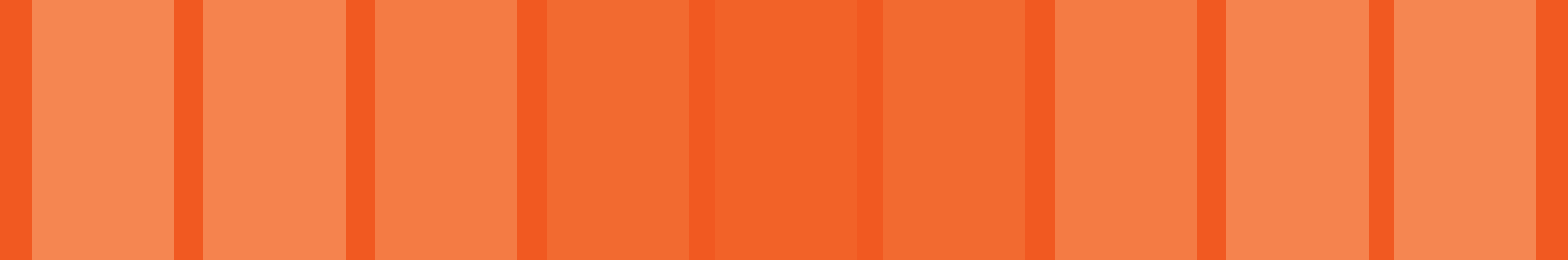


2014

BSR BRITISH
SIKH
REPORT

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



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The British Sikh community is one of the most hard-working and successful groups in the UK, contributing so much to our culture, economy and way of life.

Since the first Sikhs arrived in Britain over 150 years ago they have made a hugely positive and enduring mark.

This year we commemorate one of the Sikh community's greatest contributions to our country. 2014 marks one hundred years since the outbreak of the First World War in which thousands of Sikhs fought - and died - for Britain and the Commonwealth in the name of freedom.

But it's not just about the contribution of the past. The Sikh community is playing a key part in our future too. Sikh entrepreneurs, business leaders, hardworking families, students and public servants will be at the forefront of our Island story in the years ahead.

I commend the British Sikh Report 2014 for its continuing efforts to engage politicians in dialogue on matters concerning the British Sikh community.

DAVID CAMERON
PRIME MINISTER



The Sikh community is one which has made an immense contribution to British society over many years. I welcome the British Sikh Report 2014 for the insight it helps to provide to the community.

Sikhs believe strongly in concepts of social justice and defending the rights of the weak and vulnerable. These are values which are shared by the Labour Party, and I sincerely believe that Britain is at its best when everyone from all different communities come together.

This is a principle which is at the heart of my vision for a One Nation Britain.

ED MILIBAND MP

LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION



The Sikh community has for generations played a significant role in the success of London and the whole country.

As well as bringing their wonderful faith, which we see celebrated at our Vaisakhi celebrations in Trafalgar Square every year, Sikhs bring a commitment to hard work, making a huge contribution to our economy.

They are also dedicated to social action, providing free meals to Sikhs and non-Sikhs alike and helping vulnerable members of the community.

I welcome this latest report, which provides useful information for anyone involved in public policy.

BORIS JOHNSON
MAYOR OF LONDON



“ I welcome the *British Sikh Report 2014*. It highlights the Sikh community’s contribution to British society.

The matters of self identity, religion and faith are the tripod on which this community has advanced over the years. But that alone is not sufficient. The concept of equality between men and women, between old and young and between rich and poor is also enshrined in the tenet of the Sikh religion.

This publication will be of immense help to all political parties because it identifies issues which now confront the successive generations of Sikhs in Britain. There is no excuse but to ensure that when manifestos are prepared for the General Election in May 2015 we take into account the needs of our diverse society.”

LORD DHOLOKIA
DEPUTY LEADER OF THE LIBERAL
DEMOCRATS



“
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





INTRODUCTION, AIMS & 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 companies and by the charity and voluntary sector when looking at issues regarding the British Sikh community. The BSR 2013 has been quoted in debates in the Houses of Parliament and used by local authorities in the Midlands, as well as by Sikh organisations in the UK and abroad.

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 groups, interfaith bodies, and various Sikh organisations.

HOW WILL THE BSR HELP THE PUBLIC SECTOR?

The Equality Act 2010 bans unfair treatment and helps ensure equal opportunity in the work place and wider society. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 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 2010 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 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.



THE SIKH COMMUNITY'S CONTRIBUTION TO BRITISH SOCIETY

DR OPINDERJIT KAUR TAKHAR, UNIVERSITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON

Sikh settlement to Britain can be traced back to 1854 when the 15 year old Maharaja Duleep Singh, the last King of the Sikh Empire, was brought to England following the annexation of the Punjab by the East India Company. Sikhs fought in strong numbers in the First and Second World Wars, with 83,000 Sikh soldiers giving their lives in service of the British Army.

The Sikh community (collectively referred to as the Panth) has made a significant and huge contribution to British Society, both historically and in the present day.

Although the youngest of the six major world faiths, Sikhi(sm) has the fifth largest following globally. There is currently preference amongst Sikhs to use the term Sikhi when referring to their faith rather than adding the suffix of an ism. This highlights that Sikhi is a way of life rather than following a prescribed dogma - indeed, something of which Guru Nanak (the first Guru of the Sikh faith) was quite critical through his emphasis on good and moral living. These principles have aided British Sikhs in their contribution and assimilation into British society.

Although the term 'diaspora' was originally used to refer to the dispersed Jewish community, it can also be used to refer to Punjabi Sikhs living outside of India. Ahluwalia aptly states:

*"The dispersal of Punjabis and in particular Punjabi Sikhs is by no means a recent phenomenon – they have been on the move for well over a century."*¹

The largest Sikh community outside of India is well established in Britain. Writing about the Sikhs of Gravesend (Kent) in 1979, Arthur Helweg observed that

*"The turban and beard of the [Sikh] man, along with the salwar-kameez of the woman, make them noticeable. These dress distinctions, plus their banding together in communities where their rural culture is transplanted, make them appear more numerous than they actually may be".*²

In many respects, Helweg's comments are both applicable to the twenty first century but also outdated. Although the turban of the Sikh makes his/her presence visibly felt in multi-cultural Britain, professional Sikhs are increasingly choosing to set up homes in areas that offer good facilities for themselves and their families, areas which do not necessarily function as Indian/Punjabi cultural hubs. There has also been a sharp increase in the wearing of turbans by Sikh females in Britain, a recent phenomenon which very much echoes the wearing of turbans by Sikh women of non-Punjabi ethnicity, initially in the USA under the guidance of Yogi Bajan.³

Many earlier Sikh migrants to Britain felt pressurized by other migrants to have their hair cut since the turban was often seen as an obstacle in securing employment in British workplaces.⁴ Early Sikh settlers were rarely able to take against their prospective employers due to communication issues and a general lack of knowledge about the British justice system. Over time however, Sikhs have become successful in lobbying for the implementation of legislation which allows them to freely wear their articles of faith. Two landmark examples of this are the wearing of the turban by Sikh bus drivers in the 1960s and the Motor-Cycle Crash Helmets (Religious Exemption) Act 1976 which provided an exemption from wearing the helmet for turban wearing Sikhs. The flaws in the secularization argument therefore occupy a pivotal space in discussions relating to the wearing of Sikh articles of faith in the British diaspora.⁵

According to the British Sikh Report 2013, 95% of respondents are proud of their 'Britishness'.

Therefore, it is correct to assert that the very term 'British Sikh' has become an acceptable identity factor. According to the 2011 Census, there are approximately 423,000 Sikhs resident in England and Wales. British Sikhs have secured top level jobs in professions such as law, medicine and teaching. Sikhs are counted amongst successful entrepreneurs and therefore contribute significantly to the British economy.

Anguish over the recent revelations of possible SAS involvement in the attack on Sri Harmandir Sahib by the Indian Army in June 1984 (referred to as Operation Bluestar) caused much anxiety to a significant number of British Sikhs. Sentiments of hurt and betrayal were constantly voiced which in turn added significantly to dialogues pertaining to whether the British Sikh identity remains to hold significance for those Sikhs who have been concerned by the huge loss of life in the sequence of events post Operation Bluestar. Many Sikh groups continue to lobby British Parliament for an independent inquiry into the full extent of the SAS involvement.

The only turban wearing Sikh in Parliament, Lord Indarjit Singh of Wimbledon, continues to campaign to have the loss of Sikh life in 1984 recognised as Genocide by the United Nations. These are issues that emotionally continue to link British Sikhs with their homeland of Punjab and to some degree, India. Political and human rights issues have given rise to a number of British Sikh organisations actively seeking for their voices to be heard at local and international levels.

Sikh processions on the streets of Britain, particularly the Nagar Kirtan processions in April celebrating the creation of the Khalsa in 1699 CE, highlight the extent to which the Sikh community comfortably accommodate both their British and Sikh identity. The Khalsa institutionalised the outward identity of a Sikh – of which the turban has become a characteristic feature of the Sikh community across the globe. British Sikhs from across generations unite on such processions to publicly illustrate the utmost reverence and respect that they have for their holy scripture the Guru Granth Sahib. ⁷

The younger generation of Sikhs are encouraged to learn Punjabi so that they can experience the teachings contained in the Guru Granth Sahib for themselves. Sikh communities in the diaspora worry about the survival of the Punjabi language. Gurdwaras are increasingly using projectors on which English translations of recited passages are displayed for the benefit of British Sikhs who are unable to read or understand the Sikh Scripture. ⁸ Some Sikhs however, see this as a threat to the future of the Punjabi language, since in their opinion youngsters may not feel the need to learn Punjabi if translations are readily available. Many Gurdwaras in Britain have addressed such issues by attempting to increase facilities that offer the learning of Punjabi and the studying of the Sikh faith. These provisions however are facing a number of difficulties due to funding issues.

Many British Sikhs, true to the aspirations behind the teachings and actions of Guru Nanak are much involved in inter-faith matters in Britain and across the globe. The concept of tolerance to other faiths is a prominent feature of the teachings of the Sikh Gurus. Indeed, Guru Nanak is regarded as the pioneer in inter-faith dialogue by Sikhs and many non-Sikhs alike.

Maintaining a connection with Punjabi ethnicity is also imperative for many British Punjabi Sikhs. This reflects into lifestyles and accepted norms amongst Sikhs which emanate from the Punjabi culture. The notion of izzat 'family honour' remains dear to most British Sikhs. ⁹

In recent years there has been a vast increase in the popularity of feminist groups aimed at the British Sikh female population. These empowerment groups and online forums - Kaur's Corner, Kaurista and Kaurageous (to name a few) - take inspiration from the egalitarian teachings of Sikhi which elevate the position of females both from both a philosophical and practical level by stating:

*Why call her bad, from whom are born the Kings?
From a woman, a woman is born.
Without a woman, there can be none.
Nanak, only the one True Lord, is without a woman.*

(Guru Granth Sahib, p 473).

It is worth noting that the word 'Kaur' means 'princess' and is a middle or surname given to all Sikh girls at birth as a means of promoting equality amongst Sikhs. Sikh boys are given the name 'Singh' or 'lion' in a similar vein.

Despite such teachings, it is evident that the public realm within the Sikh community remains patriarchal. Females are seldom visible in Gurdwara management committees. According to the British Sikh Report 2013, 55% of British Sikh females who experienced gender discrimination did so at their Gurdwara.¹⁰ Young British Sikh females are currently challenging patriarchal dominance in Gurdwaras and actively seek female representation in religious institutions beyond the langar hall (the communal kitchen).

A point to be emphasized however, is that the education of females is greatly encouraged amongst the British Sikh community. Significant numbers of British Sikh females have secured professional occupations as doctors, lawyers, teachers and so forth, and their contribution to household incomes has enabled numerous British Sikh families to afford housing in affluent areas.

As can be seen, the British Sikh community is one which is generally at ease with its own identity, but which nevertheless has numerous concerns which are unique to it as well as held in common with British society as a whole. It is anticipated that the British Sikh Report 2014 will highlight the successes as well as the needs of the present-day British Sikh community.

¹ Ahluwalia, Pal. "At Home in Motion: evolving Sikh identities". *Sikh Formations*. 7:2, (2011): 96.

