpoint are that of fusing traditional culture and religion. The theory of 'practice' by Pierre Bourdieu based on the concepts of Capital, Habitus, Field and Agents was utilised as a theoretical framework. Qualitative methodology instrumented by semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and key informant interviews based on purposive and convenience sampling was adopted. The marital behaviour among the sect members is attributed to the long held socioeconomic-religious doctrinal beliefs that fuel poverty and HIV and AIDS. The social and political familiarities, the sexual reproductive and economic exploitative experiences faced by women in the Marange sect and their views regarding polygamy diverge.

Key Words: Agents; Capital; Field; Habitus; Marange; Marriages; Polygamy; Polygyny and Vapostori.

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1. Introduction and Background to the study

This research is the study of the Christian polygynous marriages among the VaPostori of Marange sect that is one of the 'white garment' churches in Zimbabwe. The study was conducted in Gutu district to assess the factors why individuals cling to the vapostori polygynous institutions, evaluating the perceptions of the vapostori vis-à-vis polygyny. The paper also assesses the familiarities of women in Marange polygynous marriages apropos HIV/ AIDS and poverty examining the impact of these experiences to women's lives. The reproduction and production rights of women in Marange polygamous families are diversely violated and this has led to numerous teething distresses in the social fabric of Zimbabwean life, hence it is imperative to make an analysis of the Marange 'problem' marriages.

The most prevalent form to the African system of plural marriage is polygyny so whenever polygamy is used in this paper the assumption is that it refers to polygyny. Polygamy is the simultaneous marriage of somebody of unique sex to two or added members of the contradictory sex *polygyny* or *polyandry*. Polygamy is a marriage that contains more than one spouse [1]. Polygamy is the concurrent unification of a husband to numerous wives or a practice of marrying more than one wife at a time [2]. Marriage is a lawfully acknowledged and/or generally approved arrangement stuck between two or multiple persons that conveys certain rights and obligations and contains sexual activity. Marriage exists where one or more men have a relationship with one or more women who are socially and legally recognized and it involves the parties in rights and duties towards each other and any children born from the union [3]. In its multifaceted nature, poverty in this paper refers to the deprivations, damaging interaction and bitter experiences faced by girls and wives (sexual or otherwise) in the vapostori polygamy.

Polygamy is a commonly acknowledged and socially valid arrangement of marriage in various regions of the world like in India, New Guinea and in most parts of Islamic world and Africa [3]. Polygamy is found in all continents and amongst individuals practising all central religious conviction of the world, Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and African Traditional Religion (ATR) [1]. The Koran permits Muslims to have up to four wives at the same time in imitation of the number of wives the prophet Muhammad had [3]. The practical reason why polygamy came to refer to polygyny is the fact that polygamy is prevalent whereas polyandry only exists notionally [4]. However, the precise focus of attention in the present study is on Zimbabwean people of the Marange 'Apostolic' sect where polygyny is accepted immensely socially and religiously amongst the congregants. World over in the Christian Church, men are facing a dilemma when it comes to marriage issues [5, 6]; whether to be in monogamy or polygamy, others opt for clandestine polygamy which is conceptualised elsewhere as the 'small house' union [7]. The, polygamous marriages among the vapostori of Marange can be understood in light of the **work of the missionaries as anti-polygamy**, the **progression of African Independent Churches (AIC)** and **History, demography and practices of Marange 'Apostolic' sect** in Zimbabwe.

1.1. Missionaries' Workings as Anti-Polygamy

Polygamy in Zimbabwe and Africa is an acknowledged share of home-grown culture and kinship systems [8]. In

pre-industrial societies, polygamy served a crucial function [9]. Polygyny was tolerable in various parts of the sphere and it was convenient in an agrarian society where it produced more children to help in farming [3]. In pre-industrial Shona society, polygamy was desirable for coalitions between families and clans [5, 6]. However, the introduction of Christianity by the missionaries led to the decline of polygamy in Africa. God gave Adam an assistant Eve and not partners; so, having multiple mates provokes God [10]. Missionaries or orthodox churches, the Roman Catholic and the Dutch Reformed Church were very critical to polygamy and any Christian man found practising it was ejected from the church and only the first wife was recognised as the official wife [6]. Missionaries rejected polygamy as both a marriage form and a religious right; the reaction towards polygamy was extremely negative [10].

Missionaries in Africa indulged in moral condemnation of the institution of polygamy in a manner injurious to scientific objectivity [5, 10]. Since the Western missionaries had grown up with monogamy ideology practised in their home countries, they inevitably brought to the people they missionized a faith based on the ideology of monogamy. Missionaries preached and insisted on a form of marriage and family life that related and suited the values of the settlers that undermined polygamy [6].

The missionaries' condemnation of polygamy was derived from both their own cultural experience and from their own petty-bourgeoisie religious ideology [6, 11]. Having grown up in the Western world, they were convinced that their own family form was the only valid one in which Christianity could live. Christian families had to be monogamous and a plurality of wives was regarded as immoral [6, 8]. Polygynous family institutions or several of their memberships were deprived of the rites of baptism or the Holy Eucharist and had to face the price of marriage break up and separation, dictated and certified by the self-same Christian church to which they became followers [12]. These conditionalities meant to end polygamy. This led to the growth of AIC with the pride in polygamy. When the Bible was made available in vernacular language, most of the Shona people were now capable of comprehending it and put some importance in their own cultural way like the accounts of OT heroes with their numerous wives and concubines against missionaries' emphasis on monogamy [6].

Men aspired to become Christians had to divorce wives with whom they had lived with for many years and by whom they had begotten many children [5]. Churches demanded that all converts keep their first wives and reject the others, the Catholic Church allowed a man to choose any one wife, while he could care for the others materially but no longer allowed sexual relations with them [ibid]. Wives of the polygamists were later accepted into the Church, but not the husbands, for the wives were regarded as 'involuntary victims of the custom' [11, 10]. Polygamy, like other African customs, was regarded as primitive and uncivilised which made it unacceptable in Christian circles that were fraught with cultural differences and contradiction [6].

1.2. Formation of African Independent Churches (AIC)

In an endeavour to merge the attraction of polygamy with the drive of Christianity, an innovative class of the African elite emerged in the early 20th century and instigated rejecting the relationship between Christian and domestic ideologies prompting the creation of AIC which were open to polygamists [4]. The AIC presented men the leeway of taking numerous wives while continuing upright Christians [13]. The bulk of menfolk were

contended with AIC. Overall, it is the AIC; composed originally, of rebellious Christians from the Western founded churches that have engaged the more tolerant positions of upholding polygyny. Other AIC allowed polygamy because they saw it as profitable social asset and as one of the essential structures of Africanism and in accord with the OT way of life [6]. Others have positively accepted polygamy as a part of their conscious indigenisation of Christianity in Africa [ibid]. Polygamy is one of the dynamic factors behind the growth of Independent churches [10].

