



SIKH LGBT+
INCLUSION



Between Silence and Seva: Sikh Perceptions of LGBT+ Inclusion in Contemporary Communities

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The Founding Principles of Sikh LGBT+ Inclusion



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2026 Sikh LGBT Perceptions Survey Results

Global vs UK

Questions	Global Responses			British Responses		
	Yes	No		Yes	No	Unsure
Do you personally know anyone who identifies as LGBT+?	94%	6%		95%	5%	
Do you personally know anyone who identifies as both LGBT+ and Sikh?	79%	16%		73%	19%	8%
	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
Do you consider yourself an LGBT+ ally? ¹	44%	8%	37%	51%	11%	13%
	Comfortable	Uncomfortable	Neutral	Comfortable	Uncomfortable	Neutral
How comfortable would you feel discussing LGBT+ issues in your Gurdwara or community?	29%	50%	21%	27%	48%	25%
	Yes	No	Would like to	Yes	No	Would like to
Have you ever spoken up in support of LGBT+ inclusion in your community?	40%	25%	35%	43%	32%	25%
	Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Disagree	Disagree
My Gurdwara/community is welcoming towards LGBT+ people	14%	51%	34%	17%	41%	41%
My Gurdwara/community is safe for LGBT+ people	22%	47%	31%	27%	31%	43%
LGBT+ people would feel able to be open about their identity in my community	12%	61%	27%	12%	49%	39%
Leaders in my community address LGBT+ issues constructively	8%	70%	22%	9%	56%	35%
	Yes	No	Prefer Not to Say	Yes	No	Prefer Not to Say
Have you ever witnessed or experienced homophobic, biphobic, or transphobic behaviour within a Sikh context?	65%	28%	7%	51%	43%	6%

¹ The remainder declared they are LGBT+



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SURVEY FINDINGS

1. Knowing LGBT+ people strongly correlates with allyship
2. Allyship strongly correlates with speaking up for inclusion
3. LGBT+ respondents are significantly less likely to perceive Sikh spaces as safe
4. Perceptions of leadership correlate with willingness to advocate
5. Younger age groups tend to show higher openness and allyship
6. Experiencing or witnessing discrimination correlates with support for inclusion.
7. Comfort discussing LGBT+ issues correlates with perceptions of community safety.

Reframing Sikh inclusion



Theological vs Cultural Tension



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ATTITUDES TOWARDS LGBT+ PEOPLE WITHIN SIKH COMMUNITIES TODAY



Attitudes towards LGBT+ people within Sikh communities today are shaped by a combination of **Sikh theology**, **Punjabi cultural norms**, **colonial history**, **migration experiences**, and **contemporary debates** around identity and tradition.

THERE IS NO SINGLE "SIKH POSITION" ON LGBT+ INCLUSION

← PERSPECTIVES RANGE ACROSS A SPECTRUM →



STRONGLY AFFIRMING

Rooted in Sikh principles of equality, dignity, compassion and the oneness of humanity. Advocate for full inclusion and celebration of LGBT+ Sikhs in all aspects of faith and community life.



MIXED / CONTEXTUAL

Seek to balance tradition and inclusion, emphasising compassion, dialogue and pastoral care while navigating cultural expectations and differing interpretations of scripture and tradition.



DEEPLY CONSERVATIVE

Prioritise traditional norms around heterosexual marriage and family, often viewing LGBT+ identities as incompatible with Sikh practice and community values.



This diversity of views reflects the richness and ongoing evolution of Sikh thought and lived experience. Our shared values of **truth**, **humility** and **seva** can guide us toward greater understanding and inclusion.



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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GREATER INCLUSION

Based on the findings, this paper proposes the following recommendations:



1 EDUCATION AND AWARENESS



- Develop accessible educational resources on LGBT+ identities within a Sikh context
- Facilitate workshops and discussions in gurdwaras and community spaces
- Address misconceptions, particularly around gender identity

2 OPEN DIALOGUE



- Create safe spaces for conversation within Sikh communities
- Encourage intergenerational dialogue to bridge gaps in understanding
- Normalise discussions around sexuality and identity

3 THEOLOGICAL ENGAGEMENT



- Promote exploration of Sikh teachings that emphasise equality and dignity
- Encourage scholars and community leaders to engage with LGBT+ issues from a Gurbani-informed perspective
- Challenge the conflation of culture with *dharm* (dharma)

4 REPRESENTATION AND VISIBILITY



- Amplify voices of LGBT+ Sikhs within community platforms
- Encourage inclusive representation in Sikh organisations and events
- Move beyond tokenism toward meaningful participation

5 INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE



- Develop inclusive policies within gurdwaras and Sikh organisations
- Provide guidance for handling sensitive situations with compassion and understanding
- Consider how seva roles and participation can be made more inclusive

6 PASTORAL AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT



- Offer support networks for LGBT+ Sikhs and their families
- Train community leaders to respond with empathy rather than avoidance
- Recognise mental health impacts of exclusion and silence



By embracing education, compassion, and open-hearted dialogue, we can create Sikh spaces where every individual is seen, valued, and able to belong.



EQUALITY
ਸਮਾਨਤਾ



COMPASSION
ਦਇਆ



DIGNITY
ਮਰਿਆਦਾ



JUSTICE
ਨਿਆਂ



SEVA
ਸੇਵਾ



SARBAT DA BHALA
ਸਰਬੱਤ ਦਾ ਭਲਾ

Thank You

Any Questions



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