² Helweg, A. W. (1979). *Sikhs in England: The Development of a Migrant Community*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, p.1.

³ Takhar, Opinderjit Kaur (2005). *Sikh identity: An exploration of Groups amongst Sikhs*. Aldershot: Ashgate, pp. 158-178.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p.32.

⁵ Takhar, Opinderjit Kaur (2014 forthcoming) 'Sikhi(sm) and the Twenty-First Century Sikh Diaspora' in Cohn Sherbok Dan and Christopher Lewis (eds) *Sensible Religion*. Aldershot; Ashgate.

⁶ Available at: <http://www.britishsikhreport.org/british-sikh-report-download-2013> Accessed 15 March 2014.

⁷ Takhar, Opinderjit Kaur (2014) "The Place of Scripture in the Trajectories of a Distinct Religious Identity among Ravidassias in Britain". *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 29:1, pp. 105-120.

⁸ Takhar, Opinderjit Kaur (2011) "The Valmiki, Ravidasi and Namdhari Communities in Britain" in Jacobsen, Knut and Kristina Myrvold (eds) *Sikhs in Europe: Migration, Identities and Representations*. Aldershot: Ashgate, pp. 279-304.

⁹ Takhar, Opinderjit Kaur (2014 forthcoming) 'Sikhi(sm) and the Twenty-First Century Sikh Diaspora' in Cohn Sherbok Dan and Christopher Lewis (eds) *Sensible Religion*. Aldershot; Ashgate.

¹⁰ Available at: <http://www.britishsikhreport.org/british-sikh-report-download-2013> Accessed 21 March 2014.





YOUNG BRITISH SIKHS

Transmission, Identity & Belonging

DR JASJIT SINGH, UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

According to the 2011 UK census, 423,158 Sikhs, approximately 0.7% of the population, currently live in England and Wales. Of these, 105,985 (25%) are between the ages of 15-29 with the majority (56.6%) being British born.¹ Given that the British Sikh community is skewed towards British born young Sikhs, it is important to understand their religious and cultural lives, and how being a young Sikh in Britain impacts on ideas of identity and belonging.

My most recent research project (further details at <http://arts.leeds.ac.uk/jasjitsingh>) which examined the religious lives of young British Sikhs, found that for many, religious identity is becoming increasingly important, supplanting ethnicity as the main label which they use to identify themselves. This can be seen as a consequence of a number of factors. Firstly, many are searching for a robust unchangeable identity in an environment in which other aspects of their lives including families, friends and jobs are constantly changing. As Ammerman (2003: 209) explains, it is “only when human beings begin to be disembedded from traditional spaces and relationships, long-accepted rhythms of time and well-established activities of survival, do we begin to ask such questions as “Who am I?” and “Where do I belong?”. Secondly, despite being born in Britain, as members of a visible minority many young Sikhs are still regularly asked the question “Where are you from?”. Having been raised in a British context and self-identifying as British, many encounter events at school or in their teenage years which cause them to re-assess this identity and to examine their religious and cultural background in depth.

Gathering data through interviews, observation and an online survey my research found that a number of young British Sikhs are now looking to learn about their religion in different ways to their parents. Although the family sets out much of what follows, there is great diversity within Sikh families, with caste and migration history being important points of difference.² Indeed, it is no longer predictable that members of a particular caste attend a particular gurdwara, as many Sikh parents now appear to send their children to gurdwaras which offer the best facilities. The structure of the household also has an impact on socialisation, especially if grandparents live in the same household or close by. Migration history is also an important factor here too, as there are clear differences in the identity practices of ‘direct’ and ‘twice’ migrants. Both factors are linked to the level at which Punjabi is spoken, which in turn influences the type of religious learning which young Sikhs engage with in later life. Further, geography has been shown to be important both for the opportunities of learning about The sikh faith which are open to the family in terms of the gurdwara attended and also for the composition of school classrooms.

My research found that gurdwaras often act as sites which offer young Sikhs an environment within which they can simply ‘be Sikh’. As gurdwaras are not homogenous, the importance they place on religious transmission varies. It is clear that for many gurdwaras organising events for young Sikhs is not a priority, given the low economic return of these events. Formal transmission organised by the older generation is generally regarded as being of poor quality and appears to be far too unstable, being subject to personal grudges and factional politics, much of which young British Sikhs do not understand or wish to engage with. For these reasons, many events organised by young Sikhs are now held outside gurdwaras, in activity centres, schools, and universities.³

These events held outside gurdwaras including camps and university Sikh societies act as places where young Sikhs can get their questions answered in an environment where questioning is allowed. In addition they allow the young Sikhs who organise and staff these events to contribute to their community in a meaningful way. These events enable other young Sikhs to meet lecturers and organisers who then serve as accessible young role models who are close to the attendees in age and who choose to adopt a positive religious identity (Quraishi 2006: 207)⁴

Attendees may in fact have engaged with these role models previously at a gurdwara or youth group and then simply follow them to a camp. In this regard camp attendance is often influenced as much by family background or membership of local peer networks as the wish to follow a particular ideological position.

As a means of religious transmission my research found the Internet acting in two different ways. For those young Sikhs who are unaffiliated and who begin to engage with their tradition online, the Internet affords them a relatively 'safe' space in which they can start to explore their tradition on their own terms without feeling the need to explain why particular topics are being investigated, or particular questions asked. For those who do adhere to a particular ideology or point of view, the Internet can supply well-rehearsed arguments for and against these views, causing some young Sikhs to continue referring to offline elders or authorities to 'check' information they find online.⁵

In summary, young British Sikhs are learning about the Sikh faith in a variety of ways. Although many may no longer attend gurdwaras for formal events or functions, it is important to note that they have not abandoned religious institutions entirely, for the simple reason that gurdwaras can act as spaces which young Sikhs are able to retreat to, in which they are able to simply 'be Sikh'. The new arenas which have been examined offer a whole raft of different types of religious transmission from which young Sikhs are free to pick and choose. The version of the Sikh faith being transmitted however always has its roots in tradition, always looking back to the past to maintain a 'chain of memory' stretching back to the founder of the faith, Guru Nanak. In this regard the story of religious transmission among young British Sikhs is a story of continuity and change as young Sikhs wish to continue engaging with the teachings of the Sikh Gurus whilst constantly changing the ways in which they do so.

¹ <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census/detailed-characteristics-for-local-authorities-in-england-and-wales/rpt---religion.html#tab-Religion-by-country-of-birth>

² See Singh, Jasjit 2012: *Keeping the Faith: Reflections on religious nurture among young British Sikhs*, *Journal of Beliefs and Values*, Volume 33 (3), pp. 369-383

³ Singh, Jasjit 2011: *Sikh-ing Beliefs: British Sikh Camps in the UK* in *Sikhs in Europe: Migration, Identities and Representation* by Knut A. Jacobsen and Kristina Myrvold (eds.) Ashgate

⁴ QURAIISHI, Amira. 2006. *Making Safe Space for Questioning for Young American Muslims*. In: HEFT, J. *Passing on the Faith: Transforming Traditions for the Next Generation of Jews, Christians, and Muslims*. New York: Fordham University Press.

⁵ For further details see Singh, Jasjit 2014: *Sikh-ing online: the role of the Internet in the religious lives of young British Sikhs*, *Contemporary South Asia*, Volume 22 (1), pp. 82-97



The approach taken in the preparation of the British Sikh Report 2014's research is outlined here, with special reference being made to the design of the questionnaire, the compiling of the questions, the demographics which were targeted, and the delivery of the questionnaire, including the manner in which it was publicised.

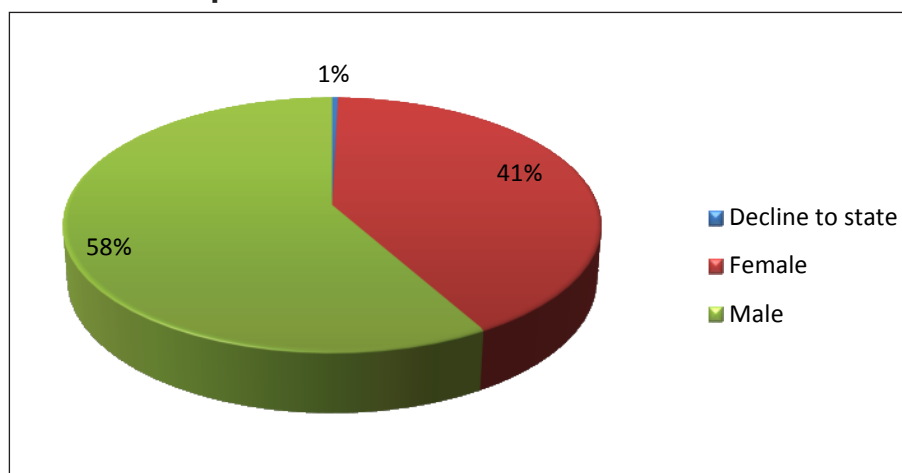
QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

Following the success of the BSR 2013, consultations took place to see how the questionnaire for the BSR 2014 could be improved. A number of matters were discussed, including a reduction in the number of question areas, a focus on demographic questions in order to improve the consistency for future BSRs, and a simplification of the questions.

When looking at the question areas, the BSR team considered issues which have an impact on a local level, such as education and policing, as well as creating questions to explore the identity of British Sikhs from a religious and cultural perspective and consider the collective wealth of the British Sikh community as a whole. Such questions were deemed by the BSR team to be important in order to see what the make up of the contemporary British Sikh community is.

As per the BSR 2013, the majority of the questions were 'categorical', sometimes taking the form of likert scales to gauge the opinions of respondents. The reason why such questions formed the majority of the questionnaire was in order to make the analysis of the BSR 2014 a far simpler task than was the case for the BSR 2013. The number of open questions, where the respondent could answer using free text, was reduced greatly for the very same reason.

Gender of Respondents



757 people responded to the BSR 2014, an increase of 14% from the number of respondents for the BSR 2013. Of that 757 people, 742 were Sikhs who live in the UK. The BSR 2014's results are based on those 742 respondents, which provides a sufficiently large sample size (0.17%) to allow significant statistical findings to be made. This is based on the Census 2011 figures for 430,000 Sikhs in the United Kingdom.

In respect of sample sizes, one should bear in mind the samples used by polling agencies when considering voting intentions for the British public in the run up to elections. The number of people in the UK who are registered to vote is approximately 47 million, whilst the samples that are used by polling agencies to gauge voter opinions are typically in the region of 2,000 people (lower than 0.005% of that grouping). In comparison, a sample of 0.17% of a grouping is a far stronger sample size which will allow for greater insight into that grouping.

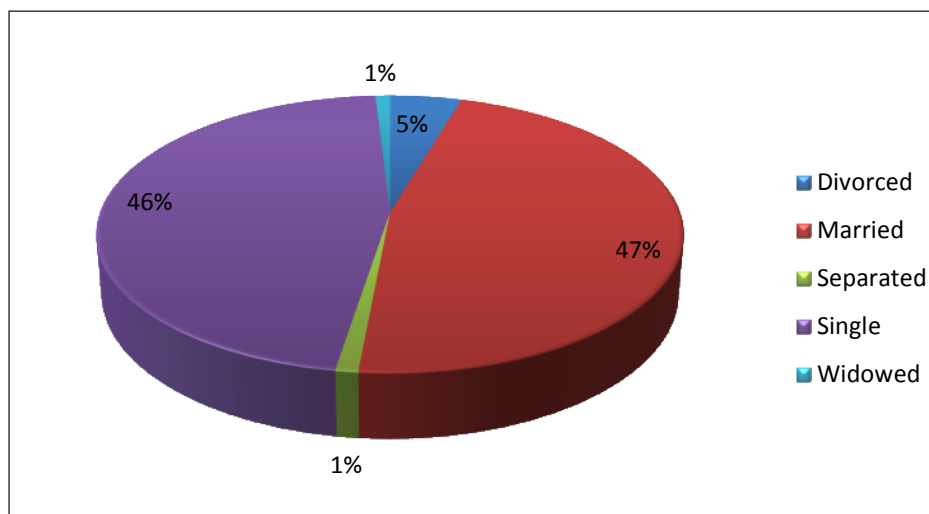


The gender balance amongst the respondents has improved since the BSR 2013, but there is still much improvement to be made. 41% of the respondents were female, 58% were male, and 1% of respondents declined to state their gender.