A Zionist Bishop in Karangaland had twenty-four wives, the Bishop's residence had turned into a large settlement, and his wives worked hard to provide food for those who came to ask for his prayer [8]. Other AIC, because of their standpoint on polygamy, had been excluded from fellowship with adjacent churches and for this lone reason were not regarded as authentic Christians [5, 6]. The Marange sect, an AIC quizzed the Missionaries standpoint of marriage and their ignorance of Bible primarily the polygamists like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David and Solomon who had seven hundred spouses and three hundred concubines; 1 Kings 11:3 and were regarded as pillars of faith [14]. Some AIC leaders felt that for certain reasons, the missionaries concealed the truth about polygamy in the Bible or that the missionaries had misunderstood the Biblical truth about polygamy [6].

The AIC view of Christianity clashed against the Western Churches in colonial Zimbabwe. The interpretation of the scriptures was the initial writings to appear in an African linguistic such that unlimited consultant was given to the written work, enabling Africans to differentiate between whatever the missionaries has said or had not and what the bible said or did not [15]. What Africans find in the Bible in relation to their tradition becomes an autonomous source of authority beyond the missionaries [ibid]. Author in [6] looked at the politics of Bible translation into vernacular languages; how missionaries worked to abolish African beliefs through the power of the Bible interpretation. Besides these challenges, Africans still saw the connection between what was in the Bible and the cultural beliefs when the Bible was translated [6]. The African features found in the Bible were structures that Africans were fast to realise, proclaim and criticise the missionaries for not being Biblical enough [11, 15]. As a result of the authority that was assumed to the vernacular Bible in all aspects of life, the vaPostori of Marange interpreted it word for word and in a fundamentalist way.

1.3. History, Demography and Activities of the Marange 'Apostolic' Sect

Johane Marange sect was termed after its originator Johane born in 1912 in the Marange ethnic region in Manicaland Zimbabwe [14, 16]. Johane Marange just like in much the same way as the Biblical prophets received a calling in 1932 from God, and that he performed healing miracles, preaching, spiritual exorcisms, speaking in tongues and even walking on fire [17]. The early evolution of the Johane Marange sect took place within the internal and extended family spheres and as the news of this new AIC spread, people started upcoming from all over the Marange area and it competed with other churches like Catholic, Methodist, Salvation Army and Lutheran [14]. Glossarial and angelology was and is prominent and every member is regarded as having an angel that protects him/ her all the time.

Like the Mormons, the Marange sect favours the OT. The founder of Mormons religion in America; Prophet Joseph Smith had several wives and the first wife was Emma [Rayne in author 1]. The youngest spouse, Helen

Kimball was fourteen years when she wedded him [1]; and the same is true to Johane Marange the founder who had thirteen spouses with several of them younger to his first born Abel and the overall number of his children is not known [14]. Hence, the Mormons and the Maranges consider tolerable for grown-up males to wed immature girls aged thirteen to fifteen years. The Mormons are a sacred organisation established in 1830 by Joseph Smith, the first Mormon prophet [1]. Despite the opposition from the US government, today the Mormons condone polygamy [ibid]. Equally, Johane Marange sect is well known for antagonising with the government because of its fundamental understandings on healthy, marital and typical society [18]. Like Johane Marange, Rayne in author [1] maintains that Smith acknowledged to have received an instruction and commandment from Deity to take more wives in order to ascend to heaven. Marriages within the Marange Sect are cheered and are entirely contrary to any marriages with non-sect adherents for it is their principle not to wed outside the sect [14, 16].

In Zimbabwe the 'Apostolic' sect is one of the leading assemblies with a probable population of 33, 9 % [19]. The Johane Marange Apostolic sect in 1999 was projected to be everywhere a million associates in Zimbabwe, with more thousands in nations advance north, making it the next or third largest congregation in Zimbabwe [15]. In Zimbabwe 31 % of daughters become married before attaining age 18 in contrast to 5% of boys [19]. The sect's teachings and practices are based on the Bible, the sect founder's philosophy, 'revelation from the Holy Spirit' or Mweya; combination of philosophies including features of African ethos and modernity [20]. The apostolic constituency constitute 6 % of Zimbabwe's mature populace and 73% of its members live in the countryside (ibid). The biggest population of the Marange sect is women; 64 % of affiliation is womenfolk and the mainstream of them are of the age in-between 20 and 29 years [20].

The Marange apostolic sect regards themselves as spirit type churches; Holy Spirit is the basis of Divine revelation, foretelling, curative, instruction, and safeguard [21]. Customarily, vapostori dressed gaily for all their wear, white colour symbolises purity, cleanliness, and members of the sect head shave signifying religious commitment to God and the group [14]. The vapostori dress code is reserved and unquestioning; and accordingly to the vapostori leaders the clothing code designate the notch in which vapostori is keen towards maintaining vapostori custom [18]. Hair cutting symbolises parting from the world and also demons and wicked spirits are thought to live in hair, accordingly head shaving is an alternative technique of getting free of these spirits [21]. Men maintain long beard inferred as an insignia of the morality of the Jewish fathers (ibid). The Marange sect members go bare footed at a church service typified by taking their shoes off as done by Moses in Ex3:5, an indication that the space where they do their church services is divine [14].

Virginity is highly pronounced and sexual relations between couples only allowed after proper sect-religious stages are followed and their premarital sexy customs are outstandingly traditional towards virginity concept [16, 18]. Among the Shona people, premarital pureness is safeguarded by inspiring girls to stay virgins and virginity is linked with wholesomeness (something still prized amongst the traditional Shona people) and teenager daughters in the Johane Marange circle are anticipated to pass a ritualistic virginity inspection [ibid]. The sect teenage girls are bush taken by some older womenfolk and inspected to understand their virginity status [16, 22]. The inspection is usually done at the Passover celebrations in July [14]. Virgins in the congregation are selected days before the celebrations and their duty is to prepare the unleavened bread and fruit juice 'wine' [16]. Those found to be virgins are congratulated and those not usually are shamed by the crowd and scolded by

their parents. In fact, each girl found to be virgin is given an undamaged tree leaf as a token of the fact while those found to have lost their virginity are given leaves with holes punched in them [14].

2. Methodology

Given the background and the explorative nature of the study, the researcher adopted qualitative methodology, utilising key semi-structured interviews, key informant interviews and focus group discussions as research tools. The method enabled the researcher to capture the voices, attitudes, perceptions and narratives of the Marange sect members. Qualitative methodology is probing and revelatory in nature and yields data communicated in words from participants who had actual involvements [23]. Using this method the investigator produced the data that was 'rich' in detail and nearer to the informants' perceived 'polygamous' world. Qualitative research allows researchers to comprehend actions and organisations by coming to discern the individuals and their morals, symbols, philosophies and sentiments [24]. This methodology contributed to the improved understanding of social realisms, the processes, structural features and the in-depth experiences of Marange sect members. The qualitative approach assumed and interpreted the polygynous practice through vapostori social action and structures, comprehended by ascribing and interpreting meanings to the motives of the polygamous practioners. Qualitative methodology enabled the researcher to uncover the informants' own 'narrative' on familiarities with the Christian polygamy.

