

# **BSR** BRITISH SIKH REPORT

**“AN INSIGHT INTO  
THE BRITISH SIKH  
COMMUNITY”**

2013



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# QUOTES

*"The British Sikh community has made and continues to make a huge contribution to our nation, and I welcome the British Sikh Report in its attempt at engaging politicians with the British Sikh community."*

*The Labour Party is committed to working with the British Sikh community. This country is at its best when everyone is able to play their part, no matter who they are or where they are from. I know that is the only way this country can succeed in the future."*

**The Right Honourable  
ED MILIBAND MP -  
Leader of the Opposition**



*"As the only serving British Sikh MP, I welcome the British Sikh Report. It is great to see a proactive approach being taken by the British Sikh community to highlight their concerns, wants and needs in such a comprehensive document.*

*"The Government has made a concerted effort to work with the British Sikh community in recent months, ending the manual searches of the Sikh turban at European airports and David Cameron becoming the first serving British Prime Minister to visit Amritsar in February – a visit I was lucky enough to accompany him on."*

**PAUL UPPAL MP –  
MP for Wolverhampton South West and Parliamentary  
Private Secretary to David Willetts, the Minister for  
Universities and Science.**



*"As the Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for British Sikhs, I am proud to be able to host the launch of the British Sikh Report 2013 in Parliament. The Report will help to provide much needed information about the dynamics of the British Sikh community which I hope will help Sikhs throughout the United Kingdom."*

**FABIAN HAMILTON MP –  
MP for Leeds North East and Chair of the APPG for British  
Sikhs**



# INTRODUCTION, AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

## WHAT IS THE BRITISH SIKH REPORT?

The British Sikh Report (BSR) is a strategic document for the benefit of the British Sikh community, for use both within the community and with Central and Local Government. The results from the BSR will have an impact upon funding decisions made in the future. It is also expected that the BSR will be used by corporations and third sector organisations when looking at issues concerning the British Sikh community.

## WHY WAS IT CREATED?

Statistics are very important to ascertain the wants and needs of any community, as well as in recognising changing trends within that community. The ultimate aim of the BSR is to be the leading light in respect of statistics for the British Sikh community. Central and Local Government relies on available statistics to ensure that funding is allocated where there are evident needs, and the BSR will assist in that.

## WHO CREATED THE BRITISH SIKH REPORT?

The BSR has been put together by an independent team of Sikh professionals from all walks of life in their twenties and thirties who believed such an initiative to be long overdue. The Team includes project managers, academics, lawyers, management consultants, PR consultants and IT consultants, and as such, the Team has brought a diverse set of skills to this project. It is a fully democratic group with each member having an equal say within the Team. The project is being run on a completely voluntary basis, with no members of the Team being paid for their hard work and dedication.

## WHAT WAS THE GENDER MAKE-UP OF THE BSR TEAM?

Following in the true egalitarian spirit of the Sikh faith, there have been an equal number of men and women on the BSR Team from its inception.

## HOW LONG DID IT TAKE?

Collectively, the BSR Team spent 350 hours in research and consultation with other bodies and organisations before putting together the Questionnaire, as well as extensive testing of the Questionnaire. The bodies that were consulted during that time included universities, corporations, third sector organisations, interfaith bodies, and various Sikh groups.



### HOW WILL THE BSR HELP THE PUBLIC SECTOR?

The Equality Act 2010 bans unfair treatment and help ensure equal opportunity in the work place and wider society. Section 149 of the Equality Act imposes an equality duty upon the public sector, which encourages the public sector to understand how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all.

The BSR will assist the public sector in ensuring that their duties under Section 149 of the Equality Act are being met.

### HAVE OTHER COMMUNITIES HAD PUBLICATIONS SIMILAR TO THE BSR?

Many other minority communities in the UK have similar projects and have benefited immensely from this approach, including the Jewish and Muslim communities. The Church of England also conducts regular research to ascertain the wants and needs of its congregation at local, regional and national levels.

### IS THERE ANY SPECIFIC ORGANISATION BEHIND THE BSR?

The BSR Team are wholly independent and autonomous. However, there are a number of partner organisations that support the BSR. Several British Sikh organisations were consulted whilst the Questionnaire was being put together, whereas others were informed of this project once the Questionnaire had gone live on the internet. Retaining independence is important to ensure that the BSR Team hold editorial autonomy over the questions without undue influence from other groups and organisations who may have vested interests. The BSR Team has been guided by the approach taken by the 2011 Census when putting together the BSR.

# LITERATURE REVIEW

## EARLY SIKH SETTLERS

There has been a Sikh presence in Britain for almost 160 years, with the first Sikh known to have settled here being Maharaja Duleep Singh<sup>1</sup> in 1854. Since then, there have been a number of waves of Sikh migrants to Britain, most notably following the Second World War when Britain was reaching out to the Commonwealth during its post-war reconstruction period. Each wave of Sikh migrants to the UK have brought their own cultural beliefs to these shores and yet managed to integrate themselves within British society whilst retaining their distinct identity.

## MIGRATION OF SIKHS IN THE 20TH CENTURY

### EARLY 20TH CENTURY

Up until the Second World War, the Sikh population in Britain was very small. It consisted mainly of students from India who were living in London and the South East as well as door-to-door salesmen selling their wares throughout the country<sup>2</sup>.

The only permanent Gurdwara in Britain for the first half of the 20th Century was established in 1911 in Putney (moving to Shepherd's Bush in 1913) following a generous donation by Maharaja Bhupinder Singh, the King of Patiala, and the Gurdwara became the first port of call of all Sikhs during that time<sup>3</sup>.

### "SIKH FAMILY SHELTERING IN THE CRYPT OF CHRIST CHURCH, SPITALFIELDS DURING THE BLITZ – NOVEMBER 1940"



<sup>1</sup> Maharaja Duleep Singh was the last King of the Sikh Empire before it was annexed by the East India Company following the Second Anglo-Sikh War in 1849.

<sup>2</sup> Bance, P. 2007. The Sikhs in Britain: 150 Years in Photographs Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing Ltd., pp.60-1

<sup>3</sup> Bance, P, Paul, S, Anand, G, Sidhu, A. 2008. Khalsa Jatha British Isles 1980 – 2008 London: The Central Gurdwara (Khalsa Jatha) London

## IMPACT OF PARTITION OF INDIA

Partition had a huge impact upon the Sikh community in India. In the summer of 1947, the largest mass migration in human history led to half of the entire Sikh population to abandon their homes in the newly-formed Pakistan and settle in Indian Punjab instead. The Indian economy in the late 1940s and 1950s stagnated and went into recession, and many Sikhs considered moving abroad to make a living and support their families in India. Some of these Sikhs came to the UK.

## MIGRATION FROM INDIA

The vast majority of Indian Sikhs who had moved to the UK in the period of time between the Second World War and the late 1960s were male. They were attracted to the UK due to the availability of manual and skilled manual jobs during the expansion of the British economy which had led to labour shortages throughout the country. The intention of these Indian Sikhs was to make a good living in the UK and send money back to their families in India before returning to their respective villages in Punjab after a few years of hard graft.

It is said that the Sikh population of Southall in West London grew to be the one of the biggest in the West in the 1950s due to the fact that the recruitment officer of a newly opened rubber factory in the area had worked as an Army Officer in British India and he was willing to offer jobs to Punjabis whom he considered to be hard-working. Such personal connections were fundamental in helping to establish a settled Sikh population in the UK.<sup>4</sup>

There have been numerous studies into the Sikh community in Britain from the 1970s through to the present day. The ground-breaking research by Roger Ballard in 1972 looked at the kinship units of Sikhs recently settled in Britain <sup>5</sup> and it also noted the impact made by Idi Amin's expulsion of South Asians from Uganda.

Ballard states:

*"A fair proportion of the Sikhs now resident in Britain have come by way of East Africa, but the majority have come here directly from India. There has been migration from India to Britain for a very long time: even before the first World War, a few hardy individuals came to Britain to peddle clothes and ribbons in the villages. By 1939, almost every large city seemed to have had a small number of Sikh residents, for the most part engaged in selling clothes in the markets. At the end of the war numbers slowly started rising, and large contingents began to arrive, particularly in the late 1950s and early 1960s."* <sup>6</sup>

## MIGRATION FROM EAST AFRICA

The complex issue of Sikh families being forced to leave East Africa and migrating to Britain was explored in the mid-1980s by Parminder Bhachu<sup>7</sup>. The East African Sikhs had established careers and industries in colonies in Africa during the British Empire in the 19th and early 20th centuries. They were forced to leave their adopted nations in the 1960s and 1970s due to increasing preferences amongst the newly independent countries for the industries to be 'Africanised' at the expense of their non-native residents. The East African Sikhs found it easier to integrate and settle in the UK due to their lack of ties to India, but they were also found to be more conservative.

<sup>4</sup> Bance, P. 2007. The Sikhs in Britain: 150 Years in Photographs Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing Ltd., p.82

<sup>5</sup> Ballard, R. 1972. Family organisation among the Sikhs in Britain. Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies. 2 (1), pp.12-24

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p.12

<sup>7</sup> Bhachu, P. 1985. Twice Migrants: East African Sikh Settlers in Britain. London: Tavistock Publications

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p.2

According to Bhachu:

*"East Africans are therefore experienced migrants who had developed considerable community and technical skills prior to migration, and who also had powerful community ties which they have been able to reproduce in Britain since the late 1960s. They lack a strong orientation to a home country, and are settlers who combine facets of both progress and traditionalism in their settlement in the UK."<sup>8</sup>*

## MIGRATION FROM AFGHANISTAN

There is also a significant Afghan Sikh community that arrived during the 1990s following persecution under the Taliban. They settled primarily in Southall in West London.<sup>9</sup>

## SIKHS IN BRITAIN IN THE LATE 20TH CENTURY

The make-up of the Sikh community in Britain has changed significantly since the 1950s, and according to Singh and Tatla:

*"Given the community's age structure and effectiveness of immigration policies in the 1980s and early 1990s, it is likely that, other things being equal, the proportion of British-born Sikhs will continue to increase. One of the likely long-term trends is the decline of Indian-born Sikhs; ... this trend would have profound implications for the development of the British Sikh community."<sup>10</sup>*

## HOW BRITISH SIKHS LEARN ABOUT THEIR FAITH

A recent study has considered how modern young British Sikhs are nurtured and socialised into their faith.<sup>11</sup> Jasjit Singh focussed his research on Sikhs between the ages of 18 and 30 years old in his work and he found that:

*"As the site of primary socialisation, the family sets out much of what follows, but there is great diversity within Sikh families, with caste and migration history being important points of difference. While caste had an influence on the occupations of the early Sikh migrants, given the variety of occupations in which Sikhs find themselves today, caste does not appear to determine occupation as much as it once did."<sup>12</sup>*

Singh's study also noted that there appeared to be a lack of understanding in respect of the Sikh faith due to the way in which it is taught at British schools:

*"...it is clear that the amount and quality of education in Sikhism across the UK varies considerably: state schools are legally required to follow the RE syllabus set by the local authority, which generally states 'that the religious traditions are in the main Christian', but requires that RE should '[take] account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain'; however, faith schools are free to make their own decisions regarding the form of their RE syllabus."<sup>13</sup>*

## DEVELOPMENT OF A BRITISH SIKH IDENTITY

Few of the studies which have gone before have attempted to look at the Sikh community as being one which is secure in its "Britishness". This formation of a unique British Sikh identity is key to the future of the Sikh community in the United Kingdom, especially as ties to other geographical areas such as India and East Africa weaken over time.

<sup>9</sup> Nesbitt, E. 2011. Sikh Diversity in the UK: Contexts and Evolution. In: Jacobsen, K, Mryvold, K, eds. Sikhs in Europe: Migrations, Identities and Representations. Farnham. Ashgate Publishing, p.226

<sup>10</sup> Singh, G, Tatla, DS. 2006. Sikhs in Britain: The Making of a Community. London: Zed Books

<sup>11</sup> Singh, Jasjit. 2012. Keeping the faith: reflections on religious nurture among young British Sikhs. Journal of Beliefs & Values: Studies in Religion & Education. 33 (3), pp.369-383

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p.380

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p.378

The origins of a British Sikh identity can be traced to the legal case of *Mandla v Dowell-Lee* [1983] 1 All ER 1062, when the House of Lords decided that Sikhs constituted an ethnic group for the purposes of the Race Relations Act 1976. This recognition of Sikhs in Britain at a time when the Sikh community in India was undergoing a tumultuous period had a profound effect on the way that British Sikhs came to view themselves, with a stronger and more confident identity emerging over the coming years.