29% of respondents were from the Midlands, whilst 41% of respondents were based in London. According to the Census 2011, 41% of British Sikhs live in the Midlands and 29% live in London, so there is obviously still some engagement work to be done in order to reflect the true geographical distribution of British Sikhs. However, the number of Midlands respondents has increased significantly since the BSR 2013 and it is hoped that this improvement will continue over time.

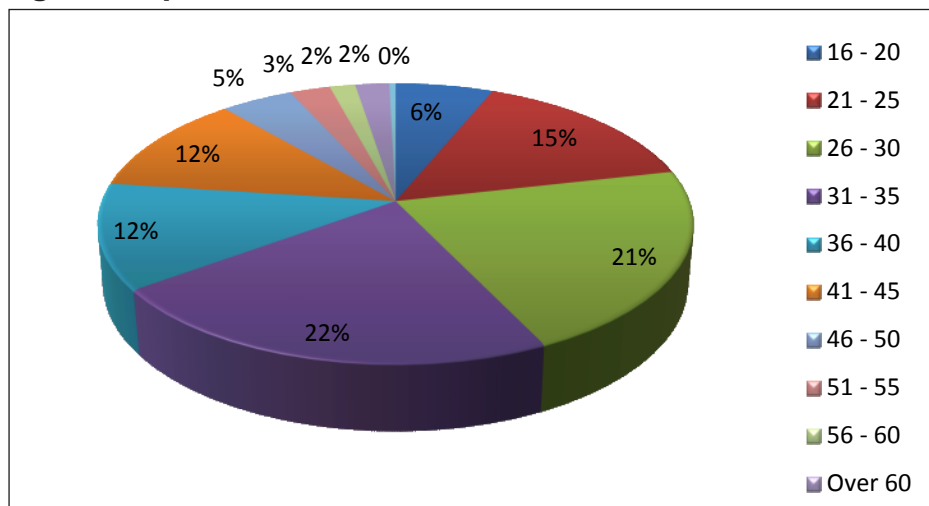
In the BSR 2014, 60% of the respondents were employed and a further 15% were self-employed. The number of employed has increased by 3% since the BSR 2013, whilst the number of self-employed respondents has remained unchanged.

Marital Status of Respondents



The marital status of respondents was also varied, as can be seen in the above chart.

Age of Respondents



Age	Number of Respondents
16 - 20	46
21 - 25	113
26 - 30	159
31 - 35	164
36 - 40	90
41 - 45	86
46 - 50	34
51 - 55	19
56 - 60	12
Over 60	16
Under 16	3
Grand Total	742

The majority of the respondents (88%) were between the ages of 16 and 45 years of age. According to the Census 2011, the percentage of the adult British Sikh population (i.e. above the age of 16) between the ages of 16 and 44 years is 60%. One should bear in mind that one in five British Sikhs are under the age of 16, and that the British Sikh population aged 16 or over is in the region of 343,000.

One area of development for future reports is for greater engagement with people over the age of 45, especially as it is clear that the respondents to the BSR 2014 are primarily under that age.



ONLINE DELIVERY OF QUESTIONNAIRES

The BSR questionnaire was exclusively available online, and this followed in the vein of numerous polling and market research organisations that conduct their questionnaires online such as ComRes, YouGov and Demos. Online polling is gaining currency within the polling industry and becoming an accurate means of gathering data on various groups and demographics.

A form of snowballing sampling was used, with people completing the questionnaire being encouraged to share it with their friends and family. The BSR team were aware of the limitations that would be imposed by restricting the questionnaire to the internet, namely exclusion of individuals who may not be computer literate or have access to the internet. Due to budget and time restraints, this was considered to be the most effective and efficient manner in which to collate responses.

The internet is widely used by the British Sikh community. According to the Internet Access Quarterly Update from the Office of National Statistics, 87% of the British population uses the internet as of December 2013. Many Sikhs in the UK live in a household with extended family members (as is explored later in this report), and at least one person within each household will have regular access to the internet. It was expected that the more technologically aware members of the family would help elder members in answering the questionnaire in the same manner in which such members would assist their elder family in completing other forms and documents such as voter registration and the Census 2011.

The online delivery of the questionnaire was achieved through partnerships with a variety of Sikh and non-Sikh organisations. A number of stalls were set up at various places where British Sikhs had gathered, including social events and at gurdwaras, in order to encourage people to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire was made available in a smartphone and tablet/iPad friendly format so that such outreach would be easy to achieve. However, it was only possible to implement this outreach on a small scale due to the lack of volunteers and time limitations of the BSR team.

As per the approach taken in the BSR 2013, no personally identifiable details were collected at any stage during this research. Instead, respondents were asked to join a separate mailing list in order to stay informed about the BSR in which they were solely asked to provide their email address.

Social media played a key role in the dissemination of the BSR questionnaire, with Facebook promotion contributing 38% of total number of respondents. Facebook adverts were also implemented for the first time. This provided the BSR team a cost effective marketing approach with a wide reach into the British Sikh community. BSR partners also helped in spreading the questionnaire and marketing the BSR project to Sikhs throughout the UK. Below is a summary of the key marketing channels used to deliver the questionnaire.

How did you hear about the BSR Questionnaire?

Gurdwara	1%
Facebook	38%
Twitter	19%
City Sikhs Newsletter	16%
Word of Mouth	14%
Other	12%



ANALYSIS

The data was analysed over a period of 6 weeks with help from BSR team members who had an academic or financial analytical background. The analysis of data was a methodical process of inspecting, normalising, transforming and modelling the raw data with the goal of highlighting uses information, suggesting themes, and supporting deeper thought.

The BSR questionnaire was primarily formed of quantitative and categorical data, which required a stage of data cleaning, so the quality of 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 the BSR data visualisation was to communicate the findings clearly and effectively through graphical means. This resulted in having to provide insights into a rather sparse and complex data set by communicating its key aspects in a more straightforward and easily understandable manner. Great effort was made to achieve a balance between form and function in order to communicate valuable information.

LIMITATIONS AND AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

The BSR has continued to grow as the largest research study conducted specifically on Sikhs living in the UK. Even so, with this being the second in the series there are undoubtedly limitations and areas for improvement. These will now be discussed.

FOCUS ON CATEGORICAL AND QUANTITATIVE DATA

The questions asked as part of the BSR 2014 have resulted massively 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.

LANGUAGE

The questionnaire was only provided in English. However, it is anticipated that the next BSR will be made available in Punjabi/ Gurmukhi in order to engage in particular with the elderly within the British Sikh community whose understanding of English may not be as strong as that amongst the younger generations.

RESPONSES FROM SCOTLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND

According to the Census 2011, Sikhs in Scotland account for just under 1.8% of British Sikhs. The number of respondents from Scotland was 1.8%, and therefore the BSR is representative of Scottish Sikhs.

Sikhs living in Wales make up 0.7% of the British Sikh population. The number of Welsh respondents to the BSR 2014 was 0.54%, which is an improvement from the BSR 2013 but which means that the BSR remains slightly under representative of Welsh Sikhs.

Once again, there were no responses from Northern Ireland. The Northern Irish Sikh population is 0.005% of the British Sikh community.

Improvements need to be made in respect of engagement with Sikhs from Wales and Northern Ireland in order to build upon the current knowledge and awareness of Sikhs in the UK.



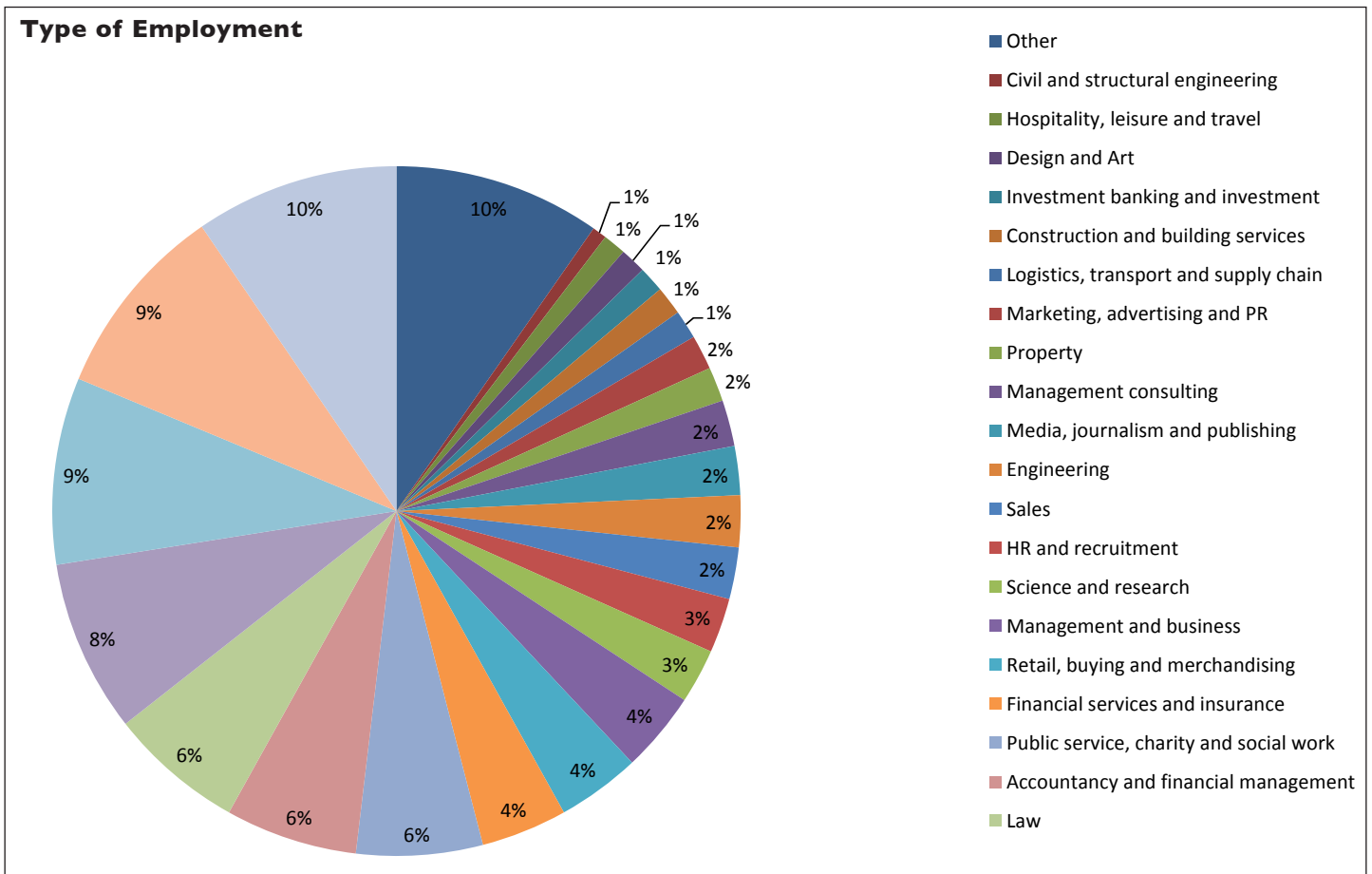
EMPLOYMENT DEMOGRAPHICS

EMPLOYMENT DEMOGRAPHICS

- **9% of respondents are involved in Teaching and Education**
- **Healthcare (9%) and IT/Technology (10%) continue to attract British Sikhs as professions**
- **6% of respondents work in the Third Sector**

The employment backgrounds of the respondents were varied. Some British Sikhs continue to be attracted to the traditional industries of Healthcare (9%), IT and Technology (10%), Accountancy/Financial Management (6%), and Law (6%).