2.1. Semi-structured interviews

For the purpose of flexibility, rapport and uniformity, semi-structured interviews were utilised. *Semi-structured interview* is a method used to assemble data when carrying out an inquiry, encompassing direct interaction with the respondent who is asked questions that are not stringent, allowing respondent to share experiences based on mutual trust with the researcher [24]. Respondents were asked the same questions. This data collection tool provided more in-depth probing into the answers given by those involved in vaPostori polygamous marriages, comparing facial expressions against the given answers, thus making a judgment about the truthfulness of their replies. As the interviews were like a chat among acquaintances, participants broadly expressed their views or remarks on the polygamy practice for they were free to expand on the topic giving their own opinions, explaining and elaborating using examples of their own personal experiences. With this method, vapostori stated their own definitions to elucidate the polygamy institution and suggested their own solutions to questions.

2.2. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

A focus group discussion is a group interview in which there are several participants and is likely to produce valid data than a one-to-one interview. FGDs allow varied classifications and sentiments to emerge, participants flesh out, alter or reconstruct viewpoints in responding [24]. Because of the multi-vocal nature, it allowed the wives of the vapostori to express their shared views, enabling the researcher to understand the forms and effects of their polygamy experiences from the group point of view. FGDs led to greater probing 'why vapostori felt the way they do', offering the researcher an opportunity to study the means by which vapostori jointly generate logic of polygyny and constructed meaning surrounding it. Participants stimulated each other to continue the

conversation, the intervention of the researcher was minimised, and the research became genuinely 'naturalistic' and closer to real vapostori social life.

2.3. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

Key informant interviews were utilized and relevant individuals were effectively used. KIIs are a qualitative research tool which embraces the identification of probable key informant based groups or individuals on the diverse viewpoints that different social actors would convey to the interview [25]. Interviews were contacted with five religious leaders, five sect elders and those involved in the polygamous relations. The interviews delivered expressive information, providing the understanding on the attitudes, behaviours and standpoints of the Marange followers, providing insights into the not observable dynamics of polygamy since the evidence came from the persons associated with it directly. The participation of these key informant individuals made easy the information recording, as they were rich in Marange marriages and religious doctrine.

2.4. Sampling

Sampling is a practice of interviewing fragment of populace in order to represent the whole population [23]. Convenience and purposive samplings were utilised to select respondents of this study. Convenience sampling involves selecting the easiest persons to reach for a sample [25]. This technique allowed drawing of vapostori polygamists who were both easily reachable and eager to participate in the study. Since the study could not only base on individuals who were only part of the sample simply because they were easy to reach and keen to participate, so purposive sampling was also utilised. Purposive sampling is picking of participants who are known or judged to be good information source [26]. Purposive sampling allowed the researcher to use personal judgement to select various individuals in polygynous institutions and sect leaders for they could provide information that could not be gotten as well from other choices.

For objectivity's sake, the respondents were those individuals in polygamous unions drawn from three wards of Makore chiefdom in Gutu district, which is about 70km northeastern direction of Masvingo city. The area is home to vaPostori of Marange. The participants were drawn from various vapostori dwellings and congregating zones. With the above sampling techniques, thirty wives, fifteen polygynists and five church leaders were interviewed. Inasmuch as a larger sample was desirable, it was not feasible to select a larger sample owing to the nature and the sensitiveness of the research topic as sexual and individuals consider marital issues too personal. More-so it was undesirable to have a larger sample than this as in qualitative research people perceptions cannot be quantified.

2.5. Limitations

The research was hindered by the sensitiveness of the research topic, as individuals consider sexual and marital issues too personal, hence, some respondents withheld the information they thought was sensitive. This was mitigated by triangulation and promising anonymity and eventually they opened up. Some female respondents were hiding some sexually sensitive information that is unacceptable to be conversed outside the conjugal structures by the church doctrine and the researcher utilised a female research assistant to enhance their

cooperation. Again, the researcher's cultural orientation somehow influenced conclusions that as well tried to affect the scientific nature of the study. As a mitigation measure the researcher remained as objective as possible observing value freedom and neutrality, using scientific methods of inquiry. At times, the researcher was subjected to subjective and emotional responses from the senior wives respondents blaming junior wives. For the participants to toned down their emotions they were informed of the academic value of the research.

3. Presentation of Data

This section presents a detailed presentation of the research findings. The findings of this study show that there is a myriad of socioeconomic and psychological factors that account for the polygyny and HIV and AIDS amongst vapostori of Marange. People in the Marange sect perceive polygamy with varying lens but generally concurring that the institution is religiously and culturally rooted. Poverty among the Vapostori wives is experienced differently. The discoveries are presented in thematic form and collections of selected respondents' quotes are offered. Themes were derived from the most essential and pressing emerging issues raised by partakers during fieldwork.

3.1. Formation of the vaPostori Polygynous Unions

It has been found out that on the vaPostori Church service, young girls sit in the front row facing the row of older men while elder women sit behind the girls' row and boys behind the male elders' row. The elders are the recommenders and approvals of the marriage relations to the junior sect members and; the vaPostori men enjoy having a variety of sexual partners. Discoveries also portrayed that the VaPostori trust that spirit can tell who should be one's wife. One respondent having questioned for the motivation behind having polygyny; argues:

Do you want to eat the same food every day? Yes, a fish is a fish but they taste differently according to types; so the same is true to women, fat and slim, tall and short, black and brown all taste but are romantically different. Overall, age does matters most especially for recently virginity broken wives, though lacking sexual experience but are sexually appetising and sweet. Marrying a virgin stimulates sexual appetite and the children born truly resemble you.

The research unveiled that multiplicity of children and traditional way of living is at the core of vaPostori polygyny. A mupostori man highlighted that men prefer polygamy and use the women not for sex only but for procreation. When asked why and if it was Christian to be polygamous in this era and space, one respondent also questioned whether it was more Christian to have well thought-out prostitution, marital infidelity, a rapidly mounting divorce rate and cumulative statistics of illegitimate children than vaPostori polygamy. He further asked whether it was more Christian for young girls and women to become prostitutes, or mistresses than to become a second or third wife of a respected member in the vapostori community. Another respondent affirmed, staying and having sex with a woman who is no-longer capable of bearing a child is just like cycling a bicycle without a chain.

A seemingly educated male mupostori reasoned that one can barely point with cast-iron certainty to a distinct text of the New Testament in which polygamy is expressly outlawed and monogamy universally commanded.

He cited Gen 1: 27 that state men should multiply and fill the earth, claiming that polygyny occurred among Cain's descendants; citing Gen 4: 19 and 23 to buttress his claims. More-so, four respondents agreed that Jacob and other OT champions were polygamists; that Jacob himself had four wives. One respondent differentiated evil against nature and immoralities against custom and sins against commandments, asserting that polygamy is traditionally permissible. He said that if the Bible and the African tradition converge on polygamy, then those churches that are against it are sinning against nature, religion and African custom. One respondent argued that it is the white men's law that prohibits polygamy and not the Bible and African customs. The research also established that the balance of males and females is less equal amongst vapostori for women far outnumber men; yet every woman must have a sexual partner.

