

**Religion-wise Percentages of Polygamy in India 2022  
and Polygamy Cases among Hindu and Muslim in  
India 2022 (based on Census Population 2011)**

**- Compiled**

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## **Polygamy**

Polygamy, specifically the practice of Polygyny, which involves a man marrying multiple women, has become a recurring topic in the ongoing discussions about the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in India. As the possibility of implementing a UCC is considered, it becomes crucial to delve into the data regarding polygamy and the various ways in which marriages are conducted.

## **Who can have "Multiple Wives"?**

Under Hindu law, which applies to Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, and Buddhists, the practice of polygamy is prohibited. In fact, individuals governed by Hindu law can face criminal proceedings under Sections 494 and 495 of the Indian Penal Code. The Special Marriage Act, as well as Christian and Parsi laws, also outlaw bigamy.

However, the Shariat Protection Act exempts Muslims in India from the ban on polygamy. Additionally, due to the protection granted to cultural practices of scheduled tribes, polygynous marriages can be found in tribal groups across northeastern states, Odisha, Telangana, and other regions.

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Table 1 (Next Page) shows: Polygamy is more prevalent among Muslims (1.9%), followed by Other Religious Communities (1.6%), and least prevalent among Hindus (1.3%) as per study published by the International Institute of Population Sciences (IIPS) in 2022 which is based on data from NFHS (National Family Health Survey).

Table 2 (Next Page) shows: Polygamy Cases among Hindus and Muslims in India 2022 (based on Census Population 2011).

Number of Polygamy cases are calculated to show that it is much bigger (12561346) in case of Hindus (Population being much bigger 966257353) than Muslims is much smaller (3272658) as Population of being just only 172245158.

**Table 1: Religion-wise Percentages of Polygamy in India 2022**

S. No.	Religion	% of Polygamy
1	Hindus	1.3
2	Muslims	1.9
3	Other Religion	1.6

**Table 2: Polygamy Cases among Hindus and Muslims in India 2022**

S. No.	Religion	Population 2011	Polygamy Cases**
1	Hindus	966257353	12561346
2	Muslims	172245158	3272658

**Polygamy Cases\*\* = (Population 2011) \* (% of Polygamy 2022)**

**Source:** 1. <https://www.indiatoday.in/law/story/uniform-civil-code-polygamy-controversy-data-muslims-tribes-2400370-2023-06-30>

2. National Family Health Survey

3. Population: Census 2011