## INTEGRATION OF SIKHS INTO BRITISH SOCIETY

Nesbitt has considered how Sikhs have become part of British society, noting that:

*"Indicators of Sikhs' otherwise full integration into UK society include high levels of educational attainment, their substantial numbers in professions such as law, medicine, and accountancy, and their election as mayors and members of Parliament, as well as the recognition of individuals by the honors [sic], conferred by the monarch, of the CBE, OBE, and MBE."<sup>14</sup>*

## CENSUS 2011 RESULTS

According to the 2011 Census, there are approximately 430,000 Sikhs throughout the United Kingdom, with the vast majority of them in England alone.<sup>15</sup> The number of Sikhs in the nations forming the United Kingdom are:

- **England** **420,196**
- **Wales** **2,962**
- **Scotland** **7,500 (approximately)** <sup>16</sup>
- **NI** **200 (estimate)** <sup>17</sup>

Given that the figure as recorded in the 2001 Census was 336,000 Sikhs in the UK, that is a substantial increase of 28% within a decade.

## BRITISH SIKHS AND THE TURBAN

Although there are no figures available, anecdotal evidence suggests that most Sikhs in the UK and around the world do not wear turbans. However, the turban remains the main visual identifier for adult Sikh men and is highly regarded by all Sikhs as a central article of faith. In his research looking at the importance of long hair and turbans for Sikhs,<sup>18</sup> Jasjit Singh noted that British Sikhs appeared to be far more comfortable with wearing turbans than their counterparts elsewhere:

*"...whereas Sikhs all over the world have removed their turbans in order to disassociate themselves from the image of Osama Bin Laden..., none of the British Sikh respondents said that they had done or would do so, even though some had experienced racism after the events of 9/11. It can be assumed that young British Sikhs continue to wear the turban, primarily because they are confident to do so, given that the Sikh community in Britain is well established... It is also clear that the majority of the respondents feel both British and Sikh; having been born in Britain, they feel that they have an automatic right to wear the turban."<sup>19</sup>*

<sup>14</sup> Nesbitt, E. 2011. Sikh Diversity in the UK: Contexts and Evolution. In: Jacobsen, K, Mryvold, K, eds. *Sikhs in Europe: Migrations, Identities and Representations*. Farnham. Ashgate Publishing, p.227

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census/key-statistics-for-local-authorities-in-england-and-wales/rft-table-ks209ew.xls>

<sup>16</sup> 2011 Census religious breakdown for Scotland will not be available until Summer 2013

<sup>17</sup> Based on the number of Gurdwaras in NI.

<sup>18</sup> Singh, J. 2010. Head First: Young British Sikhs, Hair, and the Turban. *Journal of Contemporary Religion*,. 25 (2), pp.203-220

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, p.216

## CONCLUSION

Although there have been a number of studies over the past 40 years which have looked at the Sikh community in Britain, few of them have considered the existence of British Sikhs as a distinct identifiable group. It is anticipated that the British Sikh Report will add to the existing works as noted above, as well as comprehensively set out the wants and needs of contemporary British Sikhs.

The approach taken towards compiling the British Sikh Report (BSR) research will be outlined in this section with respect to the questionnaire design, population sample, questionnaire delivery, analysis. Limitations of the study and areas for future improvement will also be outlined so as to ensure the quality of the BSR continues to be built upon.

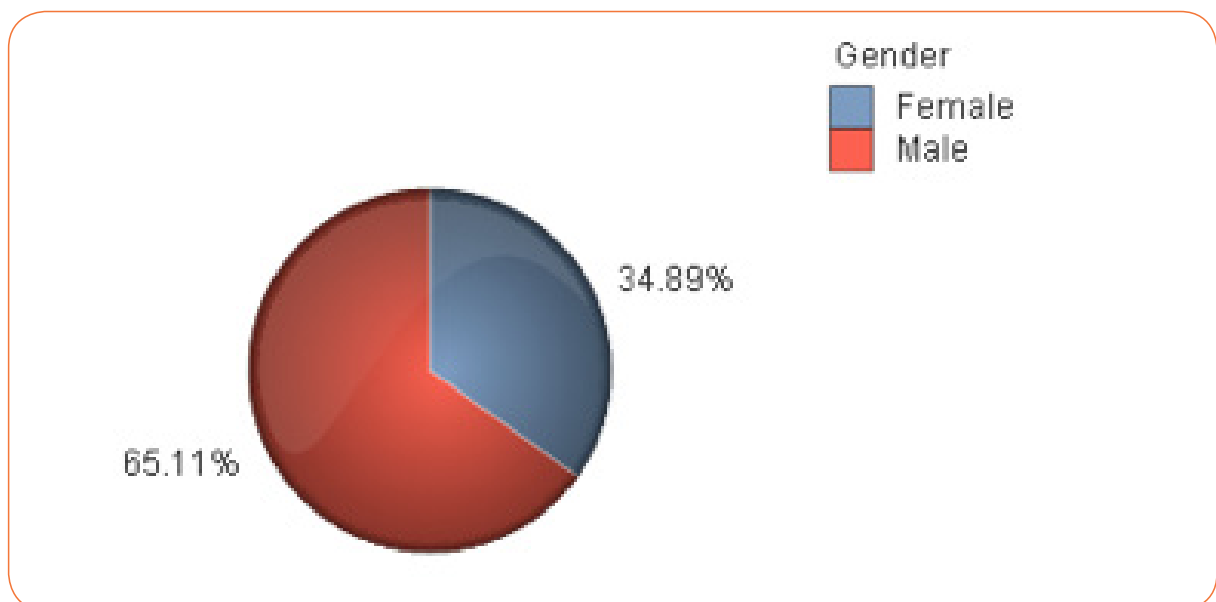
## QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

The BSR Team spent six months agreeing the topics of research and the questions for each of these areas. Broad lists of socio-cultural topics were created from which nine were agreed upon and which formed distinct sections of the final questionnaire. The order of these topics was also discussed and agreed to ensure the optimal layout of questions with regards to readability and comprehensibility.

Questions for each of the topics were contributed by all members of the BSR Team but were reviewed and adjusted by BSR members with academic experience to be non-leading, non biased and using language which avoided terms that could be interpreted in significantly different ways.

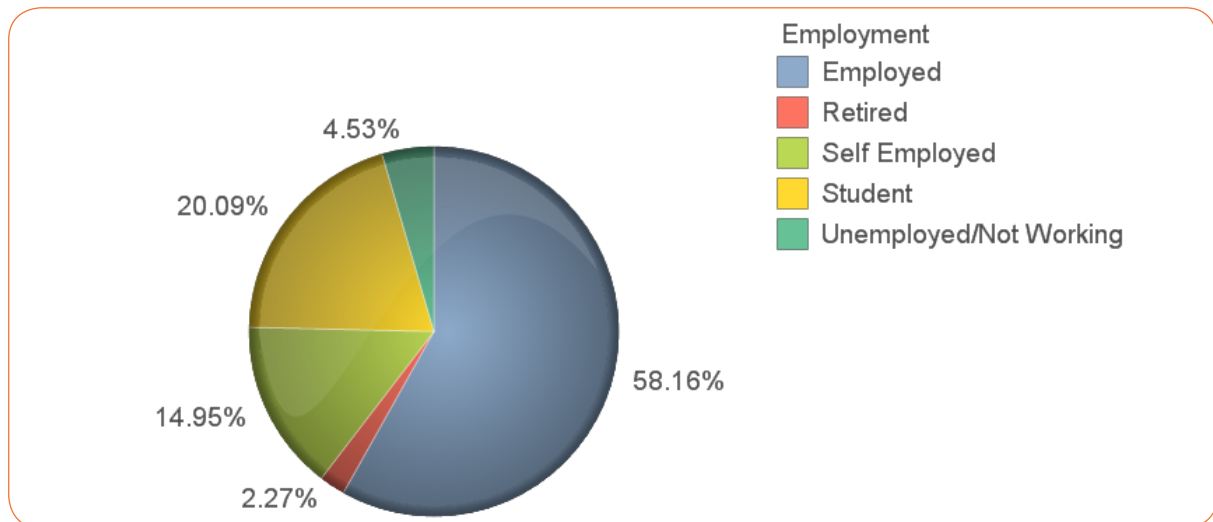
The core questions were designed to assess the opinions of Sikhs living in the UK across a variety of different topics. The majority of these questions were 'categorical', taking the form of likert scales to gauge the opinions of respondents. Other questions were used to identify descriptive, binary data, to provide further information on the respondent and their personal context.

### Percentage of Male and Female respondents



## SAMPLING

### Employment status of respondents



The BSR was designed to better understand the views and opinions of Sikhs living in Britain. As there are approximately 430,000 Sikhs in the UK, it was necessary to ensure that a representative sample of data was collected for this study. In total, 662 responses were collected from Sikhs living in the UK, thus providing a large enough sample size (0.15%) to warrant significant statistical associations to be concluded.

Nearly double the number of males responded to the questionnaire than females and the regions in which most the respondents lived was London and the Midlands. In terms of age range, respondents varied from 9 to 92, with the most common age being 30.

58% of respondents were employed with a relatively high proportion of 15% being self employed.

### QUESTIONNAIRE DELIVERY

The BSR questionnaire was made available online and a form of snowball sampling was used in which it was encouraged for those filling out questionnaires to then share it with family and friends. The BSR team were aware that the online nature of the questionnaire might make it difficult for those without access to the internet or computer literacy so this approach enabled a broader range of people to be reached. Also, due to time, resource and budget limitations this approach was deemed as the most feasible.

The internet is widely used by British Sikhs. In 2012, the Office for National Statistics stated that 84% of the British population used the internet. Most Sikhs in the UK live in a household with extended family, and at least one person within each household will have regular access to the internet. It was expected that more technologically aware members of the family will help the older generation in completing the questionnaire, just as they have helped the older generation in completing the 2011 Census and other forms and documents.

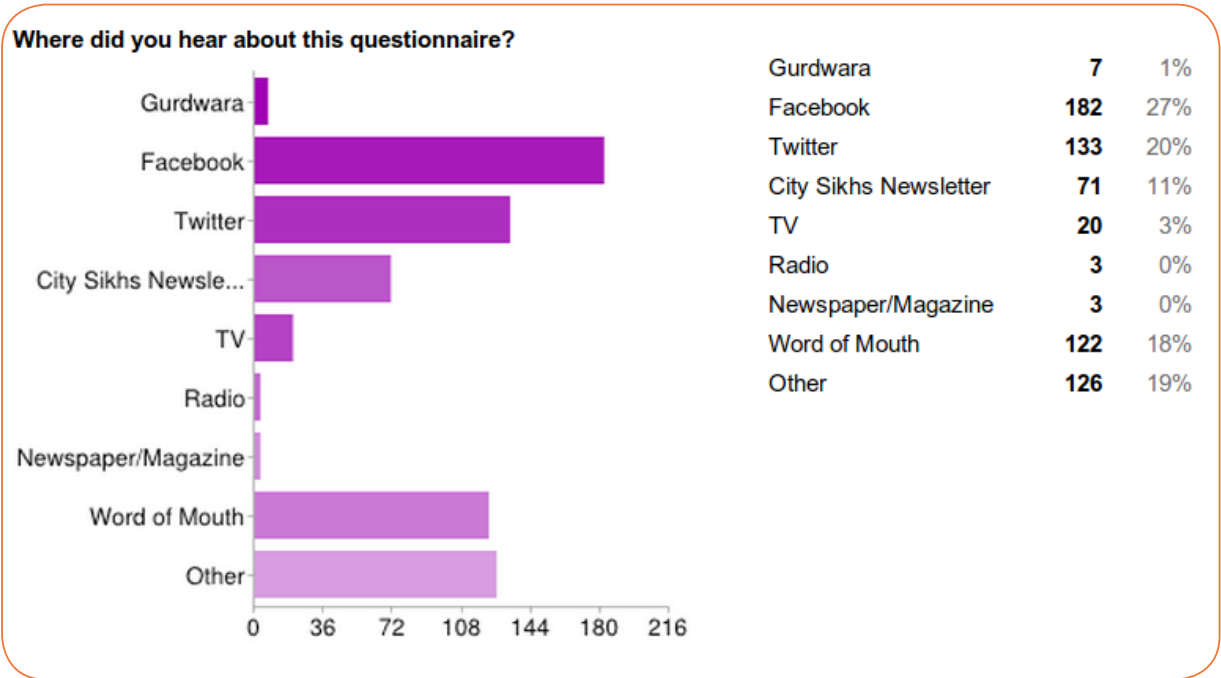
The BSR team intended to further mitigate the potential bias against those without access to a computer or the internet by recruiting volunteers to attend Gurdwaras with portable devices and encouraging the congregation to fill in the questionnaire on-site. However, this was not implemented largely due to a lack of volunteers and time limitations of the BSR team.



