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### Review Article


# Polygamy in Susana's Seven Husbands, The Guide and Train to Pakistan

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Abstract	Manuscript Information
<p>Traces of polygamy are noticeable in the Novella of Susana's Seven Husbands by Ruskin Bond, The Guide by RK Narayan, and Train to Pakistan by Khushwant Singh. Marriage for many times of a male or a female is considered to be polygamy. In a patriarchal society, polygamy is admissible only for the male members of the society. Where females are suppressed, dominated and used for rather sexual satisfaction of masculinity and children production and care for the most expected male. Females are treated as commodities. Some women characters are brought here with the opposite characteristics of femininity. Susana in Susana's Seven Husbands is sketched as a polygamist, Rosie alias Nalini and Velan's step sister in The Guide, and Hukumchand in Train to Pakistan are drawn with the informal habits of marriage for myriad. Social marriage, love marriage, and registry marriage are different types of nuptials, which are the burning questions in the colonial, post-colonial, pre-independence, independence, and post-independence periods of India. With one or two exceptional cases, polygamy in these novels of Indian perspectives is not highlighted.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>ISSN No:</b> 2583-7397</li> <li>▪ <b>Received:</b> 09-02-2025</li> <li>▪ <b>Accepted:</b> 04-03-2025</li> <li>▪ <b>Published:</b> 07-04-2025</li> <li>▪ <b>IJCRM:</b>4(2); 2025: 137-139</li> <li>▪ <b>©2025, All Rights Reserved</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Plagiarism Checked:</b> Yes</li> <li>▪ <b>Peer Review Process:</b> Yes</li> </ul>
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**KEYWORDS:** Polygamy, Patriarchal, Masculinity, Femininity, Colonial, Independence.

### INTRODUCTION

Polygamy was a burning question in the Indian society before and after the Independence of India. There was a period when Indian males could marry according to their choice. The society was entirely dominated by the male members of the society. Actually, in such a patriarchal society, everything was determined by the masculine. History says that polygamy was

prevailing for the males in the Indian society. The males could marry many times till death. But to the females, it was strictly prohibited. The Sati system was prevalent. Sati burning came into existence. The system of sati burning came into existence due to that system. But sati burning was declared prohibited in 1829 by Raja Rammohan Ray, who was supported by Alexander Duff. Susana is an influential aristocratic lady. She has been

compared with Begum Samru. That lady married seven times and made loved but all the husbands died. She didn't bear any children. So, she adopted her nephew to look after the huge property. Likewise, Susana married seven times of her loveable men. She had a staff of servants. She loved them but some of their defects made her hostile to them. Maggie was the maidservant of Susana. Her love, loyalty and affection to Susana is inevitable. Her hatred is in the will of Susana. Arun, Shah Rukh, Goonga, the Prince, Roger, Das, Shashibala did not marry more than once. The Guide is not free from the touch of polygamy whether it is in the form legal or illegal love relationship. When the love relationship between Marco and Rosie were slightly thin, Rosie alias Nalini resorted to love and live together with Raju. Velan's step sister refused to wed the betrothed bridegroom. Velan's father was a polygamist. He married more than once. Raju, Marco, Velan and others did not marry second time. In the partition novel of Khushwant Singh we don't get any reference of polygamy. Hukum Chand has been widower. He flirted with a prostitute Haseena. He tempted Haseena to marry. Juggat loved a Muslim girl Nooran. Besides this no remarries are seen. Polygamy is related to the social problems of love and hatred in the above-mentioned novels of the Indian English writers. In the Indian orthodox traditional society polygamy was prevalent among the males except some exceptions.

**Polygamy in Susana's Seven Husbands:** Susana's Seven Husbands is a novella by Ruskin Bond. It is written in Indian perspective. Once in patriarchal Indian society males of middle and upper classes could marry many times if they wanted. But the females had not the right to marry more than once. But we get totally the opposition picture in that novella under discussion. Begum Samru married seven times and this lady is connected with Susana from the side of her mother. This lady wedded seven times and all of them died one by one. She had not any children and thereby adopted her name to take care of her huge property. It is totally different from the tradition of Indian orthodox society. Susana is the protagonist of the novella of Ruskin Bond. Susana's first husband was a pseudo hunter. Her first husband was an egoist hunter. He went to hunt tiger and the tiger devoured him. Yet Susana had a little penance for that husband. Second time Susana married Roger. This husband wanted to be a singer but failed to achieved that art or skill. In each field of performance, he proved to be a failure. Depression, hatred, negligence compelled him to commit suicide. His body was found hanging from a tree. Yet she did not feel repented a bit. Doctor Gupta was a father figure. He was constipation patient. He loved to make follow everyone vegetables. He hated the idea of eating fish, foul and fowl. Under his wrong decision some persons were about to die. According to his vegetables love, he along with his friends consumed poisonous mushroom. He died. But rest of them could survive somehow. Susana married Signor Eduardo Romero. But that egoist cruel man spoiled one eye of Goonga. He had wife and children. Yet he wedded Susana. Susana injected him water rather than insulin into his vein. He died of heart attack. Whom Susana loved and

married she had immense hatred to this man. Therefore, she punished him indirectly. Sammy Das was a widower. He married second time. This husband of Susana was a cellphone lover. His first love was cellphone and secondary love became Susana. He died of consuming medicine. His love to cellphone was shown respect by keeping a phone in his tomb. This man also married second time. He was a polygamist. Susana always fluctuated from one option to another. Susana married a Prince. But the Prince expired soon because he was impotent. He was sexually weak. He was given sand ka tel, oil of lizard but yet his sex problem was not cured. So, he embraced death by hitting a mule in the way. Susana was like the widow spider who did not hesitate to kill and suck the life blood of her own husbands. At last, he would marry Arun the narrator but could not as he marry Shashibala. Susana had platonic love with the narrator, Arun. But Arun fell in love in first sight with Shashibala.