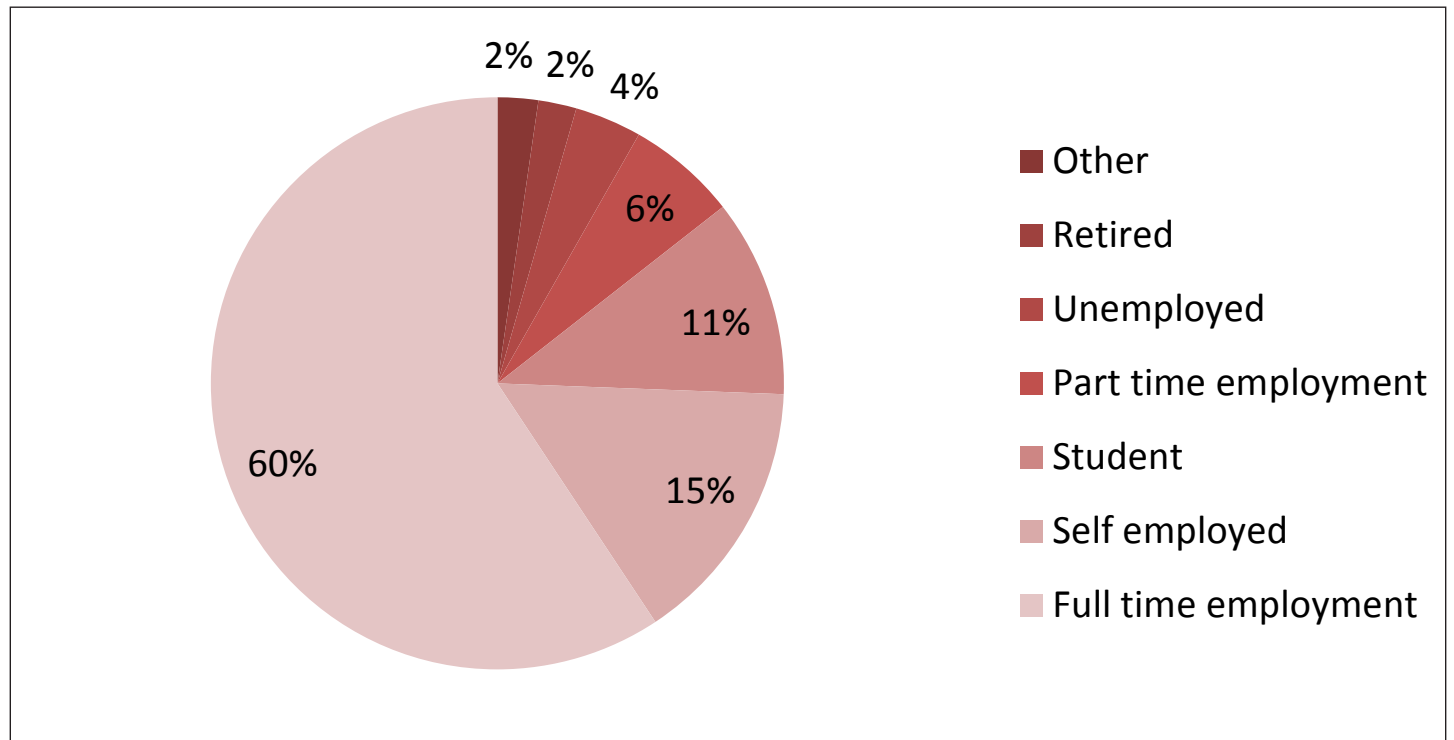
However, 9% of respondents are involved in Teaching and Education, an industry which has not traditionally been associated with British Sikhs.



Accountancy and financial management	6%	Management and business	4%
Civil and structural engineering	1%	Management consulting	2%
Construction and building services	1%	Marketing, advertising and PR	2%
Consumer goods and FMCG	0%	Media, journalism and publishing	2%
Design and Art	1%	Property	2%
Engineering	2%	Public service, charity and social work	6%
Financial services and insurance	4%	Quantity surveying & building surveying	1%
Healthcare	9%	Retail, buying and merchandising	4%
Hospitality, leisure and travel	1%	Sales	2%
HR and recruitment	3%	Science and research	3%
Investment banking and investment	1%	Teaching and education	9%
IT and technology	10%	Not applicable	8%
Law	6%	Other	9%
Logistics, transport and supply chain	1%		

60% of the respondents were employed and a further 15% were self-employed. 6% were in part-time employment. The number of employed has increased by 3% since the BSR 2013, whilst the number of self-employed respondents has remained unchanged. The number of unemployed Sikhs is low at 4%.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS



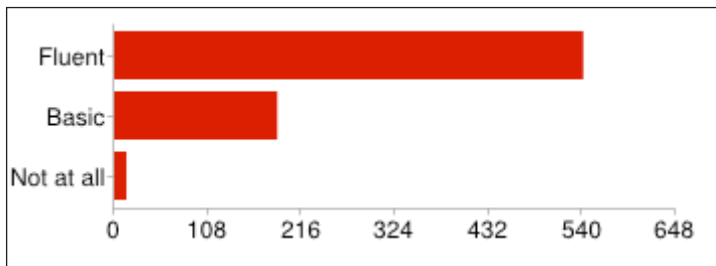


LANGUAGES

LANGUAGES

- **73% of British Sikhs are bilingual (able to speak fluently in English and Punjabi)**
- **26% of respondents can write well or very well in Gurmukhi/Punjabi**
- **Two-thirds of British Sikhs (67%) can speak basic or fluent Hindi.**

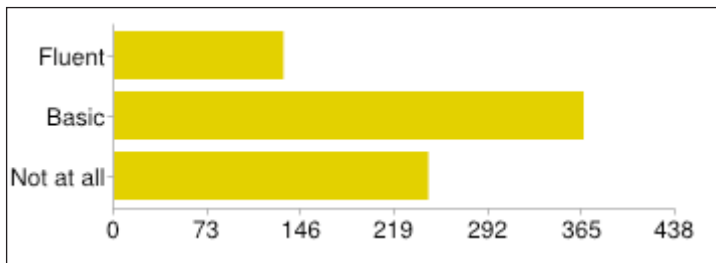
Punjabi [Do you speak any of the following languages?]



Fluent	73%
Basic	25%
Not at all	2%

The British Sikh community is one which is majority bilingual, with almost three-quarters (73%) able to speak both English and Punjabi fluently.

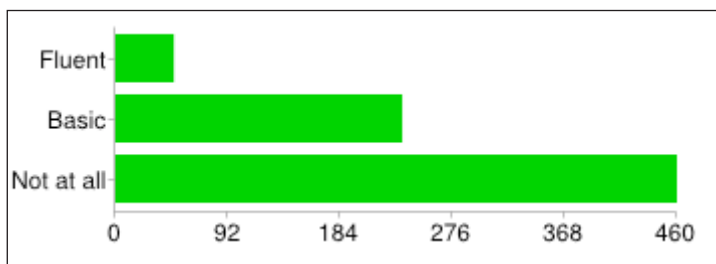
Hindi [Do you speak any of the following languages?]



Fluent	18%
Basic	49%
Not at all	33%

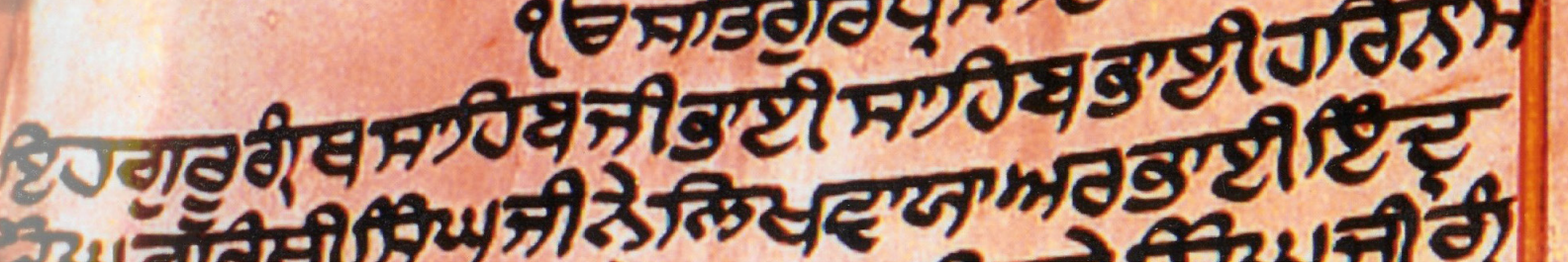
Due to the close linguistic relationship between Punjabi and Hindi, it is not very surprising that the majority of British Sikhs can speak at least basic Hindi. The popularity of Bollywood cinema and music upon the South Asian diaspora community may also have an impact upon this.

Urdu [Do you speak any of the following languages?]

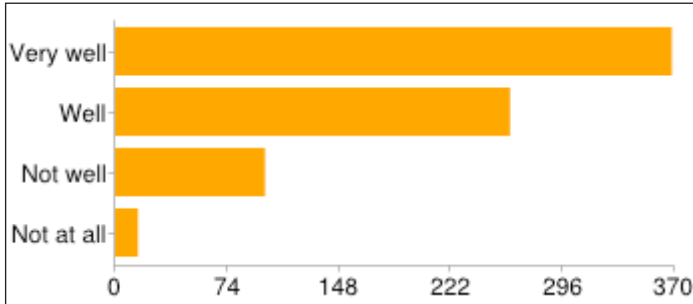


Fluent	6%
Basic	32%
Not at all	62%

There is great similarity between Hindi and Urdu as a spoken language. The two languages when spoken colloquially are deemed so close by many linguists that they are often viewed as being the same language but with different scripts and different sources for loan words (Sanskrit for Hindi and Persian/Arabic for Urdu). The distinction between Hindi and Urdu amongst the respondents may have more to do with a lack of exposure of the respondents to spoken Urdu for a number of different reasons, thus leading to an unawareness of the similarity between the languages.

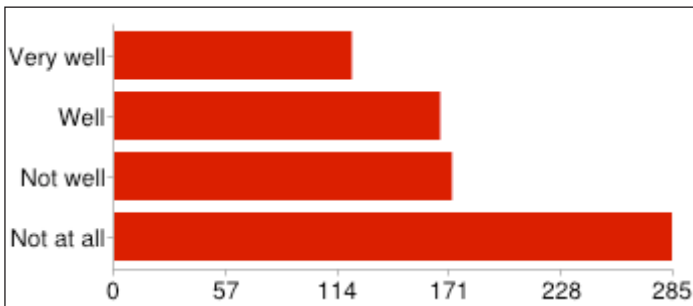


Speaking [How well can you do the following in Punjabi/Gurmukhi?]



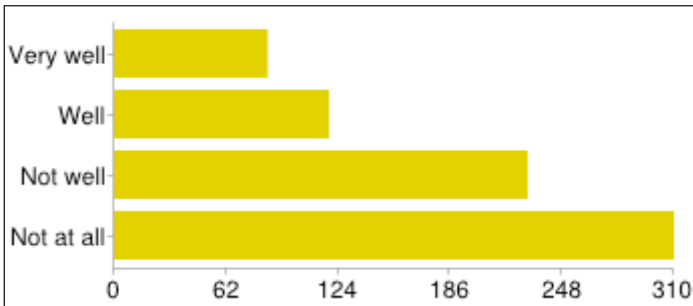
Very well	50%
Well	35%
Not well	13%
Not at all	2%

Reading [How well can you do the following in Punjabi/Gurmukhi?]



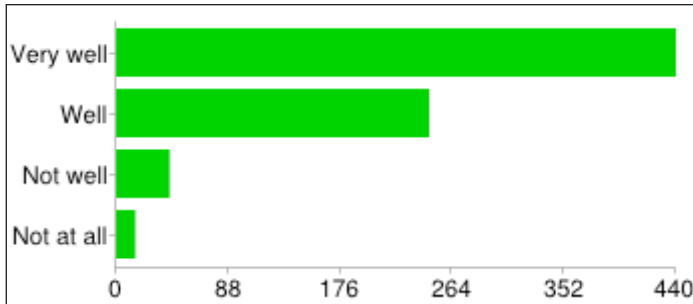
Very well	16%
Well	22%
Not well	23%
Not at all	38%

Writing [How well can you do the following in Punjabi/Gurmukhi?]



Very well	11%
Well	16%
Not well	31%
Not at all	42%

Listening [How well can you do the following in Punjabi/Gurmukhi?]