No personally identifiable details were collected at any stage during this research. Instead, respondents were asked to join a separate mailing list to stay informed about the BSR in which they provided their email only.

The online delivery of the questionnaire was achieved through partnerships with a variety of Sikh and non-Sikh organisations. It was ensured that the questionnaire could be accessed through mobile devices through a responsively designed website so as to maximise its accessibility.

Social media played a key role in the proliferation of the BSR questionnaire contributing 47% of the total number of responses. This provided the BSR team with a cost effective marketing channel. BSR partners also played a key role in spreading the questionnaire and marketing the BSR project to Sikhs in the UK. Below is a summary of some of the key marketing channels used to deliver the questionnaire.



ANALYSIS

The data was analysed over a period of 3 months with help from members who had an academic or financial analytic background. The analysis of data was a methodical process of inspecting, normalising, transforming, and modelling the raw data with the goal of highlighting useful information, suggesting themes, and supporting deeper insight.

The BSR questionnaire contained a mix of quantitative, categorical and qualitative data, which required a stage of data cleaning, so the quality of the data for further analysis could be assured with regards to non-normals and missing data. A combination of univariate statistics and bivariate associations were initially utilised to ascertain frequency counts and percentages before further graphical techniques were adopted to produce distributions and associations between data sets.

The data visualisation stage involved the abstraction of data in a schematic form and uploading to an analytics and reporting engine. The main goal of BSR data visualisation was to communicate information clearly and effectively through graphical means.

This meant providing insights into a rather sparse and complex data set by communicating its key-aspects in a more intuitive way. Best efforts were made to achieve a balance between form and function to communicate valuable information.

## **LIMITATIONS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

This BSR has been the largest research study conducted specifically on Sikhs living in the UK. Even so, with this being the first study of its kind there are undoubtedly limitations and areas for improvement. These will now be discussed.

### **STUDY FOCUSED ON DESCRIPTIVE AND CATEGORICAL DATA**

The questions asked in this BSR study have provided hugely insightful findings. However, they do not provide a further level of granularity as to the magnitude of particular attitudes. In other words, although the BSR responses show which categories are the most/least popular we do not necessarily know the degree to which they are popular in comparison to other responses. This can be addressed using more 'ordinal' data categories which ask the respondent to rank various categories or to assign a value to each category based on its importance. These types of questions would provide a richer set of data from which more in-depth findings may be obtained.

### **ONLINE DELIVERY OF QUESTIONNAIRES**

Online delivery of questionnaires is common practice in academic studies due to the speed by which they can be delivered, the minimal costs involved and the number of people that can be reached. Although this would remain a central aspect to the way in which data for future BSRs is attained, those who are not online or computer literate should be better taken into account. This could be achieved through a team of volunteers attending Gurdwaras and supporting the data collection process.

### **LANGUAGE**

This questionnaire was only provided in English. Future questionnaires should look at being provided in Punjabi/Gurmukhi in order to engage the elder generation of Sikhs for whom English is not their first language.

### **RESPONSES FROM SCOTLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND**

Scottish Sikhs make up just under 1.8% of the British Sikh population. As the number of Scottish respondents to the questionnaire was 2.1%, the BSR is representative of the Scottish Sikh community.

Sikhs from Wales form 0.7% of the British Sikh community. The number of respondents from Wales was 0.45%. The BSR is therefore slightly under-representative of the Welsh Sikh community.

There were no responses from Northern Ireland. The Sikh population in Northern Ireland is 0.05% of the British Sikh community.

In order to build a more accurate picture of Sikhs in the UK, it would be important to ensure a representative number of responses from Wales and Northern Ireland which the current BSR lacked. A stronger focus in these geographical areas would help to engage Sikhs living there to provide their views along with those Sikhs living in England and Scotland.

# ARTS / CULTURE / HERITAGE

- **94.1% of British Sikhs are interested in Sikh culture and heritage**
- **51.4% of British Sikhs believe that far too little is done by mainstream non-Sikh organisations to promote Sikh culture and history, whilst a quarter of Sikhs (25.1%) believe the same to be true of Sikh organisations in Britain**
- **Most British Sikhs would want to find out more about Sikh culture and history by way of documentary films (81.6%) and websites (73%)**
- **75% of British Sikhs want to know more about British Sikh history**

Sikhs have a rich history in Britain, having been part of British society for almost 160 years. Some aspects of the unique culture which have emerged in Britain have found themselves being transmitted around the world, such as modern Bhangra music which has its origins in the UK and has seen resurgence in India due to the influence of British Sikhs. Despite being a rich part of British society, most Sikhs still believe that more should be done by Sikh and non-Sikh institutions in Britain to promote Sikh culture and history.

## HOW MUCH IS BEING DONE IN THE UK TO PROMOTE SIKH CULTURE AND HISTORY BY SIKH ORGANISATIONS (SUCH AS GURDWARAS, SIKH CHARITIES AND SIKH SCHOOLS)?

<b>Far too little</b>	<b>25.1%</b>
<b>Too little</b>	<b>45.3%</b>
<b>About right</b>	<b>22.2%</b>
<b>Too much</b>	<b>0.8%</b>
<b>Far too much</b>	<b>0.6%</b>

## HOW MUCH IS BEING DONE IN THE UK TO PROMOTE SIKH CULTURE AND HISTORY BY NON-SIKH ORGANISATIONS (SUCH AS CHARITIES, NATIONAL MUSEUMS, THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM FOR SCHOOLS, ETC)?

<b>Far too little</b>	<b>51.4%</b>
<b>Too little</b>	<b>32.8%</b>
<b>About right</b>	<b>7.5%</b>
<b>Too much</b>	<b>0.5%</b>
<b>Far too much</b>	<b>0.5%</b>

Non-Sikh organisations appear to come in for highest criticism, with 84.2% of British Sikhs feeling that too little is being done by them. Sikh organisations are also criticised, but to a lesser extent.

It should be noted that the last major exhibition on the Sikh faith organised by a national museum was in 1999 by the V&A Museum on "The Arts of the Sikh Kingdoms", with any exhibitions since that date being organised by the Sikh community itself.

Over the past 15 years, there has been a growing effort to produce meaningful and engaging output by a small number of Sikh organisations. However, these have often been underfunded or amateur in nature. There is an evident need for more Sikh and non-Sikh experts and heritage



professionals to help develop a Sikh creative media industry, along with commensurate funding, in order to meet the desires of the British Sikh community. Pioneers in this field include the UK Punjab Heritage Association (UKPHA) and the publishing social enterprise Kashi House.

The most popular subject that British Sikhs wish to find out more about is Sikh history during the time of the Gurus between 1469 and 1708 (78.3%), closely followed by British Sikh history (75%). 70.5% of British Sikhs want to develop their understanding of spirituality and philosophy.



The subject of women in Sikhism saw a massive gender divide, with almost twice as many females wanting to find out more about this topic (81.8%) as males (44.8%).

The majority of British Sikhs (81.6%) would like more documentaries about Sikh culture and history, followed by websites (73%) and exhibitions (65.9%).



59.4% of British Sikhs would like to see apps developed for tablet computers and smartphones regarding Sikh culture and history.

Most surprisingly, only 58.3% of British Sikhs would want to find out more about Sikh culture and history through Gurdwaras. This would suggest that British Sikhs wish to have a greater connection with Sikh heritage through more mainstream means rather than traditional institutions, and it may also indicate a lower expectation in respect of Gurdwaras being able to sustain an awareness of such heritage.

# ENTERTAINMENT / MEDIA

- 96% of British Sikhs would like to see more Sikhs on mainstream British TV
- 71% of British Sikhs would like to see more Sikhs in sports programmes
- 49% of British Sikhs never read Sikh, Punjabi or Indian-British magazines or newspapers



British TV has progressed a great deal since the days of 'Mind Your Language', in the late 1970s when the only appearance of a Sikh man on prime time TV was an offensively stereotyped gentleman in a turban played by a non-Sikh actor. Since then, there have been a number of Sikhs on TV in various programmes, but such appearances are still few and far between according to the respondents.

## IN WHAT TYPE OF SHOWS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE SIKHS APPEAR ON MAINSTREAM BRITISH TV?

<b>Documentary</b>	<b>87.2%</b>
<b>Sports</b>	<b>71.3%</b>
<b>News</b>	<b>68.9%</b>
<b>Drama</b>	<b>51.4%</b>
<b>Sitcom</b>	<b>45.6%</b>
<b>Kids / Children's</b>	<b>48.8%</b>
<b>Cookery</b>	<b>45.8%</b>
<b>Soap</b>	<b>42.1%</b>
<b>Travel or Holiday</b>	<b>41.0%</b>
<b>Reality TV</b>	<b>25.4%</b>
<b>Makeover (a show that helps people change their image/lifestyle)</b>	<b>24.8%</b>
<b>Cartoon</b>	<b>23.9%</b>

87.2% of British Sikhs would like to see more Sikhs in documentaries on TV, and this ties in with the answers given in the Arts/Culture/Heritage section regarding how British Sikhs would like to find out more about their culture and history.



More surprisingly, 71.3% of British Sikhs would like to see more Sikhs in TV programmes regarding sports. This may reflect a general desire to see more Sikhs as sports-men and women, as there are currently very few sports personalities from British Sikh backgrounds.

Despite appearances in soaps often being considered as a good indicator of integration of a minority community in Britain, only 42.1% of Sikhs would want to see more Sikhs in soap operas. This is compared to 51.4% wanting to see more Sikhs in dramas. The reluctance of seeing Sikhs in soap operas may be due to concerns within the community of controversial storylines in order to maintain an interest in Sikh characters in long-running TV soaps such as *Eastenders* and *Coronation Street*. The closest equivalent of a distinct group of South Asian characters on TV is the Masood family in *Eastenders*, a Pakistani Punjabi Muslim family that has been in the centre of a number of provocative plots and sub-plots and which has drawn heavy criticism from the British Muslim community.

The manner in which British Sikhs access various media outlets is interesting to see. 43% of British Sikhs always watch mainstream British TV.

43% of respondents only occasionally watch Sikh, Punjabi or Indian TV channels, whilst 17% of British Sikhs never watch such TV channels. However, as there are a small number of such TV channels, the reach of Sikh, Punjabi and Indian TV channels is extensive within the British Sikh community.

The power of the ethnic printed press appears to be diminishing, with 49.1% of British Sikhs never reading Sikh, Punjabi or Indian-British magazines or newspapers. Obviously, this breakdown does not take into account those members of the British Sikh community for whom Punjabi is their first language and who rely heavily upon the ethnic printed press for news and current affairs.

The number of people who listen to the radio is low, with a quarter of British Sikhs (25.2%) never listening to Sikh, Punjabi or Indian radio stations and only 32.3% listening to them at least regularly. 50.3% of British Sikhs listen at least regularly to British radio stations, i.e. non-Asian radio.

Websites are very popular forms of media accessed by British Sikhs, with 43.2% always accessing British websites. Given that the respondents could only answer the questionnaire for this report via our website, it is hardly surprising that the answers that were received showed a strong preference for the internet.

The results as outlined above suggest that the British Sikh community is well integrated when it comes to access to the media, with the majority using mainstream British media outlets which are then complemented by using ethnic media outlets as felt necessary. As a result of that usage of mainstream media, there is an expectation of more Sikh appearances on TV which is not being met.



# CASTE

- **Less than a third of respondents (30%) identify with a caste**
- **69 % of British Sikhs who identify with a caste are Jatt (i.e. landowning caste of farming ancestry)**
- **Only 3% of respondents consider caste to be very important**

Discussions about caste can often prove divisive amongst South Asians, and there are still concerns about the impact of caste in British society as can be seen from the proposed anti-caste discrimination legislation recently debated in Parliament.

Often thought of as being an integral part of Hinduism, caste has also historically had a strong role within the Sikh community, despite the Sikh faith itself prohibiting divisions along caste lines. It should also be noted that many Sikhs prefer references to be made to clan and tribal divisions rather than caste.

## DO YOU IDENTIFY WITH A CASTE?

<b>Yes</b>	<b>30.2%</b>
<b>No – I don't believe in castes</b>	<b>61.2%</b>
<b>No - but I believe in castes</b>	<b>8.6%</b>

Those who identified with a caste were then asked which caste they identified with. The vast majority of those who identified with a caste (69%) were Jatt, who form the landowning and farming clan/caste. The second major grouping of respondents who identified with caste were Ramgarhia/Tarkhan (23%), who are the artisan and carpentry caste. Generally there are two broad views amongst Sikhs in respect of caste. One view is that all castes are equal, and that although there is a caste system, it is the discrimination associated with the caste system which is against the teachings of the Sikh faith. The other view is that there is no caste amongst Sikhs, and that caste in any form whatsoever has no place within the Sikh community.