3.2. The Views of VaPostori on Polygamy

The researcher found out that among the vaPostori wives; perceptions are mixed and a feeling of being neglected in the marriage was the most common complaint from vapostori wives. One female respondent argued:

Oh polygamy! What does it offer vaPostori women these days except poverty?gone are the days when there was no HIV and AIDS and when majority of individuals practised it, those days one could enjoy the support of other wives, mothers-in-law and aunts.

That woman asserted that if a husband preferred one wife to another, one could complain to the aunts and village elders but now; not everyone is polygamous as they are not vapostori. One respondent argued that the Church doctrine should change so that polygamy is abolished since it perpetuates poverty among the households. She claimed that since her husband married a second wife, he ceased to serious take any advice from her. The research discovered that in one home yard, wives, each with her own hut is expected to care-fully for her own children and no longer expect support from the husband. In some households, it was noted that for the upbringing of the children, husbands care not forcing wives to immoral behaviour in order to make ends meet. One woman cried that she was disregarded when the second wife came as the husband gave her all his attention and did as if she no longer existed. She was however quick to point out that when he later married his third wife; he treated the second wife just as he was treating her. One woman opined that:

The fact that some men are able to love more than a person at a time does not prove that vaPostori polygamy is as valuable as monogamy but that love can become shallow leading to cheating and the blowout of AIDS. The crux of the matter is that the love of spouses is naturally exclusive that it can only exist in total honest if both partners give themselves to one another, wholly and unconditionally.

It has also been found out that junior wives take pride of being in polygamous marriage. A fourth wife of five bragged that those who felt that they were no longer cared for by the husband were their fault since they could neither properly cook, bath nor please the husband. It was her claim that men are as small children who need to be looked after and carefully cared for, and even to be fed. She advanced claiming that men do not love lazy and beggaring wives who always complain to the husband and who lack innovative means to secure food for the

family in general and for the husband in particular. The research established that the vaPostori men cherish the practice of plural wives linking it to the African tradition, vaPostori religion and the life after death. One respondent claimed that:

Polygamy is a representation of that which is truly African. ...Remember; marriages sealed by the courts are only for 'while', tie spouses together on the world but not binding in the henceforth. In the contrary, vaPostori marriages wrapped by way of arrangement between couples, spouses' families and religious leaders are for 'while and forever', prolonging into the henceforth ever.

3.3. Reproduction and Economic Involvements of Women in Polygamous Marriages

The research established out that in the Sect, virginity is celebrated and every married woman is expected to do her reproductive responsibility and a good mother is one who dedicates wholly her time to conceiving all the offspring conceivable and nurturing them in the vapostori way. For a mupostori woman, breeding up offspring by sect guidelines is a twenty-four-hour job and most females are delightful to do this church intended duty. Women in the Sect are responsible for children's upbringing and socialisation. It was also established that children are very important to vaPostori women and the father is expected to be fair to all of his children. A woman claims that each interval she glanced on her offspring; she developed power from them to move on as she sought after a livelier future life for them than her experiences and that eyes were always on them whether they were fairly treated by the husband, co-wives or co-wives' children.

The inquiry found out that in many vapostori polygamous households, fathers have left the educational responsibility of their children to the wives and quite a number of mothers, keen to educate their children, engaged into illicit sexual activity in order to obtain the school fees that their husbands cannot pay. It became evident during the fieldwork that most of the vapostori fathers are incapable of adequately fending for their large families. This is so since they are self-employed and the self-jobs are seasonal, leading wives to participate in piece jobs where they also exchange sex for money in-order to get the fees for their progenies who sometimes go to school empty-belled, bare-footed and without a school uniform.

The research also found out that VaPostori women engaged in small-scale horticultural gardens and the sale of the produce ameliorated some economic quandaries. The researcher noted that husbands sometimes appropriate the little cash gotten from vegetable sales for the fantasy of newly proposed wife. From a focus group discussion, it was evidenced that suicide cases of wives originated from husbands squandering the resources sourced by other wives with the potential wives were voluminous. In situations where a husband actively contributed to the households' income, four respondents concurred that favouritism took centre stage as younger and new wives got the lion's share. The first wife of five braggingly asserted:

...though the husband is no longer equally caring for us all ...concentrating on maininis but it is only me who have grown up children who are working and taking care of me, the two younger sisters of theirs from my womb and their father; ...eventually fostering positive attitudes, respect and love from him towards me.

3.4. The Social and Political Familiarities Faced by Women in Polygamous Marriages.

The research established that some vapostori wives experience life better, especially those newly wedded and loved ones; others problems and a typical example of the difficulties found inherent in a vaPostori polygamous family has been given by the first of six wives, the vahosi of the church leader who was stripped off authority by other co-wives:

I no longer tell co-wives what to do, for they will not obey me. Since my husband no longer cares for me either, I now live with my married son. I still live in my husband's village but no longer sleeping with him. All my co-wives except the youngest are also now living with their sons. The youngest wife is the only one he still cares for.

Another senior wife argued that once a man marries a younger wife, he no longer listens to his first wife, elaborating that the younger wife rather scolds the older woman and tells her that the husband no longer cares for her. Here sentiments were similar to the respondent who asserted that today the co-wives no longer work together in the fields like what the bygone generations did and now each women look after her own children. However, she was quick to argue that, at best co-wives look after each other's children when one has to go away for a short time. Generally, it was noted that co-wives do not continually accept gifts from one other, for the sake of safeguarding their absolute independence.

Findings were also that first wives read and comprehend the Christian communication of 'love your neighbour' as chiefly valuable in solving the relational clashes developing in the vapostori polygynous families. Senior wives who could read were found to be habitually Bible readers in order to know how to evade and to manage household clashes, to resolve down and mending interior harmony. These women were found to have established a method of incorporating Christianity into vaPostori polygamous marriages, permitting them proving that they are true Christians by being successful and tolerant polygamous wives in the vaPostori tradition.

The study also unearthed that some female respondents agreed that cordial relations exist among co-wives; the vapostori religion and the husband who always preached gospel of the need of the family unity mainly attributed children and these relations. In some households, it was hard to conclude which progenies were the natural children of which spouse because of the robust ties among progenies and their 'maininis'. Such harmonious feelings were largely prevailing in polygynous relations where the spouses were clan sisters or where the majority family members occupied religious position in the sect.

It also came to the attention of the researcher that the vapostori polygamy is often associated with witchcraft accusations and conflicts emanating from the age irregularity in the marital relationship, as grownup males espouse young daughters and husbands of brides were sometimes found to be old enough to be their fathers or even grandparents. It was too found out that sometimes children are the source of competition and conflict among vapostori wives. Large number of children is common among vapostori wives, other womenfolk delivering up to eight to eleven offspring apiece. One female respondent opined that:

...in polygamous marriage the interests of us as mothers are centred on children, they need ill-treatment neither

from co-wives, any co-wives' child nor the father. ...for future's sake my children need protection for they can be bad-omened from the yonder ages translating to adulthood life where they would become beggars while those of others prosper.