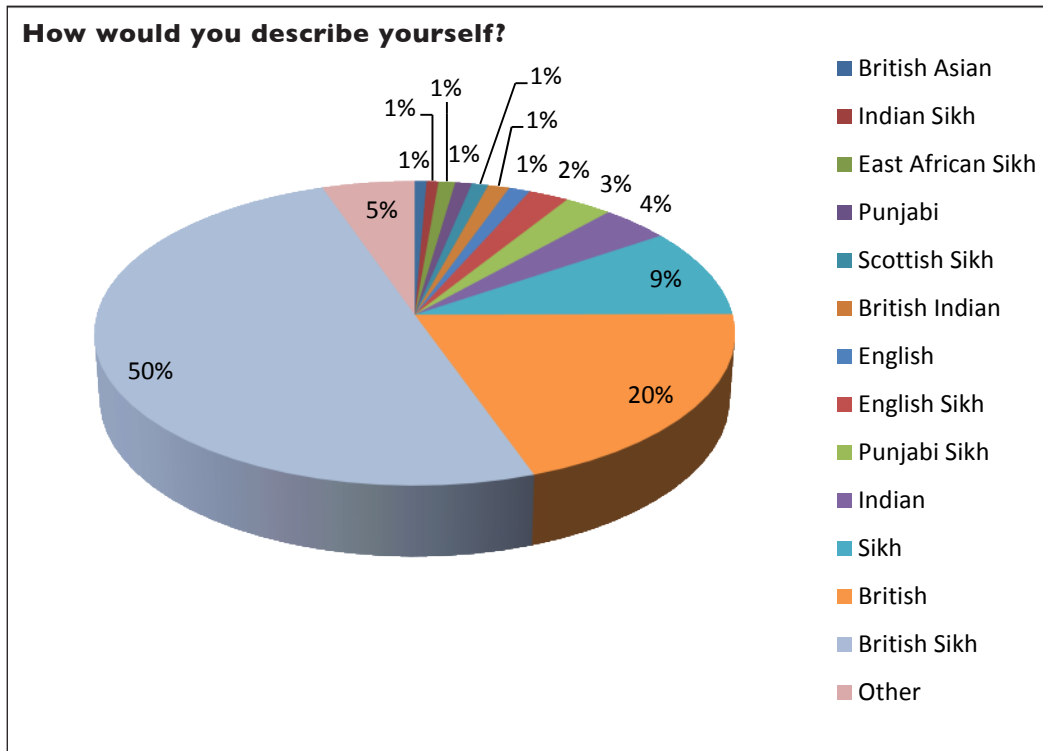


Very well	59%
Well	33%
Not well	6%
Not at all	2%

From the above data, it is clear that Punjabi has become more of a spoken or oral language amongst the British Sikh community than a language which the majority of British Sikhs can write in or read. More British Sikhs can understand Punjabi well or very well (92%) than can speak it well or very well (85%). Only one in four British Sikhs (26%) can write in Punjabi/Gurmukhi well or very well.

SELF-IDENTITY

- **70% of Sikhs in the UK self-identify as British or British Sikh**
- **Half of respondents from Scotland consider themselves ‘Scottish Sikhs’**
- **Only 1% of Sikhs describe themselves as British Asian.**



50% of respondents identified as British Sikh, a figure which remains unchanged from last year.

Whilst the term ‘British Asian’ is very popular within the media and other sections of British society when describing the South Asian diaspora in the UK, Sikhs in the UK appear to reject that as a term of self-identity, with only 1% of respondents describing themselves as British Asian.

The regional identity of Sikhs in the UK seems to be less strong on the BSR 2014 than it was last year. Nevertheless, over half of the respondents from Scotland are content with self-identifying as ‘Scottish Sikh’. The Scottish Sikh community is one which remains proud of its distinctness, a fact that will surely play a part in how Sikhs will vote in the Scottish Referendum in September 2014.

9% of respondents described themselves as merely being Sikh without any national identification.





HOUSEHOLD STATISTICS

HOUSEHOLD STATISTICS

- **The 'Sikh Pound' is worth £7.63billion**
- **47% of British Sikhs live in multi-generational households**
- **87% of British Sikh households are home-owners**
- **34% of British Sikh households have an income of over £80,000 per year**

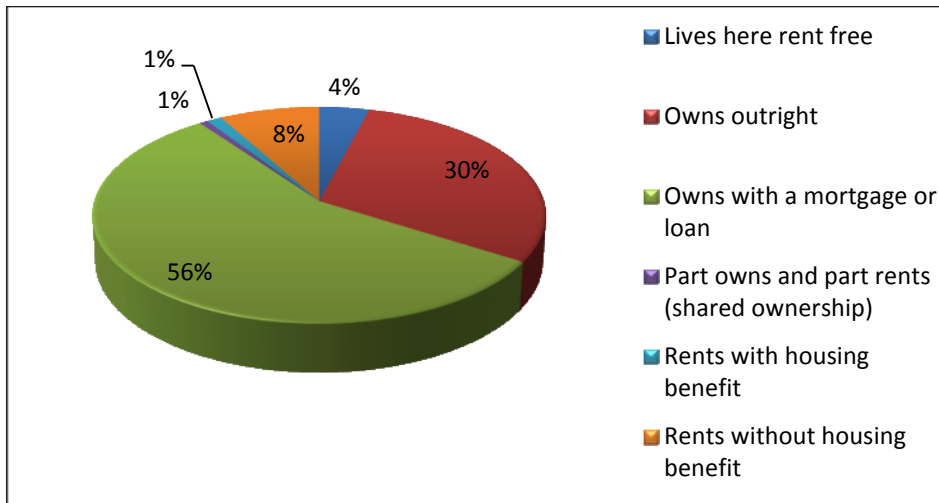
Who do you live with in your home?

	Partner or Spouse	Mother or Father	Brothers and-or Sisters	Grandparents (Mother's Parents)	Grandparents (Father's Parents)	Uncles and-or Aunts	Children	Nephews and-or Nieces	Friends	Other tenants	Landlord	
Live with	365	350	310	264	10	49	6	257	25	21	24	11
Percentage	49%	47%	42%	36%	1%	7%	1%	35%	3%	3%	3%	1%

British Sikhs still appear to be retaining their strong family links, with almost half of them (47%) living with at least one parent and 36% living in the same household as their siblings. 8% of British Sikhs live with their grandparents.

Half of British Sikhs (49%) live with their partner or spouse.

Does your household own your home?



Home ownership amongst Sikhs remains very high, with 87% of British Sikh households owning at least a portion of their home.

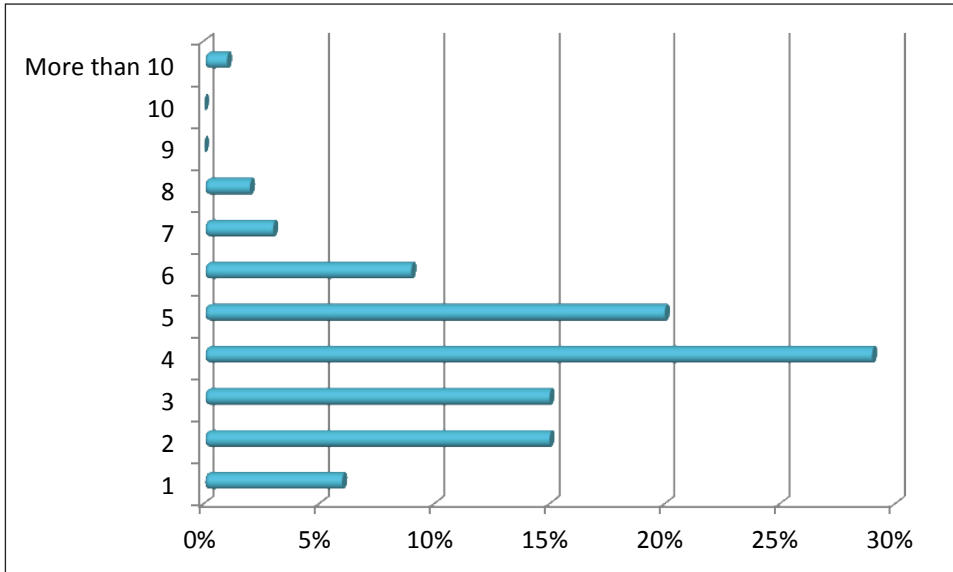
30% of British Sikh households own their homes outright.

Very few British Sikhs (9%) rent their properties.

Only 1% of British Sikhs are housing benefit claimants.

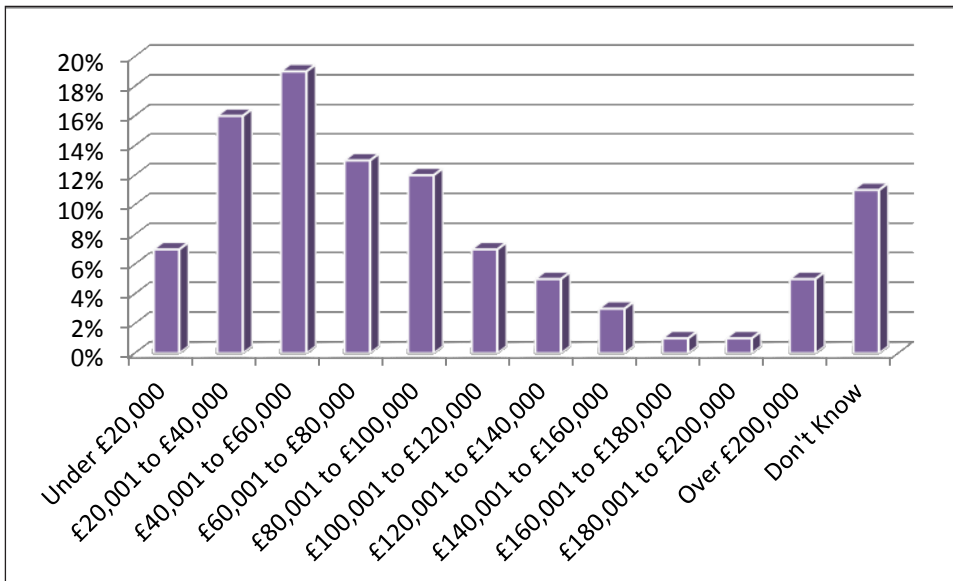


How many people live in your household (including yourself)?



Over half of all British Sikh households (55%) have four or fewer members living together. 29% of British Sikhs are living in a household of four people, whereas 20% live in a household of five people. 1% of British Sikh households have over 10 members.

Total household income before tax



According to the ONS, the national average income for British households is approximately £40,000 before tax. From these results, it is clear that British Sikh households tend to be affluent.

Two in every three British Sikh households (66%) have pre-tax incomes in excess of £40,000, and over a third of British Sikh households (34%) has an income in excess of £80,000.

The above figures have been used to extrapolate the strength of the Sikh Pound. The average British Sikh household comprises of about 4.3 members. Applying that to the figures above, the Sikh Pound is worth £7.63 billion.

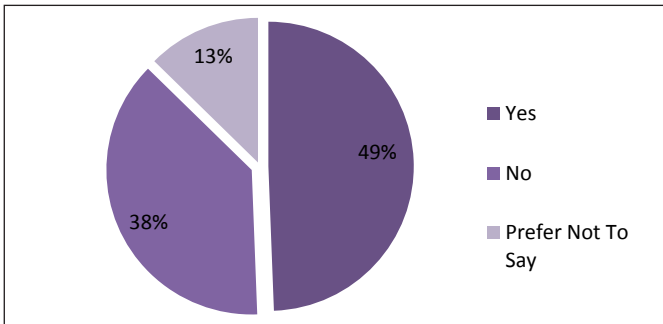


PROPERTY & BUSINESS

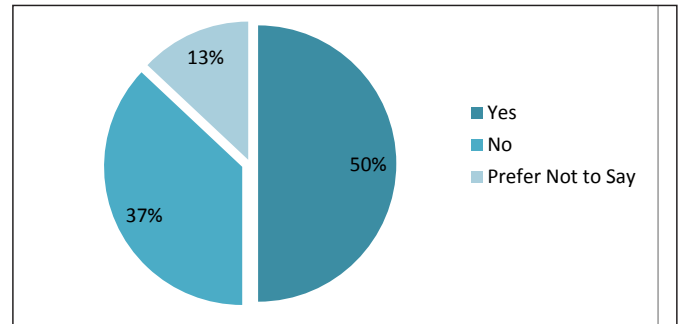
PROPERTY & BUSINESS

- **49% of British Sikh families own more than one property in the UK**
- **Half of British Sikh families (50%) own property in India**
- **One in every three British Sikh families own a business**

Do you or your family own any other property in the UK?