1% of those who identified with caste, also identified themselves as Ravidassia, the leather-worker caste. Even though Ravidassias are considered by many to be part of the Sikh faith, there is an increased demand amongst the Ravidassia community to form a distinct religious identity. Interestingly, 11,000 Ravidassias recorded themselves as having a distinct identity in the 2011 Census of England and Wales. Many of the issues surrounding distinct religious boundaries have arisen from the very fact that caste has historically been a significant feature within South Asian society.



### HOW IMPORTANT IS CASTE TO YOU?

<b>3%</b>	<b>Very important</b>
<b>7.8%</b>	<b>Important</b>
<b>22.4%</b>	<b>Slightly important</b>
<b>66.8%</b>	<b>Not at all</b>

Most of the respondents did not consider caste to be of any importance whatsoever, compared to 3% who deemed it very important.

This appears to suggest that the importance of caste has diminished over the years as there has been greater integration within the Sikh community in the UK.



# GURDWARAS / SIKH PLACES OF WORSHIP

- **71% of British Sikhs go to the Gurdwara at least once a month**
- **90% of British Sikhs would like to visit the Gurdwara more often**
- **33% of British Sikhs do not go to the Gurdwara as often as they would like due to a lack of an English translation of Sikh scriptures**

The main Sikh institutions in Britain are the Gurdwaras. Literally meaning 'the doorway to the Guru', Sikh places of worship can be found throughout Britain with about 200 Gurdwaras in the whole of the UK.

The oldest Gurdwara in Europe is the Central Gurdwara (Khalsa Jatha) London, which is based in Shepherds Bush and was founded in 1908.

As the British Sikh community has grown, so has the need to cater for it. A number of British Gurdwaras are amongst the largest outside of India, including the Sri Guru Singh Sabha Southall (West London), the Sri Guru Nanak Darbar Gurdwara in Gravesend (Kent), and the Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha Gurdwara in Birmingham (Soho Road).

However, British Sikhs do not appear to be interacting with their Gurdwaras as often as they would like to, with 90% of the respondents saying that they would like to visit the Gurdwara more often.

There are many reasons as to why British Sikhs do not visit their Gurdwaras as often as they would like, including:

<b>Personal time constraints</b>	<b>57.4%</b>
<b>Lack of English Translation of Gurbani</b>	<b>33.2%</b>
<b>Management Committee Politics</b>	<b>32.3%</b>
<b>Lack of interesting events and programmes</b>	<b>30.8%</b>
<b>Poor representation of youth at the Gurdwara</b>	<b>25.8%</b>
<b>Distance from Gurdwara</b>	<b>25.8%</b>
<b>Lack of community projects such as music lessons, language classes, Yoga, etc</b>	<b>18.3%</b>

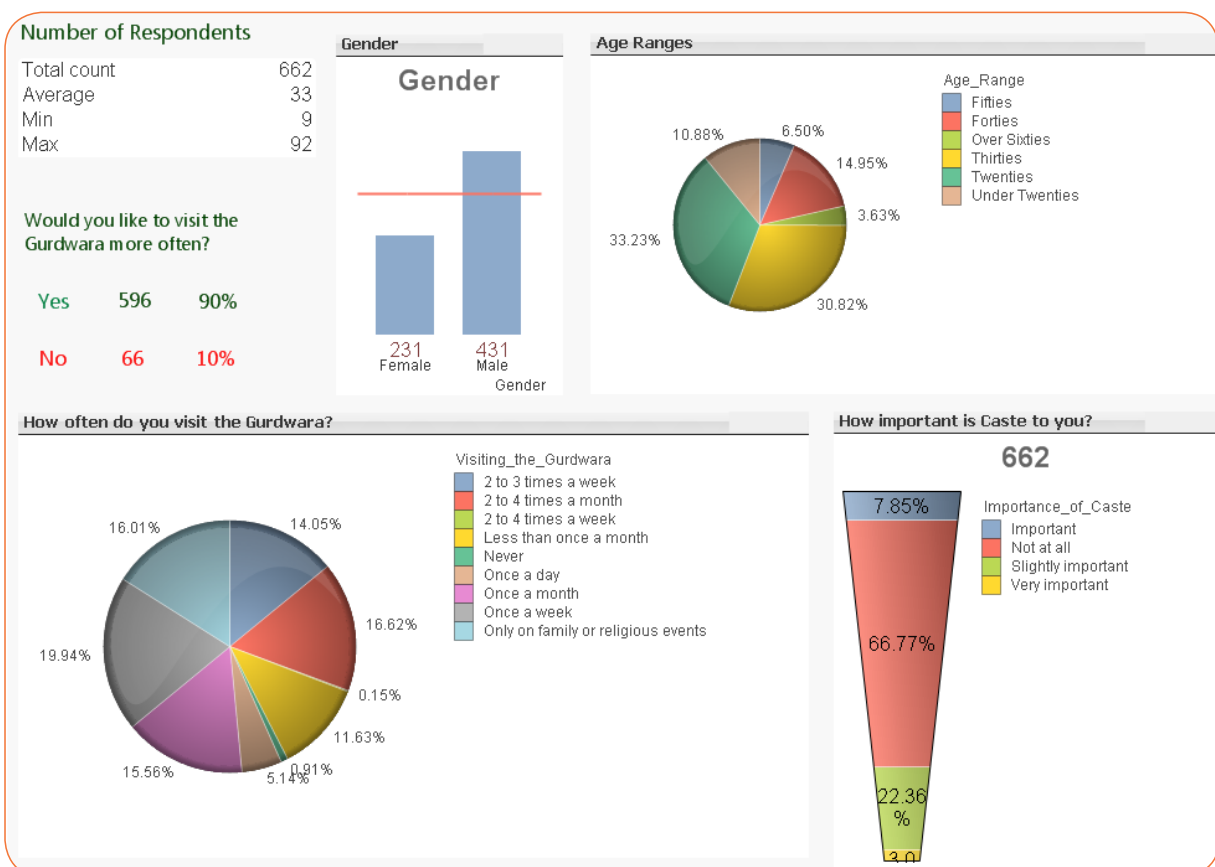
1.5% of respondents stated that they did not visit their Gurdwara as often as they wished to due to disabilities.

About a third of British Sikhs (32.3%) felt prevented from going often to Gurdwaras due to management committee politics. As there is no central authority for places of worship in the UK, virtually all British Gurdwaras operate as charities and are run under the auspices of their own management committee. Many of these management committees are elected into power at times following protracted and heated elections.

This can lead to factions being formed within Gurdwaras that, according to these results, have a detrimental impact upon the congregation visiting those Gurdwaras.

Personal time constraints (57.4%) appear to be the main reason why British Sikhs are not attending the Gurdwara as often as they would like. The demands of the modern world have crept into the British Sikh community and have had an effect upon the way in which Sikhs in the UK are interacting with their places of worship.

The issue of Gurdwara resources seems an obvious one. Many Gurdwaras now have access to projectors and screens where English translations of Sikh scriptures are shown whilst being recited or sung during services, but about a third of British Sikhs (33.2%) still feel prevented from going to the Gurdwara due to the absence of such a running translation. 30.8% of respondents felt that there was a lack of interesting events and programmes, suggesting that Gurdwaras need to do more than merely provide traditional services in order to maintain the interest of British Sikh congregations. The lack of female representation within Gurdwara management committees is another important factor preventing attendance according to 12% of respondents.





## HOW OFTEN DO YOU VISIT THE GURDWARA?

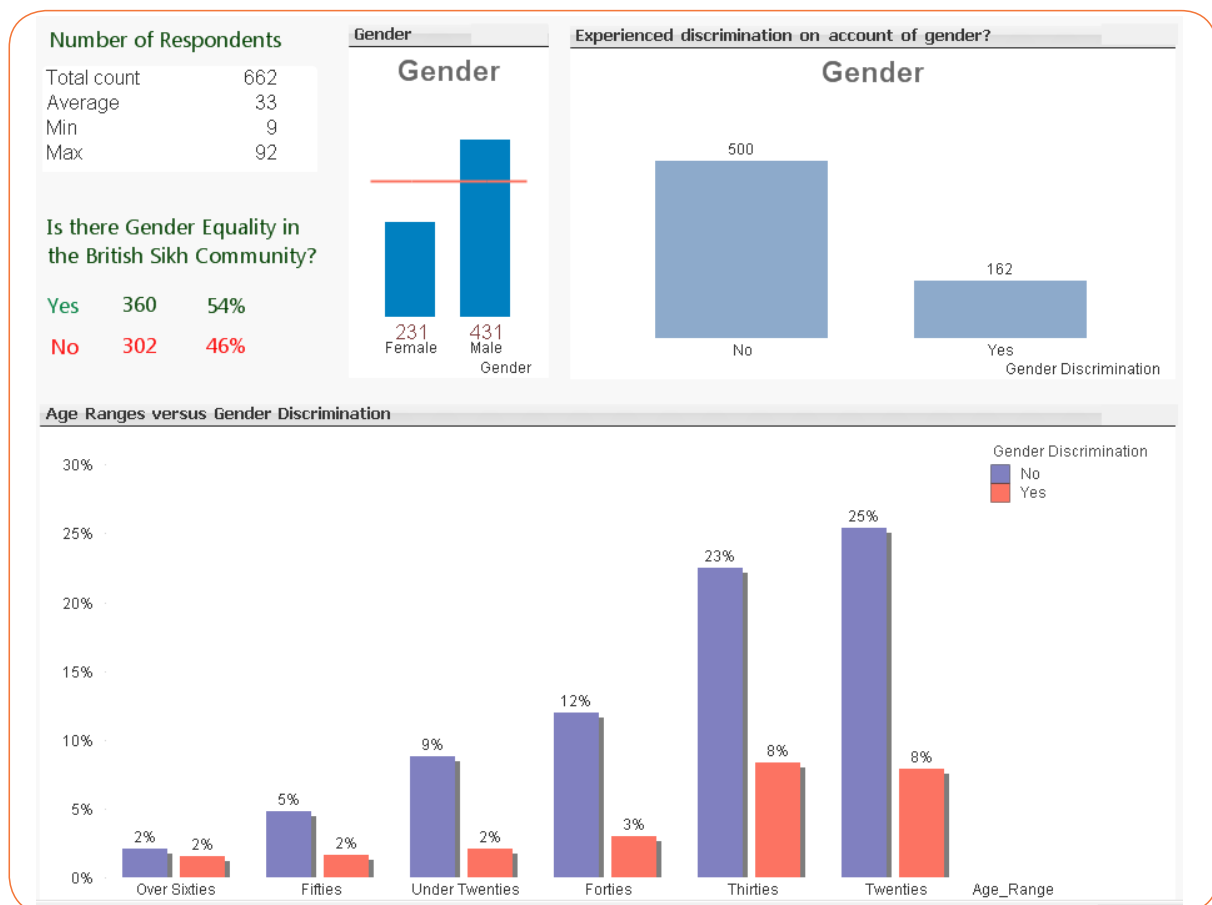
<b>5.1%</b>	<b>Once a day</b>
<b>14.1%</b>	<b>2 to 3 times a week</b>
<b>20%</b>	<b>Once a week</b>
<b>16.6%</b>	<b>2 to 4 times a month</b>
<b>15.6%</b>	<b>Once a month</b>
<b>11.7%</b>	<b>Less than once a month</b>
<b>16%</b>	<b>Only on family or religious events</b>
<b>0.9%</b>	<b>Never</b>

The majority of British Sikhs (71.4%) attend the Gurdwara at least once a month, with about 4 in 10 of our respondents (39.1%) visiting at least once a week.

Gurdwaras remain institutions which are central to the British Sikh community, with less than 1% of British Sikhs saying that they never visit the Gurdwara. However, in order to retain their importance amongst British Sikhs, there is an evident need for Gurdwaras to overcome the challenges which appear to prevent greater attendance amongst Sikhs in the UK.

# GENDER EQUALITY

- **43% of British Sikh females have experienced gender discrimination, as opposed to 14% of British Sikh males**
- **71% of British Sikh females who experienced gender discrimination did so within their extended family**
- **55% of British Sikh females who experienced gender discrimination did so at their Gurdwara**



One of the central tenets of the Sikh faith is 'equality for all', including gender equality. The Sikh faith was revolutionary in its beliefs of equality at a time when the practices of sati (widows committing suicide by being cremated alive with the corpse of their dead husbands) and purdah (veiling oneself in public) were prevalent in society.