3.5. Sexual Reproductive Rights and Experiences of Women under the vaPostori Religion

In some vapostori families, it was found out that bedroom visits by a husband trail uncompromising schemes where duty calls are organised around an inflexible timetable. Others choose free and amorphous scheme where visits are randomly organised agreeing to the needs of man and his partners, whereas others run a malleable scheme whereby the man visits his spouses agreeing to a timetable which can be altered taking into account exceptional situations like birthdates plus the day virginity was broken. It was however noted that, failure by the husband to follow the sex timetable sometimes led to conflicts among co-wives.

The researcher also found out that females in polygynous relations could not acquire sexual contentment they preferred from a common pool resource-the husband, an enticement to adulterousness and spreading the HIV and AIDS. Further, it was noted that failure by the husband to satisfy the sexual quest of his wives, some ended up having sexual relations with the older sons of the first or second wife. Several respondents were of the view that, some wives have the opportunity to enjoy sex every time they needed it from the husband and others have limited chances to access the activity. One senior wife asserted that:

Newly wedded wives get more sexual attention from the husbands; hembe itsva inonakidza kupfeka and haibvi pamuviri (a newly bought shirt is ever dressed).

The investigation found out that a man could not govern the engagements of each one of his disgruntled wives and spouses ended cooperating in guarding one another's secrets and cover up one another's illegitimate sexual dealings. A husband and woman did not share a bedroom during her menstruation periods. The research also unearthed that Vapostori women did not participate in sexy relationships with the husband for so long they are nurturing a child, who has not yet reached their first birthday. It was also within the confines of research findings that in the vapostori marriages, permitting a man sexual contact was not simply an individual choice for wives since some wives no longer needed and enjoyed sex. One respondent emphasised that their husband was aging and because of his busy work, they were left sexually unfulfilled. She further claims that she was no longer feeling like having sexual contact any longer due to her experiences from their husband, she however highlighted that once the husband sought having sex with her she permit him doing so.

The research also found out that Marange women are neither allowed visiting the hospitals, using the contraceptives nor the scientific medicine. A wife of the mupostori leader said:

... Seven of us contracted STD and out of severe agony our husband took all of us to Chitando clinic for medical treatment, we were treated.seeking sexual satisfaction ...honestly, five months later I was caught in a compromising position with somebody in our neighbourhood whom I had an affair with during our school days. After being caught, I told our husband that if he even dared to report me to the church elders, I would tell them that he had forced us to go to Chitando clinic.

On the same interview, it was evident that in the Marange sect the sin of a wife committing adultery weighs at the equivalent level as looking for medicinal usage. Both are punished by expulsion. As the husband was one of the sect leaders, he was unprepared to suffer shame of being banned and excommunicated by the sect; he did not report the wife's offence. The wife opined that she cheated on the husband since he was too old and could not fulfil her youthful sexy needs. The age variance between the husband and his youngest spouse at the time of consultation was thirty-nine and a half years.

Another respondent told the researcher that, she had an extra marital affair in her village of origin where she constantly pays visits. The same respondent further highlighted that she suspected and believed that her husband and other five co-wives were all HIV ridden for she too was HIV positive. She noted:

...secretly, I visited the Guni clinic when I was not feeling well and upon HIV tests is when I got the confirmation that I was HIV positive but now I am afraid of telling anybody for fear of victimization since it is against our church doctrine to visit the hospitals....and secretly, right now I am taking the ARVs.

4. Discussion of the Research Findings

Premised on the *theory of practice* by Pierre Bourdieu, this part of the paper discusses the research findings. The discussion is presented thematically founded on Bourdieu's ideas of *Capital, Habitus, Field and Agents*. Due to power and different species of capabilities (*capitals*) by men and the internalised knowledge, collection of ideas, habits, beliefs and doctrine (*habitus*), marital relations are Christianised and re-traditionalised among the vaPostori of Marange. Polygyny is a space of possible and dynamic forces, *field* of power wrestles meant at sustaining or altering the configurations of these powers. However, the vapostori tradition is not only a structuring structure, which organises polygyny and the insight of it, but also correspondingly a structured structure; the perceptions of the vapostori are itself the product of internalisation of the divisional groups within the sect. The nature of man and his sense of human dignity is reflected in marital relation and is not only biological and psychological but historical [5]; thus, the nature of Marange man is shaped and conditioned by history and socially situated conditions.

In the vapostori community, the stratagems of actors hinge on their situations in society and polygyny; in the distribution of the specific muscle plus on the perception that they have on polygyny. Marital behaviour among the vapostori is either enabled or constrained by long held socioeconomic-religious doctrinal forces which make it almost impossible for those outside the sect to realise subjectively some of the objective goals of polygyny. However, while Bourdieu sought after bridging structuralism and constructivism and was successful to some point, there remains a partiality in his work in the course of structuralism.

4.1. Concentration of Variant Species of Capitals Possessed by Men as Drivers of; and Polygamy

Vapostori men use a variety of capitals. A capital is any 'asset', financial or otherwise, immediately usable or potentially usable for an individual gain [27]. The elders among the vaPostori men are wealthy in the form of chipostori knowledge, ideas or vapostori doctrine, the *cultural capital* that they employ and deploy to promulgate polygyny for sexual gratification with various wives. Therefore, polygamy among the vaPostori of

Marange when a mature man espouses a young girl acts as a sexual rejuvenation mechanism as well as a product of this mechanism. The familiarity with; and easy use of vapostori doctrine legitimate the formation and maintenance of polygamy. Because of the Holy Spirit as a form of capital, men in the sect hide behind prophecies, use *linguistic capital* and abuse their position as prophets to hand-pick girls for the sect male elders who already have other wives. Therefore, the acquaintance with and informed use of the vapostori ideology legitimates the conservation of status and power of elders and the abuse of a girl child as well as the likelihood of spreading HIV and AIDS.

The sexual motivation for vaPostori men with various sexual associates is a result of humanoid biology and that is the foundation for the worldwide manifestation of polygyny amongst humankind. Sociobiologists argue that though the ability for sexual preference and the tendency to look for sexy assortment is possibly a worldwide trait of males; but the influential vaPostori men with numerous means, are able to obtain sex through polygyny. Vapostori male elders as possessors of the vapostori culture, *the cultural capital* exert considerable power over the female congregants, using it to gain preferred wives and to legitimate their claims to a greater share of honour and prestige, the *symbolic capital*. Thus, it can be safely claimed that polygamy provides vaPostori with the sexual gratification and diversity in mates; the diet of wives [14] and, this is an image detailing that polygamy embroils the sexual manipulation of female sect members, which in itself is *poverty*. Polygyny is aimed at sustaining man sexual desires and not women needs [4]. Polygamy therefore, provides an answer to the sexy obstruction of a vapostori male he may possibly experience, thus a solvent to a man's requirement for a sexual channel. Thus, Sanderson in author [18] reasoned that polygyny is about manly select and preferences for sexy diversity to guarantee male propagative achievement.