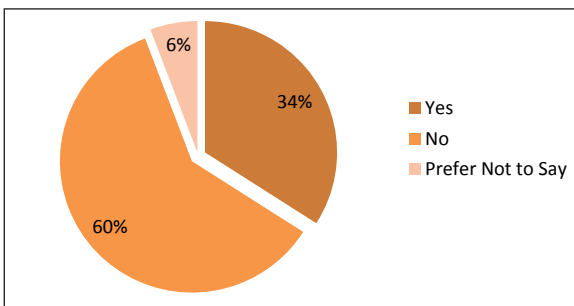
Do you or your family own any property in India?



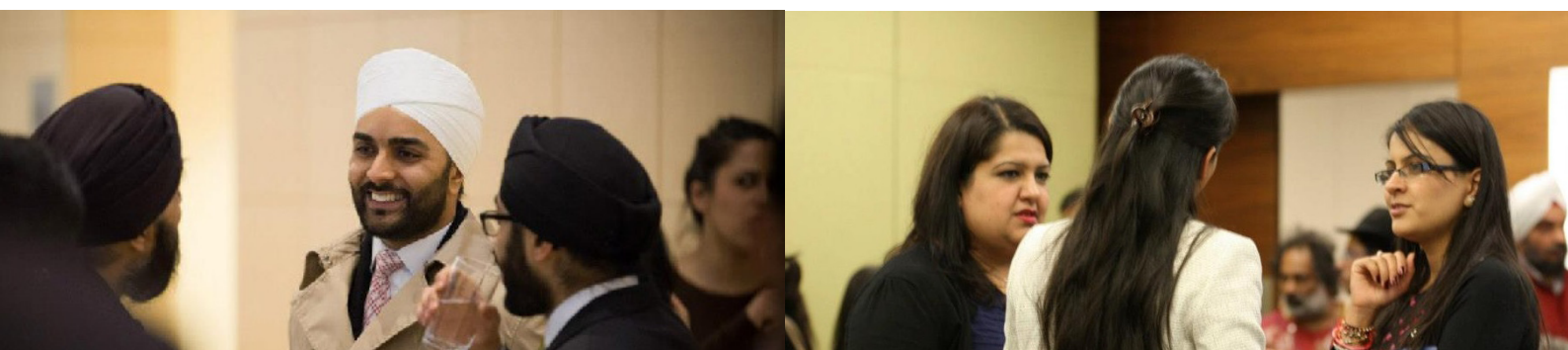
Half of all British Sikh families (49%) own more than one property in the UK, with a similar number (50%) owning at least one property in the India. British Sikh families appear to use property as a means of building assets for the future.

6% of respondents also said that their family own property elsewhere in Europe.

Do you or your family own any businesses in the UK?



British Sikhs are leading entrepreneurs, with 34% of British Sikh families owning at least one business in the UK.



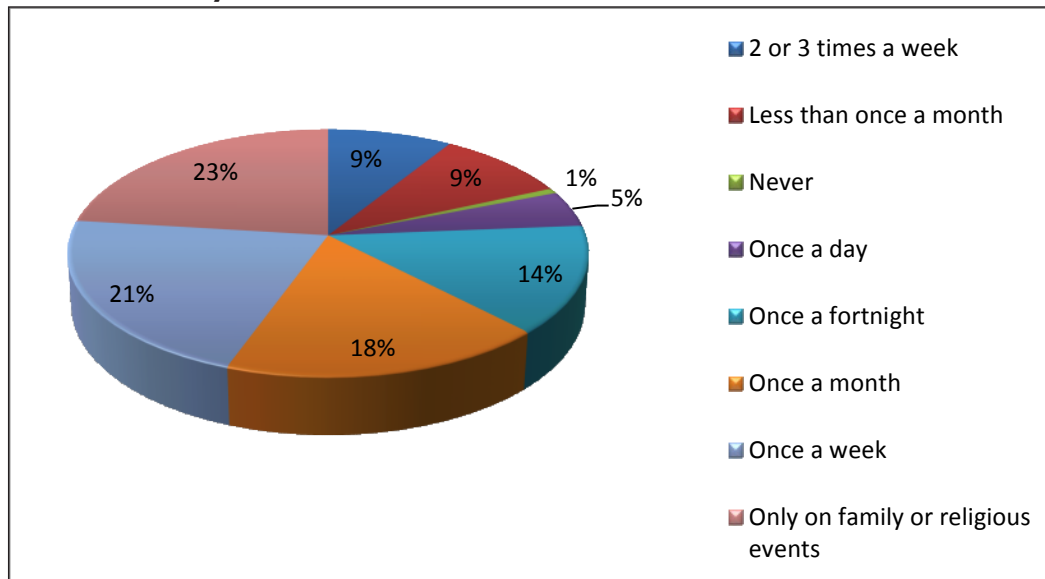


RELIGION & FAITH

RELIGION AND FAITH

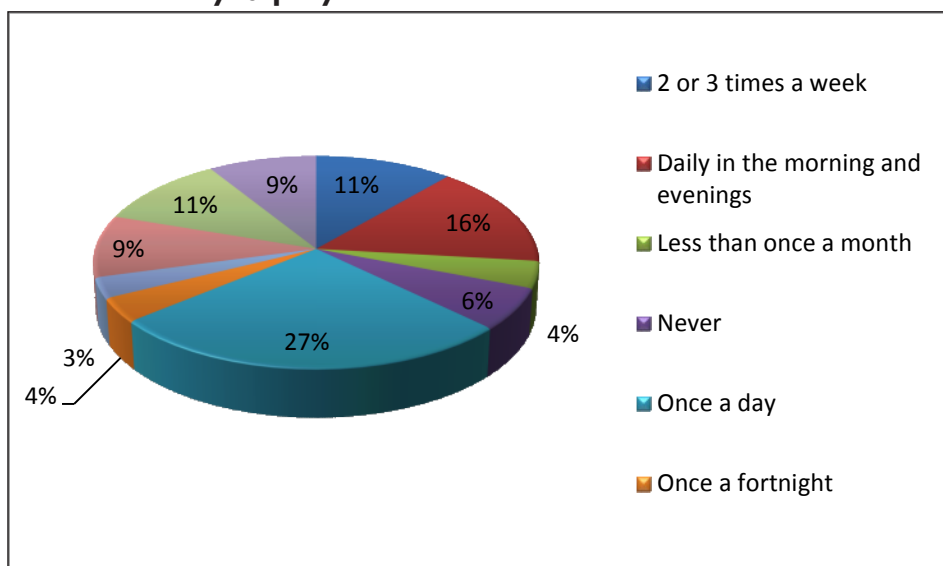
- **35% of British Sikhs go to the gurdwara (Sikh place of worship) at least once a week**
- **52% of respondents pray or meditate at least once a day**
- **80% of British Sikhs would be comfortable if a close family member married somebody of a different caste**

How often do you visit the Gurdwara?



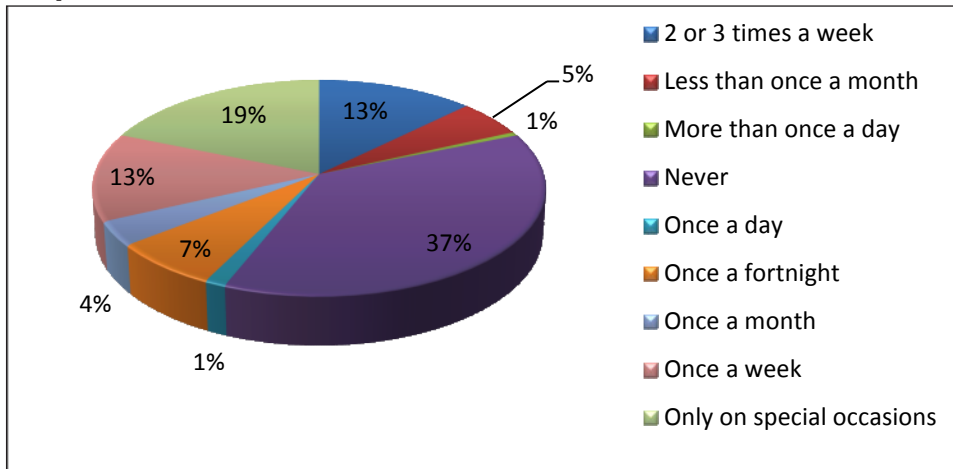
British Sikhs continue to frequent gurdwaras on a regular basis, with over a third visiting a gurdwara at least once a week. Only 1% of British Sikhs never visit the gurdwara, whilst almost one in four only visit the gurdwara for special occasions such as family or religious events.

How often do you pray or meditate?



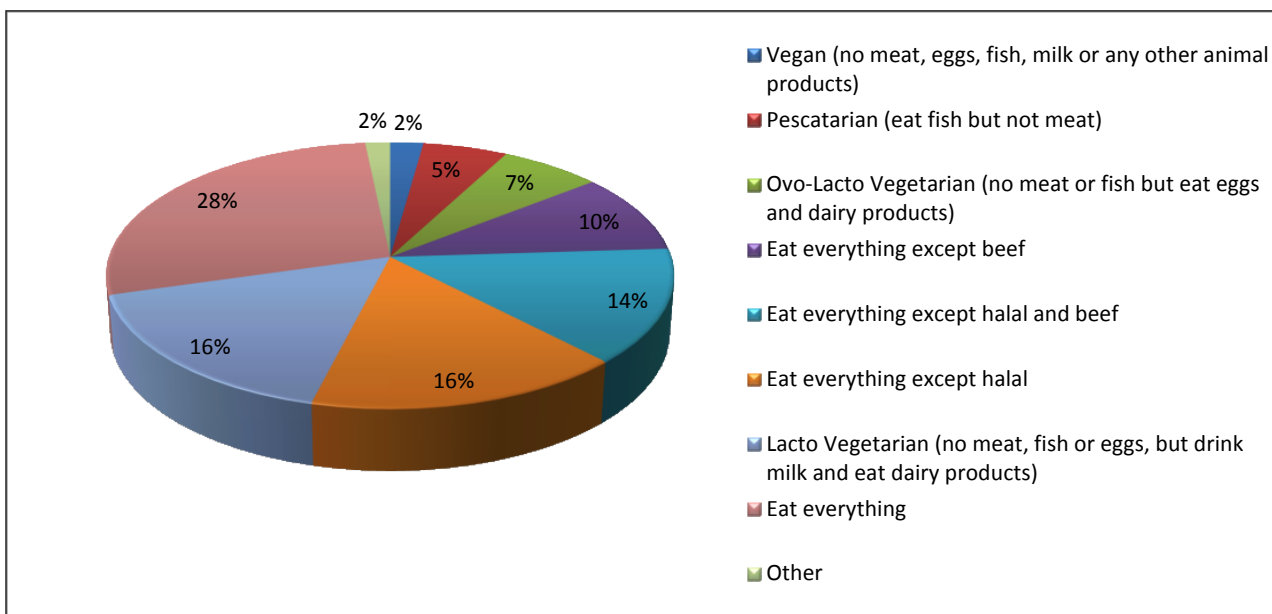
The majority of respondents (52%) pray or meditate at least once a day. 11% only do so at family or religious events, and 6% never pray or meditate.

Do you drink alcohol? If so, how often?



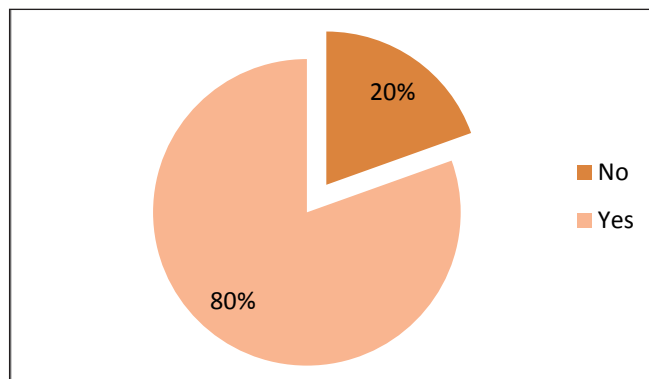
37% of British Sikhs never drink alcohol, whilst 28% drink alcohol at least once a week. A further 19% only drink alcohol on special occasions.