One of the first Sikhs was Bibi Nanaki, the sister of the first Guru, Guru Nanak Dev Ji. The third Guru, Guru Amar Das Ji, introduced a system of Sikh preachers called Masands (which was later disbanded) to help spread the Sikh faith throughout northern India, and over a third of these respected preachers were female.

According to the teachings of the faith, there is no difference between men and women as the soul does not have a gender. Therefore, women are permitted to lead services, serve in the community, and play a full role within the Sikh faith without any barriers.



Punjabi culture, on the other hand, is quite sexist and women are often treated as inferior to men. Sons are preferred to daughters in Punjabi culture, and Punjab has a strong gender imbalance. According to the Indian census of 2011, there were only 893 females for every 1,000 males in Punjab. It is important to recognise the clear distinction of what the Sikh faith says on the subject of gender equality and the sad reality of Punjabi culture which is patriarchal and can discriminate against women.

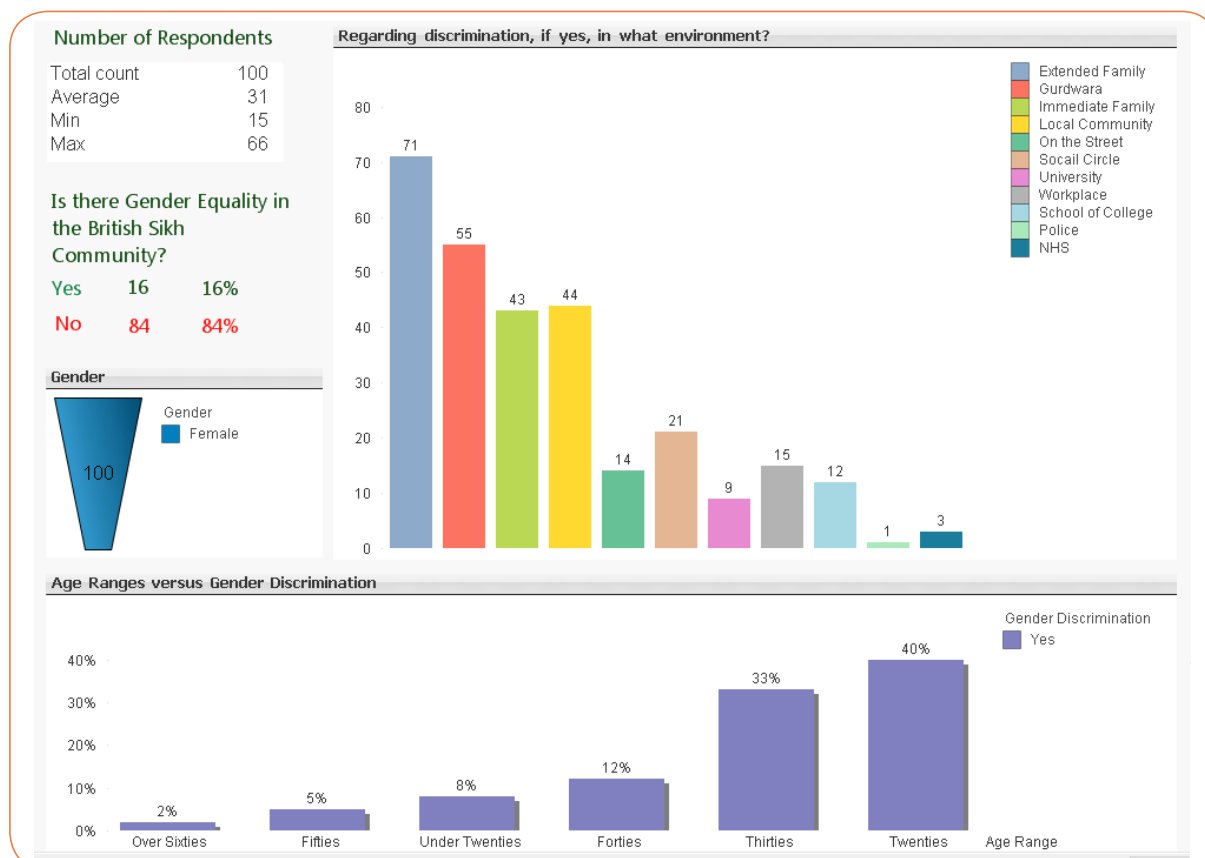
The results of the report reflect this, with only 55% of all British Sikhs believing that there is gender equality within the Sikh community.

43% of British Sikh women said that they have experienced discrimination based on their gender as opposed to 14% of men.

71% of British Sikh women who have experienced gender discrimination have done so within their extended family, whilst 55% have experienced it at the Gurdwara. Such gender discrimination against British Sikh females has also taken place within the local community (44%) and within the immediate family (43%).

15% of British Sikh females who have experienced gender discrimination said that they had done so at their workplace. Little, if any, discrimination has been experienced within British institutions such as the Police and the NHS.

## Breakdown of results of female respondents who have suffered discrimination on account of their gender

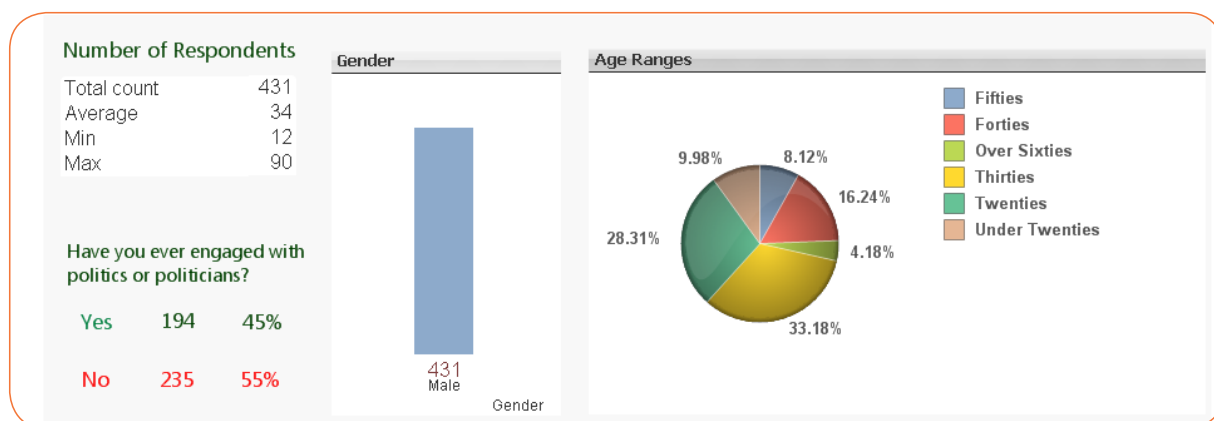




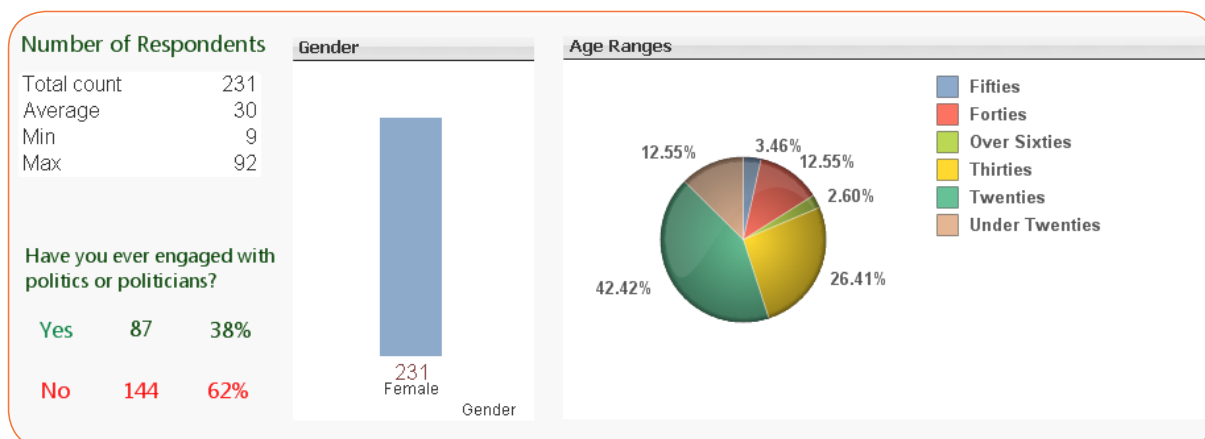
# POLITICS

- 24% of British Sikhs have not voted in any elections in the last 4 years
- 70.9% of British Sikhs voted in the 2010 General Election

## Male respondents



## Female respondents



Sikhs have historically been a very politically aware and engaged community. The main Sikh institution in Punjab, the Akal Takht, was founded by the 6th Guru in 1606 as the primary place of political assembly and sovereignty of the Sikh community as opposed to the spiritual centre of the Harmandir Sahib (the 'Golden Temple').

There are a number of political parties in modern India which are based on religious lines, including Sikh political parties. The most prominent Sikh political party, the Shiromani Akali Dal, currently forms the state government in Punjab and it also has an elected majority within the organisation which is in charge of the administration of most Gurdwaras of northern India (the SGPC – 'Shrimoni Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee').

Meanwhile in Britain, the Sikh community appears to have a rather British attitude towards politics.

Only 20% of respondents claimed to have an interest in British politics and in current affairs generally. That figure drops to 10.4% of respondents in respect of the politics of the Indian subcontinent. This suggests that British Sikhs are far less interested in the internal politics of South Asia than is often believed to be the case.



However, when it comes to British elections, the figures for British Sikhs turning out to vote are above the national average.

70.9% of British Sikhs voted in the 2010 General Election. This compares to a 65.1% turnout from the British public according to the House of Commons Research Paper 10/36.

48% of British Sikhs voted in their most recent local elections (i.e. between 2009 and 2012), whereas the mean national average of local elections from 2009 to 2012 was 44.2%<sup>20</sup>.

Despite what appears to be above average turnouts at elections for the British Sikh community, 23.6% of British Sikhs say that they have not voted in any elections during the last 4 years. Voter apathy is affecting the British Sikh community in much the same way that it has had an impact upon the British public in general.

It must be noted that the above figures do not take into account that 5.6% of all of the respondents were under the voting age of 18, and this will have an obvious impact upon the percentages for each key area.

42.5% of British Sikhs have engaged with politicians or politics in some way. The main way in which such engagement appears to take place is by petitions (62.6%), followed closely by email (59.1%) and in person (49.8%).

#### IF YES, HOW HAVE YOU ENGAGED WITH POLITICS OR POLITICIANS?

<b>Petitions (online or otherwise)</b>	<b>62.6%</b>
<b>Email</b>	<b>59.1%</b>
<b>In person</b>	<b>49.8%</b>
<b>Letters</b>	<b>39.9%</b>
<b>Protests/Demonstrations</b>	<b>30.6%</b>
<b>Via Community Groups</b>	<b>20.6%</b>
<b>Telephone Calls</b>	<b>17.8%</b>

13% of all British Sikhs have been engaged in politics by way of protests and demonstrations.

As of April 2013, the number of Sikh politicians in elected or appointed positions were:

- **1 MP in the House of Commons (Paul Uppal MP (Con))**
- **2 Peers in the House of Lords (Baroness Verma (Con) and Lord Singh (Crossbencher))**
- **80+ councillors throughout the UK (Con/Lab/Lib)**
- **1 Greater London Authority member (Onkar Sahota (Lab))**
- **0 MEPs**
- **0 MSPs**
- **0 Welsh Assembly Members**
- **0 Northern Ireland MLAs**

<sup>20</sup> (according to figures from the Guardian newspaper - <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2012/nov/16/uk-election-turnouts-historic>)





# IDENTITY

- **95% of British Sikhs are proud of being born or living in Britain**
- **15.6% of respondents self-identify as English Sikhs**
- **91.5% of British Sikhs speak English fluently, whereas only 80.7% of British Sikhs are fluent Punjabi speakers**
- **Only 23.8% of respondents are Vegetarian or Vegan**

## 2011 CENSUS RESULTS

The 2011 Census results show that the vast majority of British Sikhs self-described as Asian or Asian British (87%). 2% of British Sikhs are White according to the Census, and 1% as Mixed/Multiple Ethnic. 10% of British Sikhs self-described as being 'Other Ethnic Group', and this is believed to be as a result of a major campaign within the British Sikh community for 'Sikhs' to be recognised as an ethnicity within the obligatory section of the Census rather than only as a religion which was a voluntary question within the Census. That campaign was led by the Sikh Council UK in light of the 1983 House of Lords case of *Mandla v Dowell-Lee* (as outlined in the Literature Review earlier in this report).