Male elders as a dominant group have the Chipostori knowledge and doctrine, *informational capital* through which it establishes sexual hegemony. Therefore, polygyny amongst vaPostori men is advantageous for it significantly escalates the possibility of the constant presence of a sexual partner to service the man; allowing a man whose wife is lactating to maintain a sexual life. Africans contemplate that sexual contact to a multiplicity of females is a right for a male [4, 6]. Amongst vapostori polygamy functions as a social control mechanism as male masculinity and protracted days of sexual moderation or 'post-partum sexy restrictions' that vapostori females need to follow after delivery can be cited as the foundations of it. Hence, it can be reasoned that owing to *poverty* in general amongst vapostori, a prolonged sexual forbidden is connected with little protein accessibility plus the danger of protein insufficiency ailments; it allows a mother a sufficient recess to nurture her toddler over its precarious period before getting pregnant again.

Among the vaPostori, authority (*capital*) and all-important social decisions are centralised in the hands of elder males and as agents in the religious field, there is a tendency for them to prioritise the available women for marriage. Vapostori authority is manifested in how the followers agree to them on the exploitative means. The authority and gerontocracy become a monopoly that younger men wishing to marry the second wives can do so only with the help of sect elders. Their authoritative word (s) speaks the presumed truth and have the *dunamis*/power that young men are thus obliged to behave themselves and working hard in a manner that further the Sect doctrine for full acceptance into the mature vapostori community. It is, in part, as a result of the operation of vapostori ideology, knowledge and doctrine, the *cultural capital* that the young men are upstaged in the

competition for young girls. Young people are turned into vapostori persons and become henchmen of the sect. Thus, the elders maintain and promote order in vapostori's thinking, which is just liked as necessary as order in society but perpetuating *poverty* to the male juniors and girls.

The most important men's capital in Marange polygyny is human resources. The economical practicalities of polygamy have constantly been a hallmark of Africanism [1, 4]. Women of the Marange sect are dear as producers and equally well as reproducers and polygyny is a lucrative establishment for vaPostori men. Polygamy is associated to the erotic separation of work plus the commercial importance of womenfolk as producers for the family [3]. The *symbolic capital* coupled with age differences between husband and the last wife, while impoverishes women and a girl child but it advantages vaPostori men. The age discrepancy between the husband and the last wife, with its associated prestige, authority and rank variances, renders gender egalitarianism in polygyny 'difficulty' [14]. Amongst vapostori, with economic factor in mind, polygamy serve the purpose of breeding more effectively and efficiently, therefore, is more in accord with the ancient nature of marriage, more in conformity with the law of procreation. More so, the sex ratio in the Marange sect easily exposes them to polygamy as the vaPostori doctrine encourages sect-member marriage where men are a few. The sex disparity is compensated by polygamy [18]. However, it becomes questionable whether population ratio leads to wives or wives lead to polygamy.

Because of human resource, *social capital* (wives) the most commonly voiced reason by vapostori men for polygyny is the desire for numerous children as issues of reproduction and fertility are dominant. Production and reproduction are two sides of the same coin: production of children augments economic and social resources. One *capital* can form the basis of another; children are great productive assets to a rural based mupostori man for they immensely contribute to family production and further enhance the father's *economic capital* that eventually leads to successive marriages of other wives who may be vectors to HIV and AIDS. However, the wish for several offspring is also due to a durable belief in the future maintenance of life. A man has to guarantee that his name and line of decent continues after him, safeguarding the names of his ancestors is ensured by having numerous children who would produce offspring, guaranteeing sufficient supply of broods preserving the lineage [1]. Therefore, for vapostori men polygamy is a means of making a large family, assured of a multiplicity of children; for one wife unaided might not be guarantee of this, hence, polygamy is the undoubted goal of men in the vapostori society.

Fathers endowed with *symbolic and religious capitals* attempt inculcating in their progenies that they are entirely part of solitary household and ought not consider siblings from diverse mothers as 'half' siblings. Vapostori religious doctrine is a structure and *cultural capital* that both men and women use in creating harmonious conditions within polygamy, and it acts as an ethical guide to polygamous '*poverties*', specifically co-wife engagements. Another reason for vapostori polygyny is 'masculinity', and power, being the motive for acquiring young virgin girls who are easily controlled. Getting married to a virgin girl is prestigious and represents 'genuine' maleness in the vapostori world. Real men in the sect are defined by the amount of virgin spouses he marries plus the sum of spouses he has. It is noble for male sect followers to pluck-off the flower head whilst is quiet 'fresh' and young before being tampered with by some admirers [16]. A virgin girl brings honour to herself and family of orientation and are held up as good exemplary parents thus uplifting their status

within the church.

4.2. Design for Living: Sexuality, Reproduction Acquaintances, Beliefs and Customs vis-à-vis Polygamy, Poverty and HIV/ AIDS

The concept of capital closely is related to the idea of *Habitus*; psychological or cognitive erections or structures over which individuals deal with the societal world [27]. Through these structures, persons are gifted with a chain of adopted and internalised arrangements or structures over which they observe, comprehend, escalate and assess the societal sphere [28]. Within the vapostori society, various habit-uses, the *social mechanisms and traditional practices* are at work in determining the marriageability of women while disadvantaging them. Polygamy and patriarchy habitus exerts differently upon different polygamous marriages; hence, the way the habitus exerts itself upon members of the society varies [27].

Patriarchy and polygamy are 'the long lastingly fitted propagative principles' producing and reproducing vapostori marriage doctrine. The vaPostori preparedness to engage in polygamy is a reflection of their long held devotion to Johane Marange the founder and the instruction of the sect. Therefore, the Sect takes polygamy with some sense of pride but it impact badly on females in broad-spectrum and the girl child in specific, as they are the victims of polygamy and related HIV / AIDS and poverty quandaries. The girls and sect members for they are programmed or brainwashed into the polygamous sect philosophies from a tender age, they discover it hard to escape. Due to these mental or cognitive structures, the Sect emphasized on polygamy which resonates well with the African and biblical concepts of polygamy.

Owing to internalised polygamous mental schemas, some wives, rather than opposing polygyny, their feeling is that polygyny provides an opportunity of showing their 'true Christianity' by managing pressures in polygynous marriage. Thus, vapostori Christian marriage is equally long lasting and exchangeable; transferred from single arena to another. Females are the vibrant patrons of the Marange sect for they bear numerous offspring as well as conveyors (*socialising agents*) of a religious structure in which they are not legends, a *deprivation and poverty* [29]. Because of beliefs and customs, *habitus*, for vaPostori, polygyny (a habitus in itself) is an expressive method of loyalty to their type of Christianity, traditional philosophy and culture, allowing vapostori to make logic out of the societal sphere. The Marange men have internalised and embodied the social structures of polygamy and patriarchy, for them, multiple wives is a true represent of Africans in general and Marange in particular. Polygyny determines how vapostori think, feel and it can lecture both realistic matters in the sect as well-as giving them self-importance for belonging to an ethical Christian minority. Culturally, vaPostori have internalized polygamy that it directs their actions and define their outlook in life. However, these cultural dictates have perpetuated the feminisation of poverty, HIV, and AIDS among the adherents as the patriarchal habitus and cultural values influence profoundly the lives of the vapostori women. Every social life and every expressed body of human thought has been moulded by the particular epoch in which it occurred and shares the relativity of that epoch [5]. Therefore, human nature is variable, being shaped by internalised physical and social *environmental habitus* (polygamy is rife and socially accepted among vapostori). The formation of polygamy has largely been dictated by the deep extent to which vapostori have absorbed the dominant Sect culture and the way in which this custom (*capital*) is shared by the dominant vapostori group, thus ideologically

legitimizing the existing polygamous social order. As a result, vapostori polygamy is an *exploitative institution* to a girl child and women appearing to the general Sect members as something natural to African people and true Christians. Polygamy is intensely rooted in the philosophy of vapostori and is grounded on African traditional-custom and Christian foundation; hence Marange polygyny is linked to both culture and religion. The readiness of young women to marry polygamists is often associated with the internalised tradition and *poverty* in its multifaceted nature. Polygyny is an on-going practice amongst vapostori because some individuals grew up exposed to that lifestyle and often disciplined by other sect leaders. Vapostori polygamy is learned, shared and transmitted from generation to generation.