What type of diet do you have?



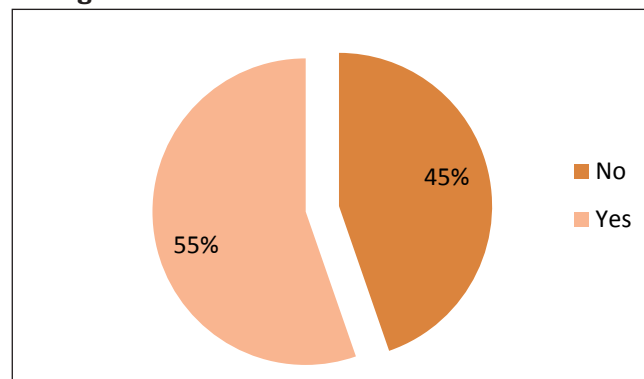
27% of British Sikhs are vegetarians, whilst a similar number (28%) eat all forms of meat. 44% of British Sikh meat eaters do not eat halal meat, and 35% of British Sikh meat eaters do not eat beef.

Comfortable with a close family member marrying outside of caste:



80% of British Sikhs would feel comfortable if a close member of their family married somebody from a different caste.

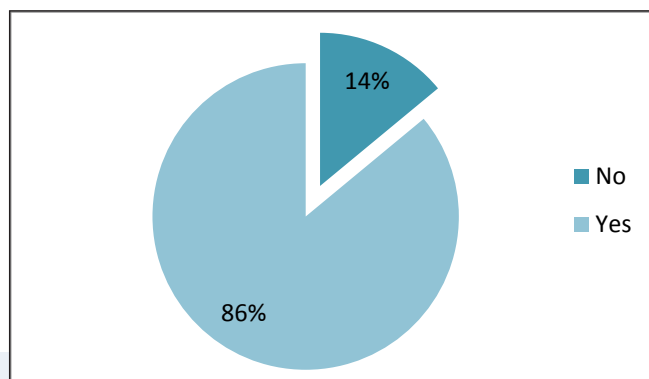
Comfortable with a close family member marrying outside of somebody of a non-Sikh background:



55% of British Sikhs would feel comfortable if a close member of their family married somebody from a non-Sikh background.

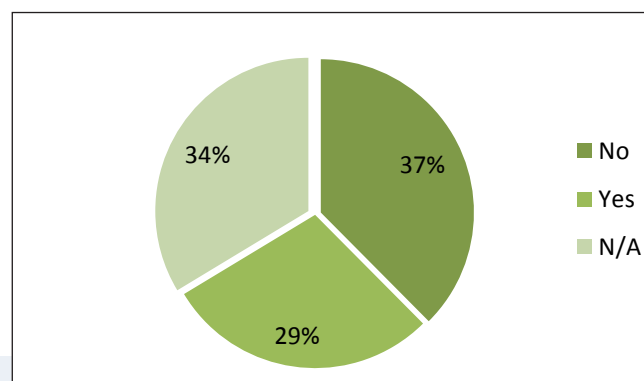
The next set of questions were to find out the ranges of religiosity of British Sikhs. The ranges include Sikhs who wear a steel bangle (the most common of the articles of faith for Sikhs), Sikhs who keep long uncut hair, Sikhs who do not cut or trim their facial hair, and Amritdhari Sikhs (who have been initiated into the Khalsa, the collective body of Sikhs forming the initiated core of the faith as founded by the last of the living Sikh Gurus over 300 years ago).

Do you wear a Kara?



86% of British Sikhs wear a kara (a steel bangle which forms one of the 5 Ks or articles of faith of the Khalsa, and the most common article of faith worn by Sikhs).

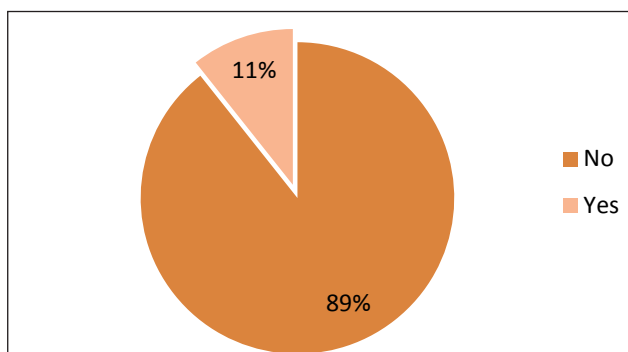
If you keep long hair, do you trim or cut it ?



29% of British Sikhs keep long and uncut/untrimmed hair (another of the 5 Ks or articles of faith).

50% of British Sikh respondents who keep facial hair do not trim or cut it.

Do you wear a Kirpan?



11% of British Sikh respondents wear the Kirpan (a small sheathed ceremonial dagger which is one of the 5 Ks or articles of faith). The Kirpan is almost exclusively worn by Sikhs who have been initiated into the Khalsa. This provides an insight into the number of British Sikhs who are members of the Khalsa (approximately 45,000 throughout the UK).



FAITH SCHOOLS

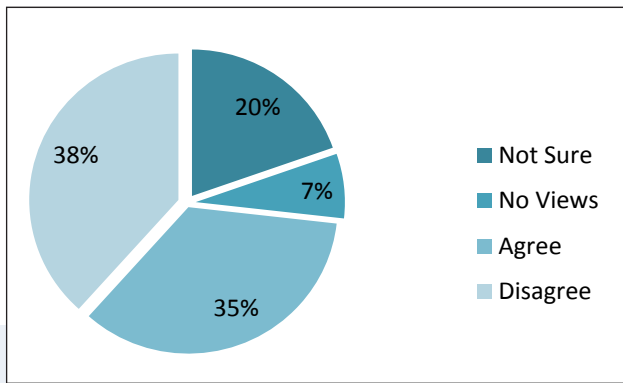
FAITH SCHOOLS

- **38% of British Sikhs would send their children to a Sikh faith school**
- **49% of British Sikhs believe that at least a quarter of pupils in faith schools should belong to a different faith**
- **80% of British Sikhs believe that Religious Education (RE) should be compulsory in all schools**

Faith schools remain a contentious issue within British society, and these questions were asked in order to see what the attitudes of British Sikhs are towards faith schools.

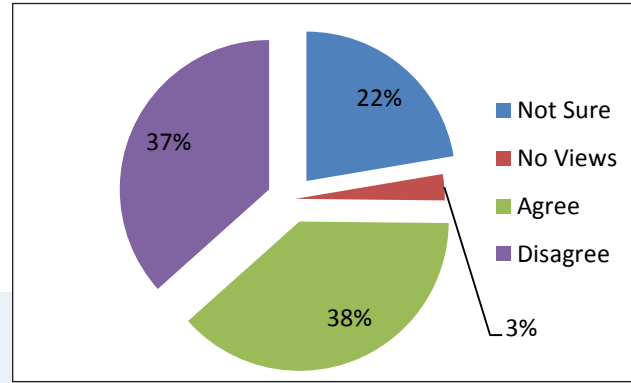
For the purposes of these questions, references to 'faith schools' were explained to the respondents as meaning all schools which are set up, established or run by a faith community, regardless as to whether such school is actually a faith school, an academy or a free school.

“Faith schools should be funded by the State”



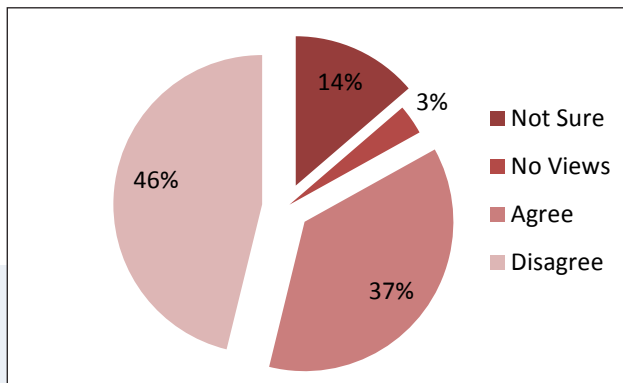
35% of British Sikhs believe that faith schools should be funded by the state, with 38% disagreeing with state funding.

“I send/would send my child to a Sikh faith school”



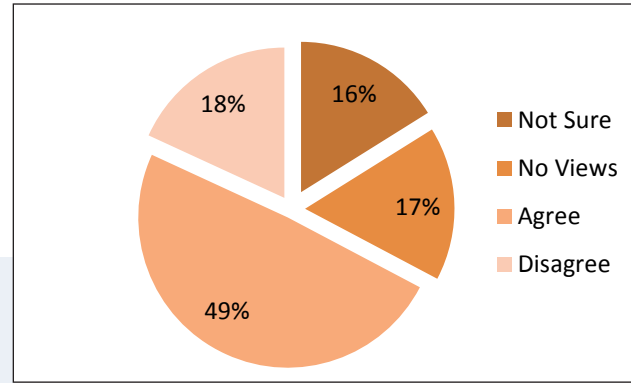
38% of British Sikhs wish to send their children to a Sikh faith school, whilst a similar number (37%) do not wish to do so.

“No religious group should have its own schools”



46% of British Sikhs disagreed with the statement that 'No religious group should have its own faith schools'.

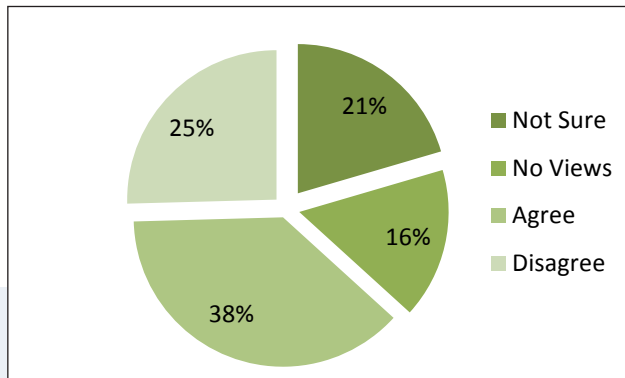
“Faith schools should have at least 25% of pupils who don't belong to that faith”



Half of British Sikhs (49%) stated that faith schools should have at least 25% of pupils who do not belong to that faith.

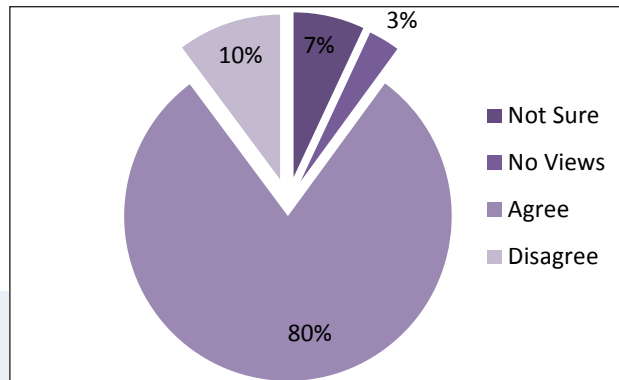


“Faith schools should have at least 50% of pupils who don’t belong to that faith”



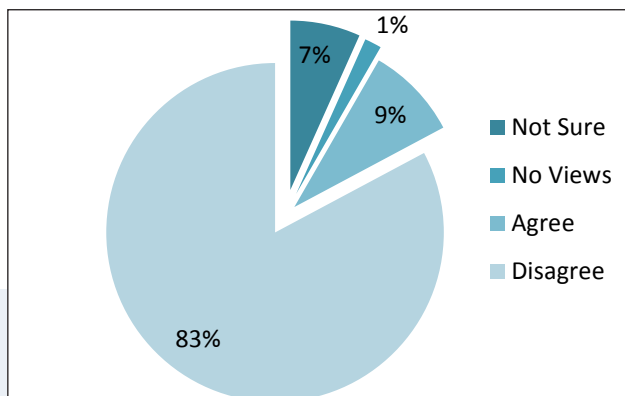
38% of British Sikhs believe that faith schools should have at least 50% of pupils who do not belong to that faith.

“Religious Education should be a compulsory subject at schools and be taught in detail”



80% of British Sikhs said that Religious Education should be a compulsory subject at schools and be taught in detail.