## SELF IDENTITY

Whilst 50% of respondents described themselves to be British Sikh, it is worth noting that the concept of regional identity is also strong. 15.6% of respondents consider themselves to be English Sikh. Virtually all of the respondents from Scotland considering themselves to be Scottish Sikhs. Just over 2% of all respondents were from Scotland, a figure which correlates with the Sikh population of Scotland as compared to the UK as a whole. This suggests that the Scottish Sikh community is proud of its unique identity, something to bear in mind in the run-up to the Scottish Referendum in Autumn 2014.


14% of respondents described themselves to be Sikh only and did not align to any nation whatsoever. The results show a small minority who identify themselves to be Afghan Sikh, African Sikh and White Sikh.

What is clear from the results is that very few British Sikhs self-identify as Indian (2.1%) or Indian Sikh (5.7%). This creates the impression that although most respondents can trace their ancestry to the Subcontinent, they would not describe themselves as being Indian at the first instance.

## WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING WOULD YOU DESCRIBE AS BEING A SIKH

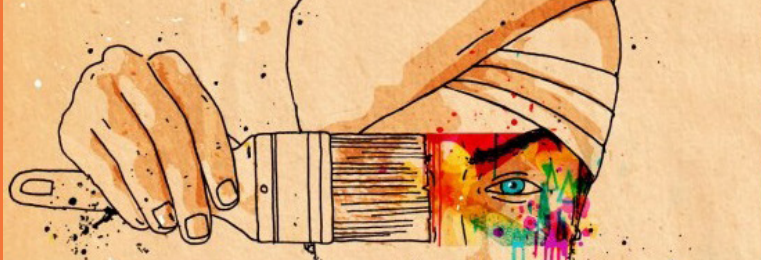
The vast majority of respondents feel that to categorise someone as Sikh they need to a belief in the Guru Granth Sahib Ji (87%) and teachings of the ten Sikh Gurus (81%). This view is consistent with traditional Sikh opinion.

It is clear that some respondents associate ethnicity or cultural heritage as factors in characterising a Sikh. For example, 18% of respondents felt that being Punjabi in ethnicity would be one factor in describing a Sikh.



The Punjabi community is actually extremely diverse, with the region of Punjab having been divided in half between India and Pakistan during Partition, and the Indian State of Punjab being further divided in the 1960s into three distinct states based on language. The current Indian state of Punjab is 1/6th the size of pre-Partition Punjab, and there are in fact four times as many Punjabi Muslims than Punjabi Sikhs worldwide.





### WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING WOULD YOU CATEGORISE AS BEING A SIKH?

<b>Belief in the Guru Granth Sahib Ji</b>	<b>87%</b>
<b>Belief in the teachings of the ten living Sikh Gurus</b>	<b>81%</b>
<b>Belief in Waheguru Ji</b>	<b>79%</b>
<b>Belief in the equality of all religions</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>Belief in one God</b>	<b>66%</b>
<b>Being an Amritdhari</b>	<b>60%</b>
<b>Being born into a Sikh family but not being Amritdhari</b>	<b>58%</b>
<b>Somebody that goes to the Gurdwara</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>Not having an allegiance to any other religion other than Sikhism</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>Somebody that wears all the 5ks</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>Keeping uncut hair but not being Amritdhari</b>	<b>38%</b>
<b>Somebody who wears a Kara</b>	<b>37%</b>
<b>Belief in the teachings of the Sarab Loh Granth and the Dasam Granth</b>	<b>32%</b>
<b>Being Punjabi in ethnicity</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Close relationship with Punjab</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Participating in Indian cultural activities (e.g. Bhangra)</b>	<b>14%</b>

### LANGUAGES SPOKEN

The main language spoken by British Sikhs is English (91.5%), showing that the British Sikh community is clearly well integrated within British society.

The Office for National Statistics in 2012 stated that Punjabi is the 2nd most common foreign language spoken in England and Wales. There are over 273,000 people who speak Punjabi as their first language. The results show that 80.6% of respondents can speak Punjabi fluently so British Sikhs still have a strong proficiency in the use of Punjabi language.

The respondents can also speak other European languages such as French (7.3%), German (5.3%) and Spanish (4.5%).

Only a mere 8.5% of respondents could not speak English fluently.

### DO YOU SPEAK ANY OF THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGES FLUENTLY?

<b>English</b>	<b>91.5%</b>
<b>Punjabi</b>	<b>80.7%</b>
<b>Hindi</b>	<b>26.7%</b>
<b>Urdu</b>	<b>9.5%</b>
<b>French</b>	<b>7.3%</b>
<b>German</b>	<b>5.3%</b>
<b>Spanish</b>	<b>4.5%</b>
<b>Pashto</b>	<b>0.7%</b>

## PRIDE IN BEING BRITISH

94.9% of respondents take at least some pride in being British or living in Britain. This implies that the vast majority of British Sikhs are proud of their British identity.

## TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU TAKE PRIDE IN BEING BRITISH OR IN LIVING IN BRITAIN?

<b>A great extent</b>	<b>44.7%</b>
<b>A moderate extent</b>	<b>38.4%</b>
<b>Only slightly</b>	<b>11.8%</b>
<b>Not at all</b>	<b>5.1%</b>

## DIET

Although one in five respondents are vegetarian, the eating preferences of the respondents is quite varied. It is widely believed that most Sikhs are vegetarians, whereas the vast majority of British Sikhs eat meat including fish and eggs (76.2%).

26.7% eat meat except for beef and non-halal foods whereas respondents who consume all types of meat regardless of slaughter method is 36.6%. This shows that some Sikhs who do consume meat consider the type of slaughter method used when they are looking to purchase food.

It is important to note that due to cultural attitudes and religious protection of the cow in India, 26.7% of respondents who are not vegetarian still abstain from consuming beef.

## WHAT TYPE OF DIET DO YOU HAVE?

<b>Eat everything</b>	<b>36.6%</b>
<b>Eat everything except beef – and non halal only</b>	<b>26.7%</b>
<b>Vegetarian (no meat, eggs or fish)</b>	<b>20.9%</b>
<b>Don't eat meat, but eat eggs &amp; fish</b>	<b>10.6%</b>
<b>Vegan</b>	<b>2.9%</b>

## FAMILY

- **54% of British Sikhs live with their parents and only 7.2% of respondents live with no family members or a partner**
- **A third of respondents (33.4%) have or know of a family member who has been affected by depression**
- **46.9% of respondents have experienced pressure from a family member when taking a decision**

## COMPOSITION OF HOUSEHOLD

Most of the respondents (54%) live with a family member or partner, and only 7.2% live separately from relatives. The Office of National Statistics 2012 states that there is a growing trend in the UK of single person households, with 12% of the general population living on their own.

The results also show that a significant number of British Sikhs live in joint family households, with 40.3% respondents living with their brothers and sisters as well as 4.2% who live with their nieces and nephews.

7.7% of British Sikhs live with their Paternal Grandparents as opposed to 2% who live with Maternal Grandparents. This may also indicate a substantial number of British Sikhs living with their in-laws in a traditional multi-generational household.

### WHICH FAMILY MEMBERS LIVE WITHIN YOUR HOUSEHOLD?

<b>Parents</b>	<b>54.8%</b>
<b>Partner</b>	<b>43.4%</b>
<b>Brothers or Sisters</b>	<b>40.3%</b>
<b>Paternal Grandparents (father's side of the family)</b>	<b>7.7%</b>
<b>None</b>	<b>7.3%</b>
<b>Nephews or Nieces</b>	<b>4.2%</b>
<b>Children</b>	<b>2.3%</b>
<b>Cousins</b>	<b>2.1%</b>
<b>Maternal Grandparents (mother's side of the family)</b>	<b>2%</b>

### ISSUES AFFECTING FAMILIES

A third of British Sikh families have been affected by depression (33.4%). The discussion of mental health issues within the South Asian community has historically been taboo, and these results show a critical issue which needs to be addressed due to the impact that it has upon the quality of life for all family members.

The second highest result was for alcoholism (27.5%), whereas drug abuse accounts for 6.9%. Alcoholism appears to affect four times as many respondents or their families than drug abuse.

It is worth noting that alcohol and other intoxicants are prohibited within the Khalsa brotherhood which forms the core of the Sikh faith and that Gurdwaras do not allow anybody under the influence of alcohol or intoxicants onto their premises, whilst heavy drinking forms a strong part of the Punjabi culture.

### HAVE YOU OR ANYONE IN YOUR FAMILY BEEN AFFECTED BY ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ISSUES?

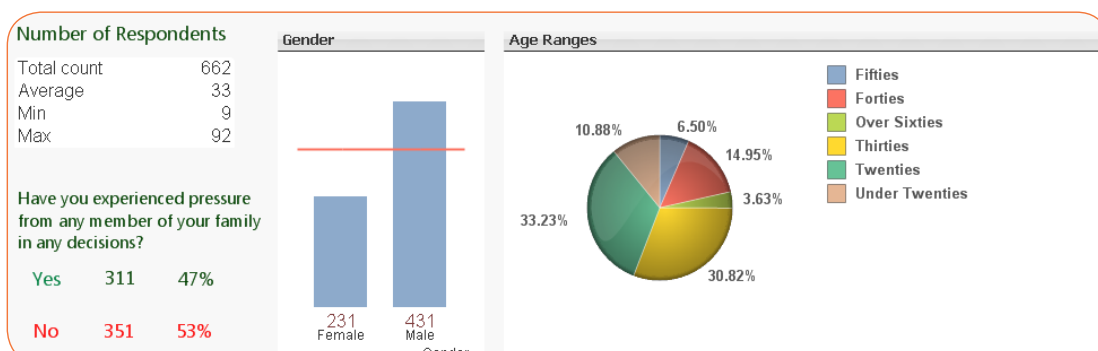
<b>Depression</b>	<b>33.4%</b>
<b>Alcoholism</b>	<b>27.5%</b>
<b>Domestic Violence (physical/emotional)</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Drug Abuse</b>	<b>6.9%</b>
<b>Gambling Addiction</b>	<b>4.4%</b>

### BEEN PRESSURED BY FAMILY INTO MAKING SPECIFIC LIFE DECISIONS

46.9% of British Sikhs have been pressured by a family member when making a specific life decision. 63.9% of respondents who have been pressured in some way are between the ages of 20 to 39.

### HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED PRESSURE FROM ANY MEMBER OF YOUR FAMILY IN ANY DECISIONS?

<b>Yes</b>	<b>47%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>53%</b>



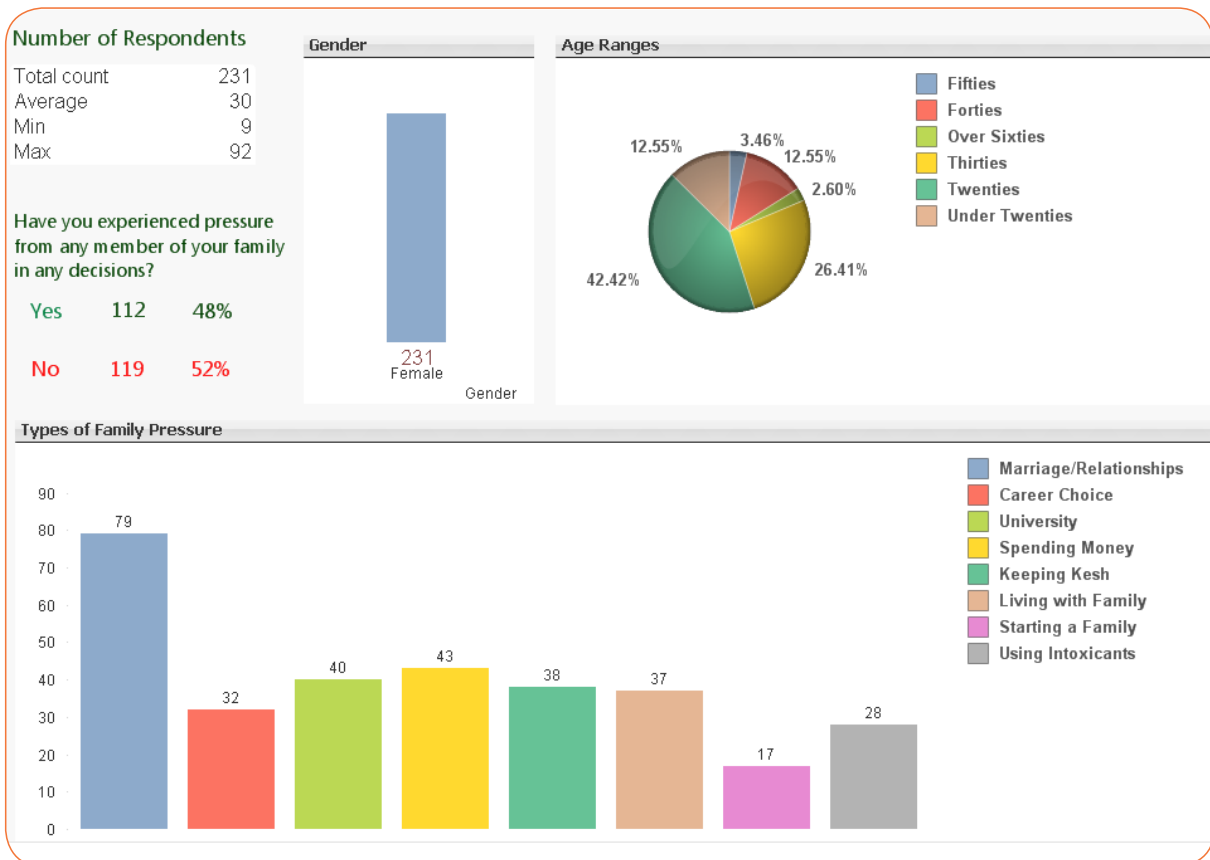
Family pressure has focussed primarily on educational, relationship and financial decisions.