4.3. Gendered Networked Relations of Actors and Poverty in Polygamy Field

The notion of field is together with those of habits and capital. What exist in vapostori world are relations and not interactions of agents. A field is a web of associations amongst the impartial situations within relationships, characterised by battles [27]. Vapostori marriages are grounds of power struggles between men and women and amongst women themselves. The wives whose capitals are more powerful out compete others determining the pace and direction of those others' actions while miserly them. Vapostori wives, as *agents* in the polygamy *field* compete for scarce resources where they employ diverse brands of capital in-order to win the rare, sporadic and infrequent resource, the husband, resulting in conflicts and all forms deprivations-*poverty* to other wives. Polygyny escalates skirmishes simply not amongst sexes but similarly within the similar sex [30]. The situation of women in vaPostori polygynous unions leads to undesirable interaction for wives compete for the specific profit that is at stake, the husband. Those relegated seek sexual satisfaction outside leading to the spread of HIV and AIDS. In the polygamous relations, other wives lose and others win depending on one's capital stamina. The contestations in polygamy stem from one's trajectory to accumulation; what one wants to realise? Some wives struggle for basic needs and others for sex. Lamphere in author [8] asserts that polygamy is competitive for women try to shape their personal nuclear household inside the polygynous family. In this sense polygamy is a resource that permits single wife to regulate one's individual destiny as well as that of others. For vapostori wives, polygamy is a showground of 'calculated emplacements or strongholds' to be safeguarded in a relation of contests. Hence jealousy is common because junior wives lacking the official prestige of a senior wife, due to the engagement and placement of various *capitals* are often more eye-catching to their husbands than the older wives and try to subvert the customs governing the co-wives' stratification. Thus, a field is an environment of possible or lively forces of skirmishes intended at conserving or altering the pattern of those powers [28]. Therefore, regardless of marriage provisions, tensions often mares many polygamous households. Women employ *economic, social and erotic capitals* to impress the husband resulting in tensions and conflicts, thus; women of the Johane Marange are victims of witchcraft accusations [14, 30]. Therefore, witchcraft is an ideology used in vapostori polygamy to mystify and obscures the real cause of polygamous conflicts. Vapostori polygamy is a field of power; the stratification of authority relationships within the wives that functions to assemble social affairs in polygamous marriage. Polygyny involves inequalities stuck between males and womenfolk and amongst women for commonly there is 20 to 40 years age difference between the second or third wife and her spouse [31]. Polygyny is competitive market institution in which categories of wives use *cultural, economic and symbolic* power, constantly working to differentiate themselves from their closest rivals in-order to establish a monopoly over specific sector of the polygamy. The spouses in polygynous family

fundamentally have diverse familiarities and lifecycle circumstances, those senior wives perpetuate *symbolic violence* on the juniors and enjoy quite extensive autonomy, whereas if she fails to deploy and employ various capitals junior wife may be like a house slave. Therefore, vapostori polygamy serve to strengthen the situation of persons in control (husband and/ or senior wives) by, including, mystifying their doings from the entire social order allowing 'the dominated' to admit as appropriate their individual circumstance of domination. Polygyny generates *inequality* amongst co-wives, as the husband cannot provide for the desires of more than a spouse. In this sense polygamy is in itself *poverty* and it perpetuates absolute poverty to some of its adherents. Vapostori polygamy is structured in a way that wives pursue, independently or jointly, to defend or develop their situation, and imposing principles best fertile to their personal designs, hence; a field is a structure of relationships between locations within human interaction [28]. Wives invent and improvise within polygamy; time-husband-sharing signifies the model, not the practiced actuality. Actually, wives have limited private time with a shared husband; *monogamy in the context of polygamy* as one wife is preferential to the husband. Wives deprived of sexual pleasure seek gratification outside where they contract HIV and AIDS. Polygamy is a cultural practice that most people hate for its potential to spread the HIV and AIDS [18]. *Inequality* emanating from inconsistency wife-time allocation is a general source of infidelity and clash among co-wives. Sexual and emotional jealousy and infidelity arise once the man prefers a specific wife and neglects the needs of others [6]. Polygamy is an affirmation of male power and sexual inequality [11], hence he candidly putting the struggles between sexes. Women in the Marange sect are considered as minors both domestically and on church leadership positions [16]. Polygamy is known for violating women's rights [31]. Polygamy foster *poverty* as it deprives women from enjoying their rights, trivialising and perpetually condemns them to second-class citizen [ibid]. Polygamy reduces women to items an individual can accrue once having the requisite capitals [4]. Vapostori polygamy foster *poverty* as it impedes home harmony and reduces some wives to a state of inferiority, compromising the secondary ends of marriage (mutual love or household tranquillity), for there exist silent divorce since couples continue living together but not composedly sleeping. Sometimes polygamy compromise some aspects of the principal end of marriage like socialisation for children are socialized 'differentiation' by their mothers. Polygamy produces and imposes categories of oppressive thought that different wives spontaneously apply to all 'things' in the polygamy relationships. Relations in the polygamous unification entails that the focus on children means an extreme procreative race amongst co-wives. Spouses contest having as numerous progenies as conceivable and infidelity is the result of this competition as the husband cannot sire children to them at once thus maximising the HIV and AIDS chances within the household. Co-wives as rational and calculative beings normally attempt having the biggest amount of progenies and greatest prosperous male children for this make stronger their standing apropos one another plus their husband in the polygamy structure. Thus in the polygamous field, agents (wives) accrue more capital (children) to improve their positions; causing their positions within the field to incline [27]. Therefore, children are an 'admission fee' that polygyny imposes and defines eligibility for participation. A product of this competition for children is that vapostori wives relax using contraceptives, exposing them to HIV and AIDS as well as reinforcing the high birth rates resulting in household poverty and ensuing co-wives conflicts. The procreative competition has severe consequences to children who might bear a grudge or even victimised by their mother's rivals. As an intersection of social, religious and cultural relations, Marange polygyny induce emotional trauma, encouraging mothers to centre attention on children relegating their health status and other issues for children are essential for personal,