“Religion has no place in schools”

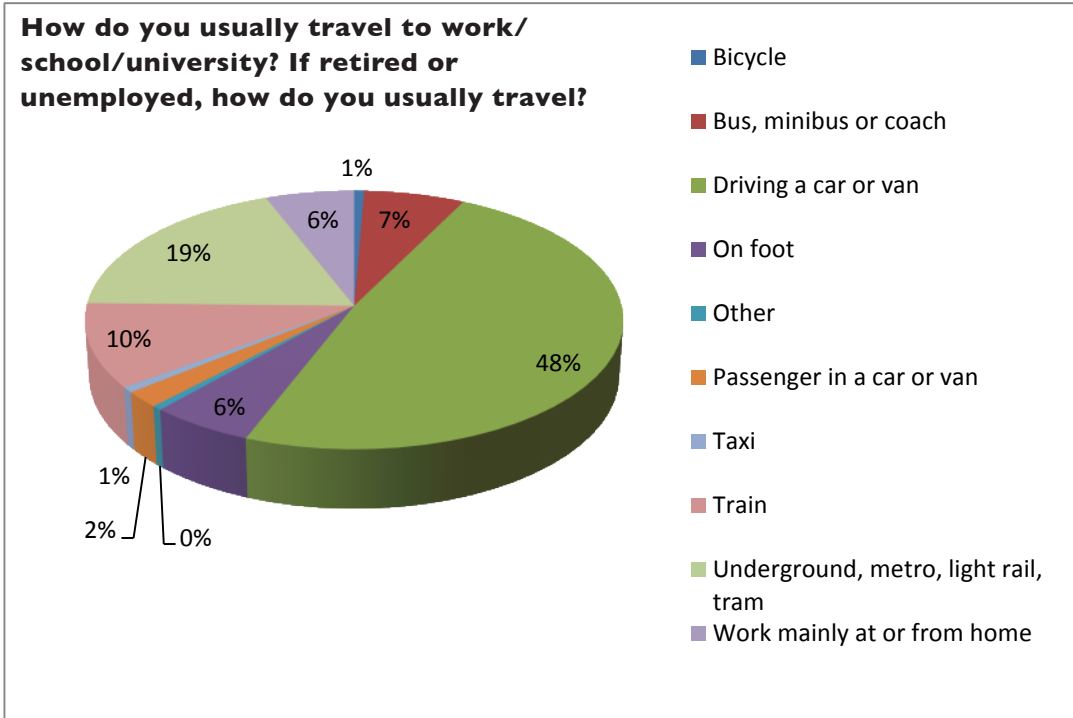


83% of British Sikhs disagreed with the statement that ‘Religion has no place in schools’.

As is very clear from the above, the vast majority of British Sikhs see the importance of teaching religion in schools and they want RE to remain on the National Curriculum as a compulsory subject. British Sikhs are also broadly in support of faith schools. Half of British Sikhs with views on this subject would choose to send their children to a Sikh faith school. However, 49% British Sikhs also want to ensure that there is a suitably diverse mix of pupils attending faith schools.

TRANSPORT

- **Half of all British Sikhs (50%) make their commute by car or van**
- **50% of respondents would be more likely to use public transport if it was cheaper**

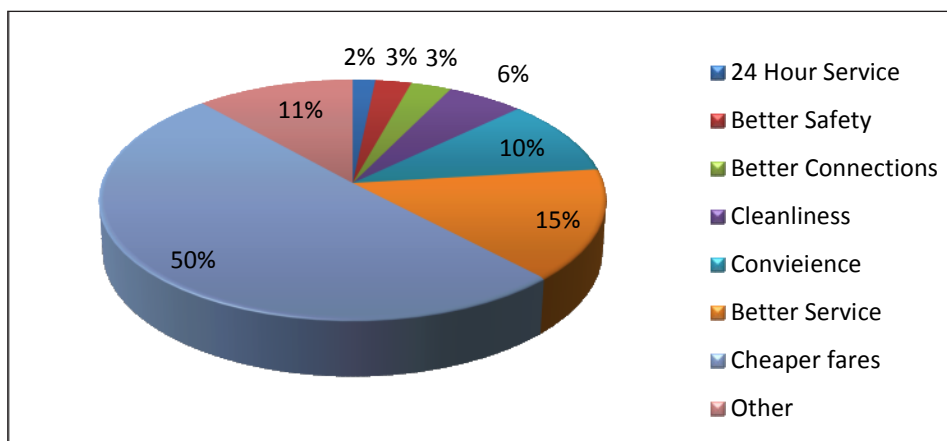


The figures given here relate to the majority of the journey for a daily commute, as some journeys may be a combination of different forms of travel (such as a bus to a train station or cycling to the underground stop).

48% of British Sikhs drive a vehicle for their commute, and 2% of British Sikhs are passengers in such vehicles.

37% of British Sikhs use public transport for their commute, with 10% travelling by train, 19% by underground/tram/metro/light rail, 1% by taxi and 7% by bus/minibus/coach.

What would encourage you to use public transport more often?



Cheaper fares would be most likely to encourage British Sikhs to use public transport, with 50% of respondents stating that to be the case.

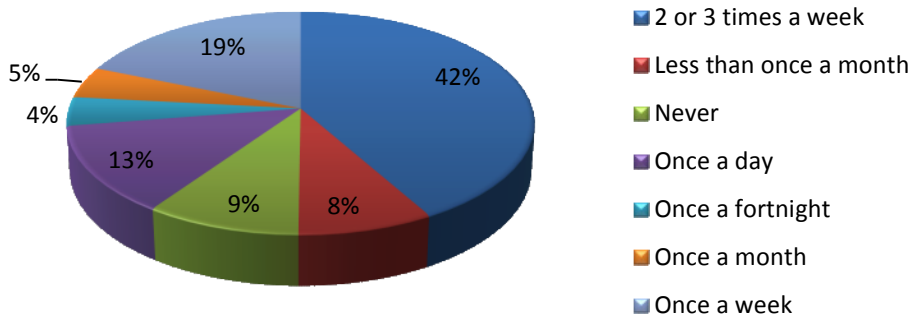


SPORTS & EXERCISE

SPORTS & EXERCISE

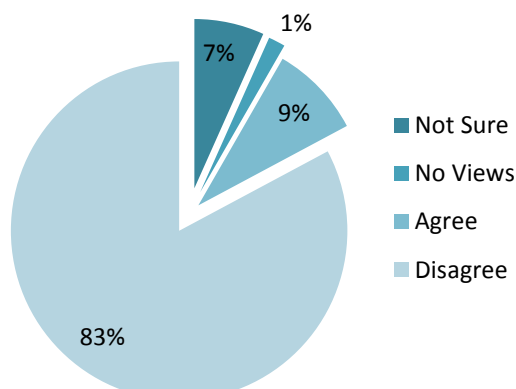
- 54% of respondents take part in physical activities at least two or three times a week
- 77% of respondents want to do more sports and exercise
- 48% of respondents are satisfied with local sport and leisure facilities

Do you take part in sport, exercise or any other physical activities?



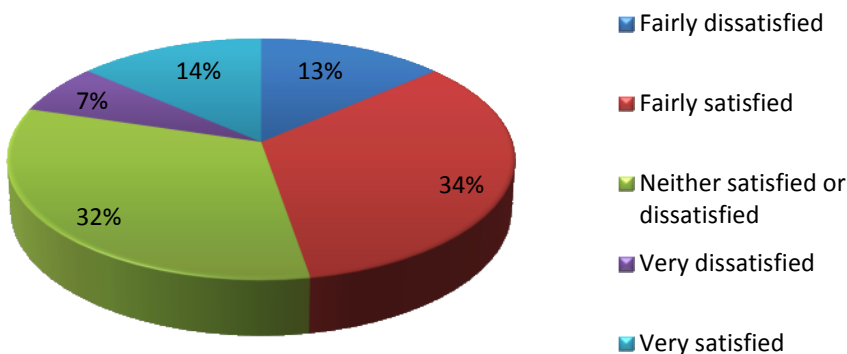
The frequency with which British Sikhs participate in physical activities is varied. Whilst 13% of respondents said that they took part in such activities every day, 9% said that they never do so and a further 8% did so less than once a month.

Would you like to do more sport, exercise or recreational physical activity than you do at the moment?



Over three-quarters of respondents (77%) said that they wanted to do more physical activities than they do at the present time. However, 15% of respondents stated that they do not have the time to do such activities.

How satisfied are you with sports and leisure facilities in your local area?



48% of British Sikhs are generally satisfied with the provision of local sports and leisure services, with 14% being very satisfied.

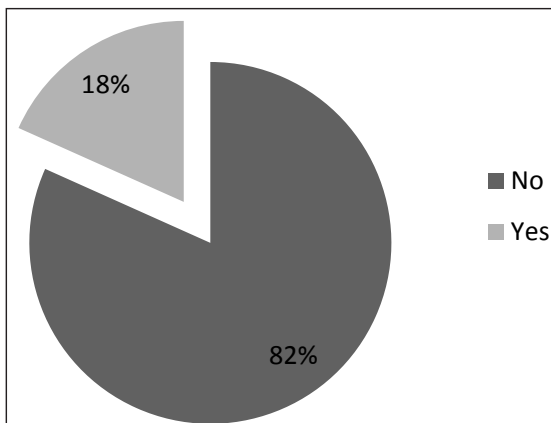


CRIME & POLICING

CRIME & POLICING

- **18% of respondents have been victims of crime in the last 12 months**
- **37% of victims did not report the crime to the Police**
- **78% of victims who failed to report the crime had no confidence in the Police to deal with the crime**

Have you been the victim of a crime in the last 12 months?



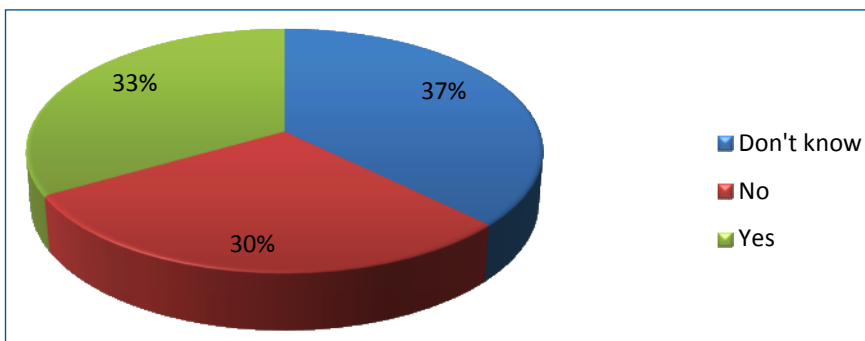
Whilst 18% of respondents stated that they had been a victim of crime in the last 12 months, less than two-thirds of those crimes (63%) were reported to the Police.

17% of crimes against British Sikhs in the last 12 months were racially motivated, 12% were religiously motivated crimes, and 10% were gender motivated.

When questioned as to why they failed to report the crimes, 95% of respondents said they did not think that the Police would do anything about it, and 75% of respondents said that they did not think the crime serious enough.

Almost one-fifth (18%) of victims who failed to report the crime said that they did not know who or how to report the crime.

Do you have confidence in the Police dealing with issues that affect the Sikh community?



33% of British Sikhs have confidence in the Police in dealing with issues affecting the Sikh community as opposed to 30% who do not have such confidence.

Respondents were asked what they thought the Police could do to better engage with the Sikh community and they were allowed to write out the answer in free text and in detail.

The themes which emerged were as follows:

- Work needs to be done to recruit more Sikh Officers and to have more Sikh officers in senior ranks.
- More engagement needs to take place with Gurdwaras and younger people within the Sikh community not just elders.
- Training on Sikhism and the 5 Ks needs to be delivered to Police Officers to improve their understanding of the Sikh faith and to understand the differences between Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus.
- More community engagement events and open meetings need to take place to engage with the Sikh community and to listen to their concerns and to take on board their views.
- Grooming of Sikh girls needs to be addressed and looked into by Police.
- Third party reporting needs to be established in Gurdwaras and work needs to be done around hate crimes against Sikhs.
- The Police need to establish awareness and crime prevention stalls at Gurdwaras.

Thank you to all of the members of the BSR Team, without whom the BSR would never have come to fruition.

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BSR BRITISH SIKH REPORT



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