Families tend to exert most pressure when it comes to decisions regarding marriage or relationships, with 30% of British Sikhs stating this to be the case in their own lives.

### IF YES, IN WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING DECISIONS?

<b>Marriage/Relationship</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Spending Money</b>	<b>18.9%</b>
<b>University</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>School Subject Choice</b>	<b>15.7%</b>
<b>Career Choice</b>	<b>15.4%</b>
<b>Living with Family</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Clothing</b>	<b>12.5%</b>
<b>Keeping Uncut Hair (Kesh)</b>	<b>12.4%</b>
<b>Using Intoxicants (Alcohol, drugs, tobacco)</b>	<b>11.2%</b>
<b>Starting a Family</b>	<b>8.6%</b>

### Female respondents



# HEALTH AND WELL BEING

- **47.5% of British Sikhs exercise less than three times a week for a minimum of 30 minutes at a time**
- **12.4% of British Sikhs suffer from a physical or mental illness that affects their quality of life**
- **10.6% of British Sikhs are a carer for someone in their family**

With an ageing population and a struggling welfare state and National Health Service, it is important for Britain to ensure that its population is in a good state of health. Many initiatives have been launched by the State to help achieve that, including recommendations as to the amount of exercise that should be undertaken each week.

The results show that 47.5% of respondents exercise less than three times a week for a minimum of 30 minutes. Physical activity is one of the best preventative medicines; research has shown that it halves the risk of developing heart disease, it also reduces the affects of stress and depression.

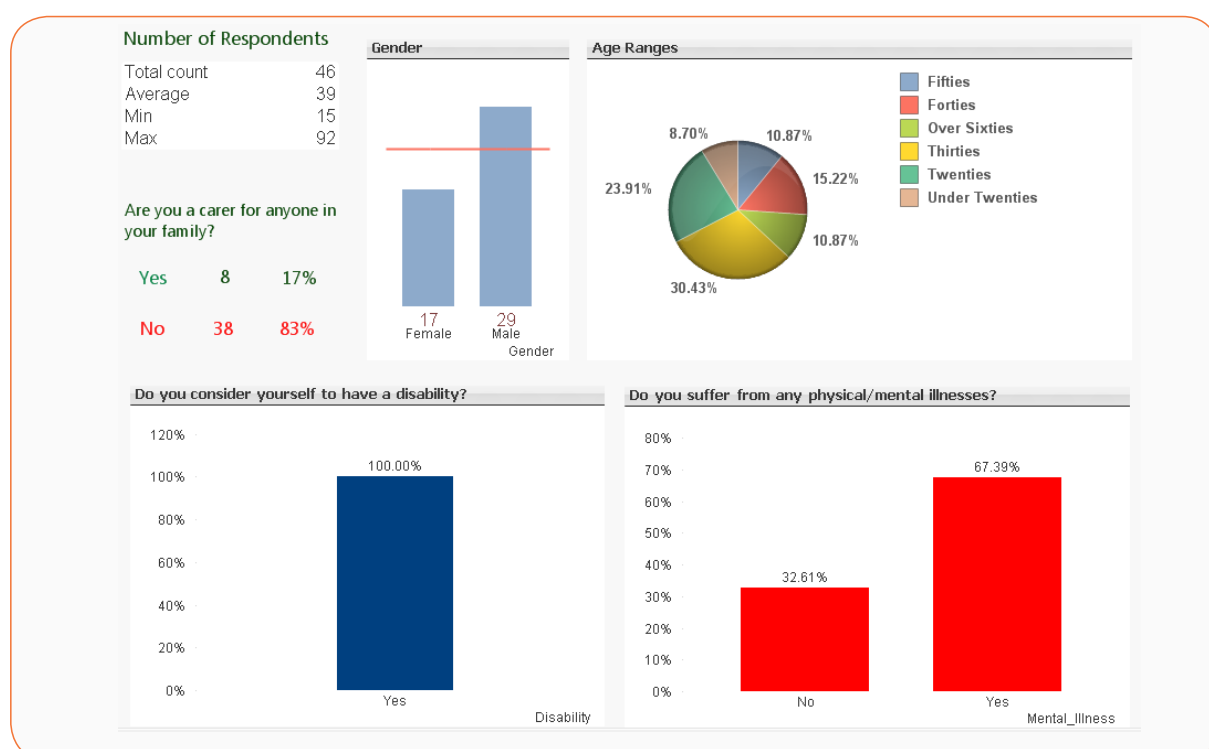
## DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN ANY SPORTS OR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AT LEAST 3 TIMES A WEEK FOR A MINIMUM OF 30 MINUTES?

Yes	52.5%
No	47.5%

## DO YOU SUFFER FROM ANY PHYSICAL/MENTAL ILLNESSES THAT AFFECT YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE?

Yes	12.4%
No	87.6%

### Breakdown of results of respondents who consider themselves to have a disability





## DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF TO HAVE A DISABILITY?

<b>Yes</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>93.0%</b>

## ILLNESSES/DISABILITIES

Depression was again highlighted and there are related conditions such as stress and anxiety which have an impact on the quality of life of British Sikhs. The results are significant as they clearly show that depression, stress and anxiety are key illnesses that members of the British Sikh community have to deal with.

There is well documented evidence that members of the South Asian community are more likely to suffer from diabetes than the general population, and over the years there have been a number of awareness campaigns regarding diabetes which have been targeted at the South Asian community. It may well be that the British Sikh community has benefited from this targeting.

However, this disparity may also be due to the fact that most people who answered the questionnaire spoke English fluently, whereas research suggests that the language barrier may prevent many British South Asians from accessing health services in time to stop symptoms of ill health from developing into serious conditions such as diabetes.

## WHICH ILLNESSES OR DISABILITIES DO YOU HAVE?

<b>Anxiety</b>	<b>5.1%</b>
<b>Stress</b>	<b>5.3%</b>
<b>Depression</b>	<b>5.7%</b>
<b>Diabetes</b>	<b>2.9%</b>

## CARER FOR ANOTHER PERSON

10.6% of British Sikhs are carers for someone in their family; this will inevitably have an impact on their life in many ways including time commitment. This ties in well with the results from the 2011 Census which revealed that 9.7% of the British population are carers for their relatives.

Many carers will also be working full time. 73.5% of carers do not receive any government support, and it may well be that the majority of carers will benefit from a legal right to support from Local Authorities as proposed in the Queen's Speech in May 2013.

## ARE YOU A CARER FOR ANYONE IN YOUR FAMILY?

<b>Yes</b>	<b>10.6%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>89.4%</b>

## IF YES TO ANY OF THE ABOVE, DO YOU RECEIVE GOVERNMENTAL SUPPORT?

<b>Yes</b>	<b>26.5%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>73.5%</b>

# EMPLOYMENT

- **20.4% of British Sikhs in employment are self-employed**
- **British Sikhs can be found in a great variety of professions, with over 357 different professions listed**
- **6.9% of respondents have experienced abuse in the work place**

93.2% of respondents are either working or studying, whereas only 2.3% of respondents are retired. This figure is probably not reflective of the true number of retired Sikhs in the UK given that there were few respondents over the age of 60 in the sample for this study. Figures released recently from the 2011 Census show that 8% of British Sikhs are aged 65 or over.<sup>21</sup>

From those British Sikhs who are in employment, 20.4% are self-employed, as opposed to 14% of the employed British population according to figures from the Office for National Statistics for 2012. British Sikhs have historically been known to be entrepreneurs, and the present state of the economy may be influencing decisions as to becoming self-employed. However, a variety of support is often needed for SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) to survive in difficult conditions.

## EMPLOYMENT

<b>Employed</b>	<b>58.2%</b>
<b>Retired</b>	<b>2.3%</b>
<b>Self-Employed</b>	<b>14.9%</b>
<b>Student</b>	<b>20.1%</b>
<b>Unemployed/Not Working</b>	<b>4.5%</b>

The range of professions covered by the respondents, both male and female, is immense. There were 357 different job titles given by the respondents, and it is an excellent example of how British Sikhs are contributing to the national economy as well as being well established and integrated within British society.

Initial waves of Sikh migrants to the UK were mainly focussed in a handful of professions but the current British Sikh community has completely diversified. There are more male respondents working in the field of IT and finance compared to the female respondents, whilst there are more females working in the legal profession in comparison to males.

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2013/may/16/uk-census-religion-age-ethnicity-country-of-birth>







## FEMALE POPULATION



It is important to note that over one-third of British Sikhs (36.1%) have experienced some form of discrimination in the work place.

HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY OF THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR WORKPLACE?

Favouritism	36.1%
Racism	28.9%
Bullying	18.6%
Sexism	9.5%
Abuse	7%

# RACISM

- **Three-quarters of British Sikhs (74.5%) have experienced racism**
- **Of those who have experienced racism, 53.4% said that the racist incident had occurred in the last 18 months**

The vast majority of British Sikhs have experienced racism (74.5%).

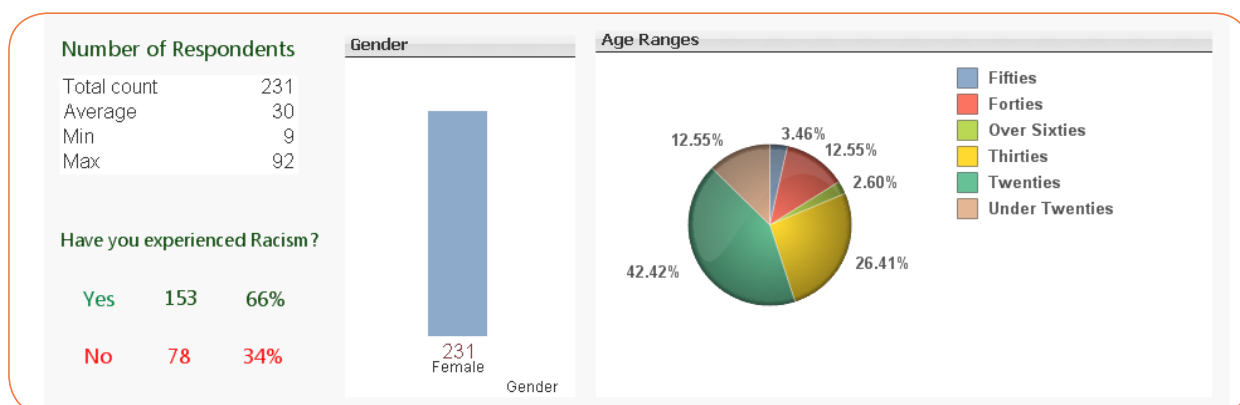
Out of the respondents who have experienced racism, 42.4% of females in their twenties experienced racism compared to 28.3% of males in the same age group. This shows that age and gender can also play a significant part in racist incidents.

There continue to be a large number of racist incidents occurring, with 28.2% of such incidents having occurred in the last six months.

## HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED RACISM?

<b>Yes</b>	<b>74.5%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>25.5%</b>

### Female respondents

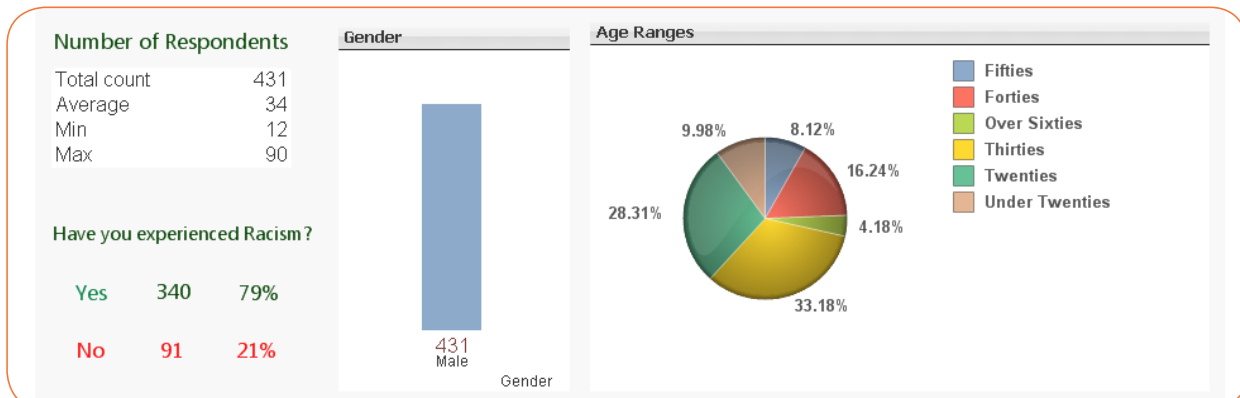


## IF YES, WHEN DID YOU LAST EXPERIENCE RACISM?

<b>0 to 6 months ago</b>	<b>28.2%</b>
<b>6 to 12 months ago</b>	<b>13.8%</b>
<b>12 to 18 months ago</b>	<b>11.4%</b>
<b>More than 18 months ago</b>	<b>46.6%</b>

\* Percentages are for those people that had experienced racism.

### Male respondents





# OLDER PEOPLE

- The biggest issues facing older British Sikhs are the language barrier and the lack of social interaction
- 40.9% of respondents are not happy with the provision of local and community services for older people

68% of respondents believe older Sikhs have a language barrier problem, due to Punjabi being their main language spoken. If older Sikhs within an area which does not have a Punjabi speaking population, they will find it difficult to access help without any assistance.

Over half of all British Sikhs (52.1%) are unsatisfied with the provision of local and community services for older people, with only one in four British Sikhs (24.8%) being satisfied as to local provisions.

## DO ELDERLY PEOPLE HAVE PROBLEMS WITH ANY OF THE FOLLOWING?

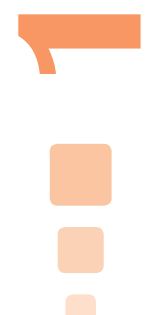
Access to travel	42.6%
Language barrier	68.6%
Lack of social interaction	56%
Lack of activities to be involved in	54.4%

## HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE PROVISION OF LOCAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE?

Very Satisfied	2.3%
Satisfied	22.5%
Not Satisfied	40.9%
Very Dissatisfied	11.2%
Don't know	23.1%



# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS



The key decision makers can take practical steps to fulfil the needs of the British Sikh community. It is evident from the analysis within the BSR that there is much work that can be done to achieve this. We hope that these recommendations will assist the relevant parties in allocating sufficient resources to help achieve a positive outcome.

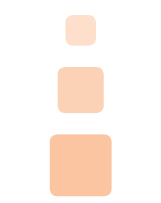
## ARTS/CULTURE/HERITAGE

### Recommendations:

- The quality of work in this area should be raised to a higher level. In particular there is a need to promote Sikh culture and history through the following:
  - websites
  - apps for mobile phones and tablets
  - documentaries
- The following areas deserve a greater level of focus by Sikh and non-Sikh heritage organisations alike:
  - British Sikh History
  - Early Sikh History
  - Women in Sikh History
- Mainstream heritage organisations should make concerted efforts to produce Sikh-related events and projects, and where possible to work with recognised Sikh heritage groups with proven track records in order to do so.

## ENTERTAINMENT/MEDIA

### Recommendations:

- 
- Almost all British Sikhs would like to see more Sikhs on TV. Mainstream broadcasters should cast more Sikhs in a variety of programmes and should work with leading British Sikh organisations to promote this through their respective networks.
  - A mentoring scheme where Sikhs and non-Sikhs in the media are 'buddied-up' with British Sikhs interested in the entertainment industry in order to guide and assist them in their future careers. Pre-existing organisations such as the Creative Diversity Network would be best placed to deliver this.
  - Community organised 'Melas' (South Asian festivals) should wholeheartedly support, host and promote performances by up-and-coming British Sikh talent.

## CASTE

### Recommendations:

- Sikh community organisations should host discussions with people from all age ranges about the issue of caste amongst Sikhs and the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib Ji in respect of caste.
- A social media campaign via Twitter and Facebook to 'mythbust' British Sikh attitudes to caste discrimination.
- Gurdwaras in a region including those based on caste lines should come together and organise collective events such as sporting tournaments each summer.
- Central Government should actively ensure participation from young British Sikhs during consultation in respect of caste legislation by way of focus groups.
- Central Government should ensure that any definition of 'caste' in legislation includes reference to cultural attitudes and is not exclusively aligned to faith because caste is not a part of the Sikh faith.

## GURDWARAS

### Recommendations:

- There should be an English translation on a projector screen of the Sikh scriptures (Gurbani) being recited or sung during busy periods at the main prayer hall. 'Some Gurdwaras already do this using software developed by Sikhi to the Max.
- Live streams from major British Gurdwaras should be made available on the internet.
- An online course exploring the basics of the Sikh faith should be established along similar lines to the highly-successful Alpha Course for Christians. Such a course should include philosophy, teachings, history, musical heritage and inter-faith dialogue amongst other elements.

## GENDER

### Recommendations:

- Gurdwaras should actively increase female representation in their management committees. This should be done through a quota system to overcome gender inequality within Gurdwaras.
- Gurdwaras should encourage women to lead religious services.
- Gurdwaras and Sikh community organisations should facilitate empowerment and training sessions for women to be leaders within their communities. Pre-existing organisations within the South Asian community such as Jeena International ([www.jeenainternational.org](http://www.jeenainternational.org)), Kaurageous ([www.kaurageous.com](http://www.kaurageous.com)) and Kaur's Corner ([www.kaurscorner.com](http://www.kaurscorner.com)) may be able to assist in the training.

## POLITICS:

### Recommendations:

- Political Parties in the UK should actively engage with the British Sikh community to ensure proper Sikh representation at all levels of politics. Discussions have already been initiated on this point by organisations such as the Sikh Council UK, the City Sikhs Network and the Network of Sikh Organisations.
- Regular hustings events should be organised by Sikh community organisations with assistance from the Political Parties to engage British Sikhs with politics. One successful example is the London Mayoral Hustings in 2012 held by the City Sikhs Network.
- Political Parties should introduce monitoring of party membership on the basis of faith.

## IDENTITY

### Recommendations:

- Local and Central Government should help promote the success story of the British Sikh community in respect of integration and identity.
- Events should be organised at local and national levels in 2014 to mark the 100th anniversary of the First World War and the contribution made by Sikh troops. Such events should be supported by Central and Local Government, and should further be hosted by mainstream museums and galleries.
- Events should also be organised in 2014 to mark the 160th anniversary of Sikhs in Britain. Such events should again be supported by Central and Local Government and hosted by mainstream museums and galleries.
- Gurdwaras and Sikh community organisations should use the results of this section to host open discussions on the question of “Who is a Sikh?”.

## FAMILY

### Recommendations:

- Courses should be provided for Sikh youths up to the age of 25 to effectively manage pressure from their family and community by improving their confidence and self-esteem. The British Youth Council is a leading light in this area and they should work with the Sikh organisations in order to set up such courses.
- Mainstream organisations such as Alcoholics Anonymous should set up Punjabi language meetings in areas with large Punjabi communities in the UK to tackle such issues. They should also liaise with local community organisations as part of their outreach.
- British Sikh TV channels and media should have discussions and debates on topic of pressures within the family, with fair representation on both sides of the debate. These results could be used in order to instigate the debate within the British Sikh community.

## HEALTH & WELLBEING

### Recommendations:

- Central and/or Local Government should launch a campaign on mental health issues such as depression, stress and anxiety targeted at the British South Asian community. Such a targeted campaign has had success with diabetes prevention amongst South Asians.
- Central Government should consider providing strong support to carers in full and part-time employment, including financial support, when drafting the proposed Care Bill.
- Gurdwaras and Sikh community organisations should run events to discuss and acknowledge the existence of mental health issues such as depression and stress. Mainstream organisations such as the Mental Health Foundation and the NHS should be able to assist in this.
- Gurdwaras and Sikh community organisations should host drop-in clinics to support people affected by such mental health problems. Regular drop-in clinics for blood pressure and diabetes are already commonplace in Gurdwaras throughout the UK.

## EMPLOYMENT

### Recommendations:

- Central and Local Government should increase the level of practical support available to SMEs.
- Sikh community organisations should promote and encourage continuing professional learning and development amongst British Sikhs through projects such as the City Sikhs Network and the British Sikh Doctors Organisation.
- Mainstream companies and corporations should consider setting up internal corporate Sikh organisations that are sustainable. Existing successful examples include the Ernst & Young Sikh Group, the PwC Sikh Network and the Accenture Sikh Group.



## RACISM

### Recommendations:

- Central Government should ensure that the Race Equality Act 2010 is fully enforced by the relevant authorities.
- Sikh community organisations should work with local anti-racism organisations such as Hope Not Hate on collaborative projects.
- Gurdwaras should organise interfaith events and 'open' days to help challenge prejudices in local and regional areas.
- An online resource for reporting racism and hate crime against British Sikhs should be set up along the lines of Tell MAMA for the Muslim community.

## OLDER PEOPLE

### Recommendations:

- Local Government should prioritise resources regarding access to travel for older people, including "dial-a-ride" services and local public transport.
- A volunteer task force should be set up in each region to help provide relevant assistance to older people, including English improvement courses. The Gurdwaras should play a pivotal role in finding participants and volunteers as well as hosting courses.
- Sikh community organisations should organise regular social activities which encourage participation from older people.



# FUTURE RESEARCH

## HOW TO IMPROVE ON THE BRITISH SIKH REPORT IN THE FUTURE

In a short space of time, from the formation of the team to the completion of the inaugural British Sikh Report, many decisions and activities have taken place in order to make the BSR as successful and meaningful as possible.

However, as with doing anything for the first time, there is much that the BSR Team has learnt and below is an overview of how to make future reports even more fruitful:

Activities conducted for the first BSR	Conclusion and how to improve for future reports
Engagement of several members of the British Sikh community	<p>Input warned from several members, which had an impact on the rest of the Team.</p> <p>Future: Secure input by introducing a contract on a report by report basis – this will encourage proactive engagement and the short time-frame means that there is no lock-in for future BSRs.</p>
Timeframe from the first Team meeting to publishing of the BSR – nine months	<p>This was ample time for the Team to be introduced to one another, the Questionnaire be designed and in-field as well as the collation of results and the write-up which followed.</p> <p>Future: Time has already been saved as most of the questions asked in the first report can be duplicated. This will allow for more time in-field in the future.</p>
Distribution of the Questionnaire	<p>Due to limited resources, the Questionnaire was only available in English and online.</p> <p>Future: With greater input, the BSR should be available in both Punjabi and English, in print and online – thus opening up engagement from a range of age groups.</p>
Buy-in from partners and sponsors	<p>The Team engaged a number of proactive members of the Sikh community.</p> <p>Future: To continue with this engagement as it currently stands but to also look at other parties who maybe interested in contributing to and promoting the BSR.</p>
Focusing attention on the BSR being independent	<p>The Team pushed hard to ensure that the BSR was viewed as an independent piece of work.</p> <p>Future: To continue with this move – showing no affiliation to one organisation or body allows the BSR to gain credibility from a number of partners.</p>
Buy-in from third parties to feature the BSR	<p>The Team was able to secure third-party involvement when it came to gaining media/public attention. However, commitments were not fulfilled and as a result it did not get the full media coverage it could have early on in the process.</p> <p>Future: To gain airing commitment before members of the Team set aside time – this will ensure that all efforts are rewarded.</p>

The recommendations made above are in no way suggesting that the initial approach taken was unsuccessful. Instead, the suggestions made above are part of a learning curve in order to make the BSR even more of a success in the future and in order to put the contribution of the BSR in perspective.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**FAITH IN LEADERSHIP**  
**HOPE NOT HATE**  
**SIKH CHANNEL**  
**SIKH DIRECTORY**  
**THE RUNNYMEDE TRUST**  
**TURBAN CAMPAIGN**  
**UKPHA**  
**WOMEN EMPOWERED**

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