religious and status reason. Individuals develop a habitus that is a transformation of biological dispositions into social dispositions [28]. Thus, it appears that among the vapostori, wives as mothers own children but husbands own wives. So, outwardly, most vaPostori tend to produce a ‘fascinating mythical polygyny’ rather than exposing the difficulties involved like *sexual poverty* and conflicts. A mupostori husband does not impede in the spouses’ clashes with one another, for he benefits from these clashes, as each wife will caters for her whims and caprices to conquer his favoured care and consideration. However, in vapostori polygamy, women’s experiences are erroneous, multifaceted and multi-dimensional as some marriages are well managed and others are branded by *poverty* like clashes, squabbles and discord; generate harmony in one polygamous family and misery in another. Sharing a husband’s sexuality seems bothersome to vapostori strangers, but women in the Sect find not necessarily strange to ‘*drink from the same cup*’. The ability of people to use their capitals depends on them being situated within an appropriate habitus [27]. Undoubtedly, for personal reasons, some women enjoy being part of plural marriages. Of course, in polygamous households’ men have favourite wives and one of them acts fully as a wife, while others are wives in principle and seeking pleasure outside, exacerbate the spread of HIV and AIDS. Thus, women familiarities in polygamous marriages are amorphous and context specific. Nonetheless, the vapostori simultaneous polygamy as compared to monogamy tends to exclude divorce, or at least it does not lead to it.

4.4. Capitals, Life-worlds, and Polygyny Field’s Intricacy apropos Poverty

The notion of capital is with those of habitus, field and agents [27]; there exist a symbiotic relationship between and amongst these concepts. Polygamy is both a product and producer of the vapostori community hence in these marriage relations are subjectively resolute and are not a result of free will. Thus, polygamy is a ‘structuring structure that structure’; it is the structure of polygamy that structures the vapostori sphere. Conversely, it is a ‘structured structure’; it is a structure structured by the vapostori sphere. Enabled by the polygamy structure agents are rational; ready, aware and have capacity to identify problems, and advantage themselves in the polygamous marriages. Therefore, in polygamous field, the wives’ strategies depend on their positions in the polygamy hierarchy, society and the distribution of capitals and these aspects determines one’s fate in relation to *institutional poverty*. Hence, vapostori capitals are not mobilised in a vacuum but within polygamy and societal structures that either enhance or constrain the utilisation of capitals. On gender aspect, seniority, children and religiously or socially approved achievements provides power and status to women in vapostori unions. However, these power relations and status are not a product personal cognizance and determination. Owing to historical struggles, groups occupy social space where agents participate according to social position and their psychological structures over which they apprehend this space [27]. Due to polygamous relations and ‘common sense’, wives improvise within the polygamy leading to jealous and *impoverishing* others. Therefore, polygamy and *poverty* become so much a part of vapostori lives that they become unaware of their existence. The degree of mutual aid and rivalry within the household; or how successful vapostori marriage is depends on individual wives’ personality and circumstances. Practices are established due to the relationship between the habitus and field [28]. Thus, despite the influence of religion to pacify women in Marange marriages, they have *social capital* as opposed to cultural capital (possessed by men) that they mobilise to counter some precarious polygamous experiences. Endowed with symbolic capital; mupostori husbands allow spouses to generate and regulate individual economic capitals but due to *patriarchal habitus*, the control of their

social capitals remain his prerogative, determining where, why, when and whom they visit. Henceforth, the vapostori *polygynous field* represents the age-gender stratification as grownup male *agents* govern the human resources, controlling the productive plus reproductive resources in vapostori society, a *field* of vapostori relations. Every human act is culturally conditioned for language, behaviour and ideology are inherited social settings, *the habitus*, hence polygamy is seen by the vaPostori as a cultural indigenisation of Christianity in Africa. Vapostori polygamy is dominated by power seeking *agents* whose struggles are not entirely played directly because of religious *doctrinal habitus* and those wives failing struggles in the *polygamous field* become servants to be used and enjoyed. Without dignity, she is *deprived of equality* and treated as an inferior, never as an equal human being. Her children are bound to suffer, as they grow aware of the degraded position of their mother and receiving only a share of the divided attention of their father. Therefore, the losing wives and their children are poverty engulfed. However, the real is the interactive; in this or that particular polygamous household it may or not be true that the dignity of women is compromised and that, their children suffer from a lack of paternal attention because of the custom of vapostori polygamy. One can question, *if women are abused and children are neglected in vapostori Christian polygamous families, must it be assumed that this same abuse and neglect are due specifically to the practice of polygamy? Have women always treated as equals and not as inferiors in monogamous families? Is it always among vapostori polygamists that women are degraded and children neglected?* Thus, linking poverty only to Marange marriages will be incorrect for marriage after all is a pre-Christian social institution universally experienced in a great variety of cultural forms. Hence, masculinity itself is a relational thing; one is a man only in relation to a woman.

5. Conclusion

Indeed the drivers, good and the bad of polygamy amongst vapostori, perceptions and experiences of those involved have been dyed in this paper. For humanity is not passive species but an active and rational beings endowed with the strategies and progression for the better, the practice of polygamy among vapostori is confronted by various sociocultural, economic, and political challenges. Poverty in the form of problems or sour reproductive and sexual rights experiences, rivalry among co-wives and limited ability to make autonomous life choices and strained relationship among the children in the family, all having a bearing towards the spread of HIV/ AIDS. Life has never been a fair game for women of Marange since Vapostori polygamous system contains elements of production and reproduction, power politics and prestige, all of which deprive certain wives' rights. Culturally and religiously, a real mupostori man is well defined as one who has many wives. Vapostori of Marange remains synonymous with polygamy and these polygynous marriages are often hurried, hushed and rushed. Polygamy is considered damagingly for among others, generating household disharmony, exist to gratify male lust, and fail to guarantee equivalent sexual pleasure of wives in the polygamous union and household impoverishment. It lacks equality in husband's dealing with his spouses and the over stretchment of available resources. Accordingly, some vapostori wives are against polygamy and even husbands who adhere to it fear that if they shrivel back from it that will lower their social standing in vapostori community, so polygamy is an institution of poverty. Although the potential of polygamy to impoverish women and to spread HIV and AIDS, some vapostori women are quite contented with it in the Christian and cultural perspectives that withstand it, for them being a polygamous wife is a precondition for being a blameless Christian. For them, being an upright Christian is more significant than being married monogamously or polygamously. Marange sect

attract men who for one reason or another want to marry more than a wife and yet would want to call himself or herself Christians.

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Johanne Marange 'Apostolic' Sect should sporadically re-examine its sect procedures on polygyny to bring into line their processes with the contemporary universal Christian tendencies. The sect should consider and recommend modern health practices and it should accommodate the medical practices within its doctrine. More so, congregates need to be sensitised on the experiences of polygyny so that those deciding entering it would do so from an informed position. In order to reduce poverty among female congregates, the women and girls in the sect need to be informed on their sexual and reproductive rights and gender equality needs to be considered in the code of the sect. Last but far from least, enforcement of girl child rights need to be ensured in the Marange apostolic sect since they are 'girls and not brides'.

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