**Polygamy in the Guide:** If we go through the novel The Guide by RK Narayan the aspects of love, hatred, and deception are visible. Rosie was the wife of Marco. She was an educated lady having Master's degree in Economics. She belonged to a lower-class dancing family. She had only her mother. She did not know who was her father. From this reference it is clear that her mother was a whore who could have relations with multiple males. It is not polygamy but illegal relationship. Almost equal to polygamy. Marco and Rosie got married from newspaper advertisement. She was an ambitious lady. Her love had to dance but Marco hated the idea of dancing. Marco's love was to research ancient caves. He gave liberty to Rosie to stay separately. She began to court Raju who could support her dancing. An illegal love relationship grew between them. As Rosie was a married woman, she had extramarital sexual connection with Raju. That can also be categorize as polygamy. That brought destruction in Raju's life and development as a spiritual soul. This shows Rosies' progress and fulfilment as a Bharat Natyam dancer. Velan's sister refused to marry the bridegroom of her brother's choice. With the help of spiritual Raju, she was agreed to marry. She was not a victim of polygamy. Velan's father married thrice. Velan was the son of his father's first wife. That girl was of third wife's daughter. In view of the above discussion the novel is concerned with polygamy.

**Polygamy in Train to Pakistan:** The novella deals with partition. Anarchism, robbery, rape, stabbing went on continuously. Prostitution was a common profession. Many adopted the profession of stealing. Hukum Chand was a widower. His wife and daughter died immaturely. Corruption evoked in his brain. He made sex with Haseena. She was a Muslim prostitute. Hukum Chand gave her false promise to marry her. But actually, he could not marry the prostitute in fear of being stained his own status and that of girl Haseena. Sex is God. Sex could do everything. He had not the chance of fulfilling his physical need. So, he was crazy for that promise. That was a kind of fictitious polygamy. Juggat Singh loved a Muslim girl. Her name was Nooran. He made Nooran pregnant. Nooran appealed to Jugga's mother to accept her. She said that she would

be given marriage to another if she went away to Pakistan. But she was taken there. She had the possibility of given marriage for the second in second new place. One the other hand, Juggat could wed a second time if he could survive somehow. So, it is clear that direct marriage for more than once or multiple times is not traced in this novel; only hints are traceable. Illegal relationship, illegal rape are prevalent in the orthodox patriarchal Indian society.

## CONCLUSION

The three novels concerned with Indian traditional society depict the most highlighted matter of polygamy. The society was orthodox. Everything went on the whims of the males. Males could marry as per their will. Nothing could be done if the males did not want. Marriage for more than once was not expected. It is expected only when one of the couple dies. In a patriarchal society polygamy is admissible only to the males. But in Susana's Seven Husbands it is exception. Susana married as many as seven times. Being female she went against tradition. It has been possible only because she is portrayed as the Christian. As far as it is known that polygamy of women in Hindu, Sikh and Muslim is extremely prohibited. Begum Samru married seven times because of her belonging to Christianity too. As those two women married multiple times by breaking the social rules and regulations, they are comparable to Chaucer's wife of Bath in 'Canterbury Tales'. Religion is something that determines the system of nuptial. Out of love and hatred, marriage for many times took place. The plot construction of that novella is appropriately arranged. Throughout the plot development, the storyline of love and marriage is tightened. Besides the unity of time, place, and action like the construction of Aristotelian drama is woven skillfully. Susana moved to different places at certain times and fell in love with seven lovers. She or the lovers proposed to her and married her delightedly. She was disgusted with the behaviors of all the seven men, and naturally, hatred was felt in her mind. The marriages were thought of in the gap of at least one year. Seven marriages had been possible for her only because she was a childless lady.

The Guide by RK Narayan, with the theme of transformation of a fraud corrupted guide to a spiritual soul, also can be treated in the light of polygamy and love and hatred. The plot construction within the storyline of polygamy, love, and hatred is apt and appropriately arranged. Unity of time, place, and action is dexterously captured. Rosie was given marriage with Marco. Marco loved to be absorbed in cave and cave painting. His wife loved to be a classical dancer. Marco hated that passion of her wife. Rosie hated this impractical pursuance of her husband. In this fluctuation of love and hatred between Rosie and Marco, Rosie fled with Raju and started living together. This is a kind of polygamy. Velan's step sister's marriage revolved around love and hatred and would be polygamy if she eloped with the bridegroom of her choice and if would be given marriage second time. It is irrelevant to say that matter of polygamy.

The principal themes of Train to Pakistan is partition, anarchism, and robbery. During Independence and partition of India males in particularly in possession with huge wealth would marry several times. But Khushwant Singh had present very little of it. The novella is steeped in love and hatred, but the matter of polygamy is not available except in one case of Hukum Chand. He made only a false promise to marry the prostitute, Haseena.

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