

2026 SIKHS IN ACADEMIA

Hidden in Plain Sight

PRESENTED BY

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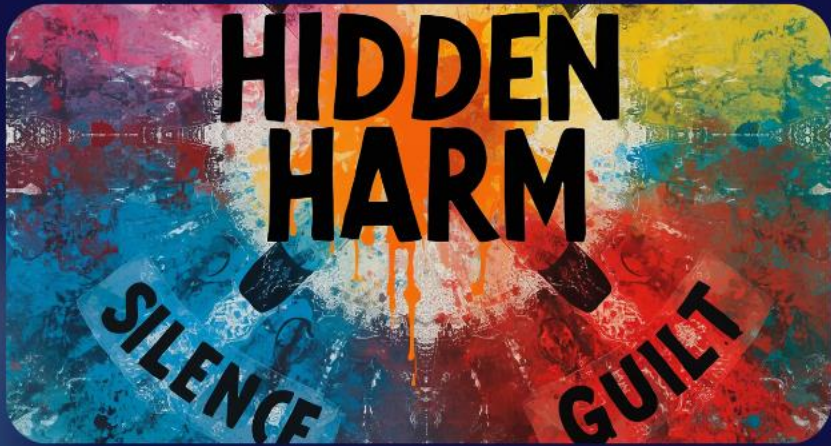
SEXUAL VIOLENCE, SILENCE AND
ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE SIKH
AND PANJABI COMMUNITY

Core Argument

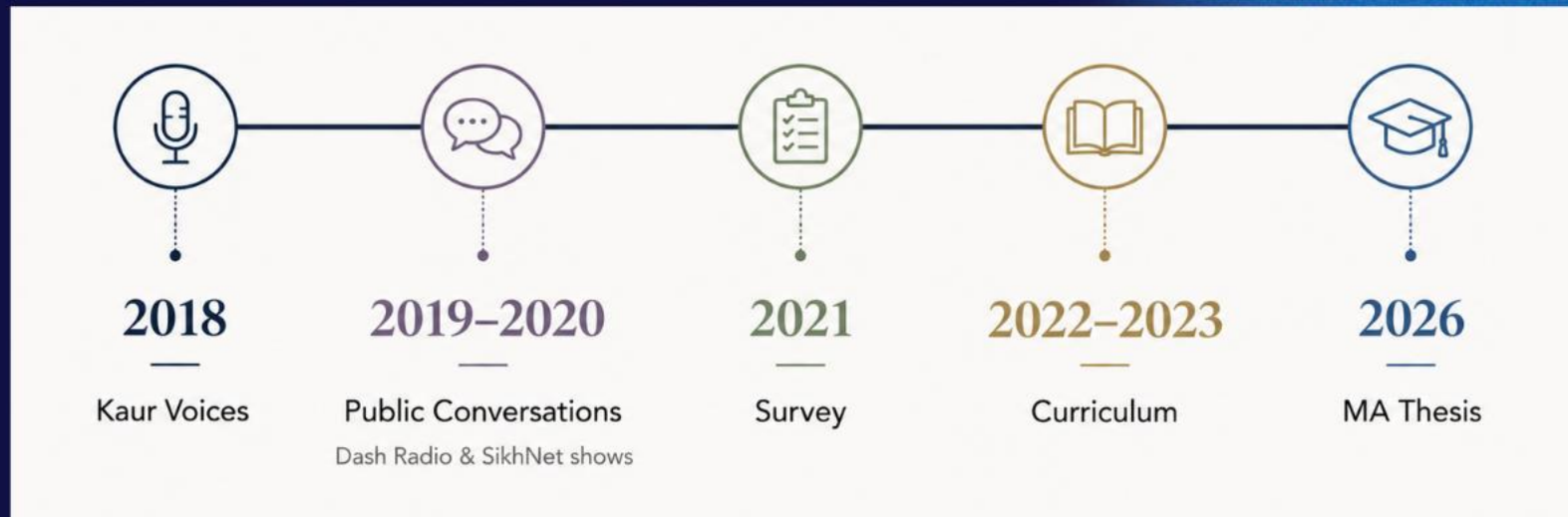
**Sexual
violence is not
only individual
harm.**

Hidden Harm

- Honour and shame
- Silence and stigma
- Family and community pressure
- Unclear accountability
- Lack of culturally literate safeguarding



Why This Research Began



From community conversation to academic inquiry: a progression shaped by survivors, scholars and Sikh institutions across a global network.

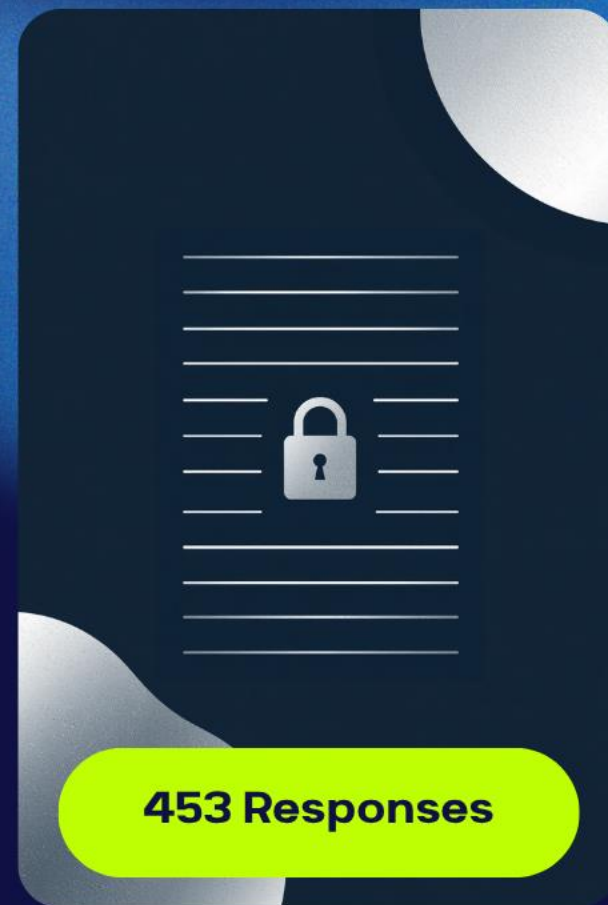
Method & Ethics



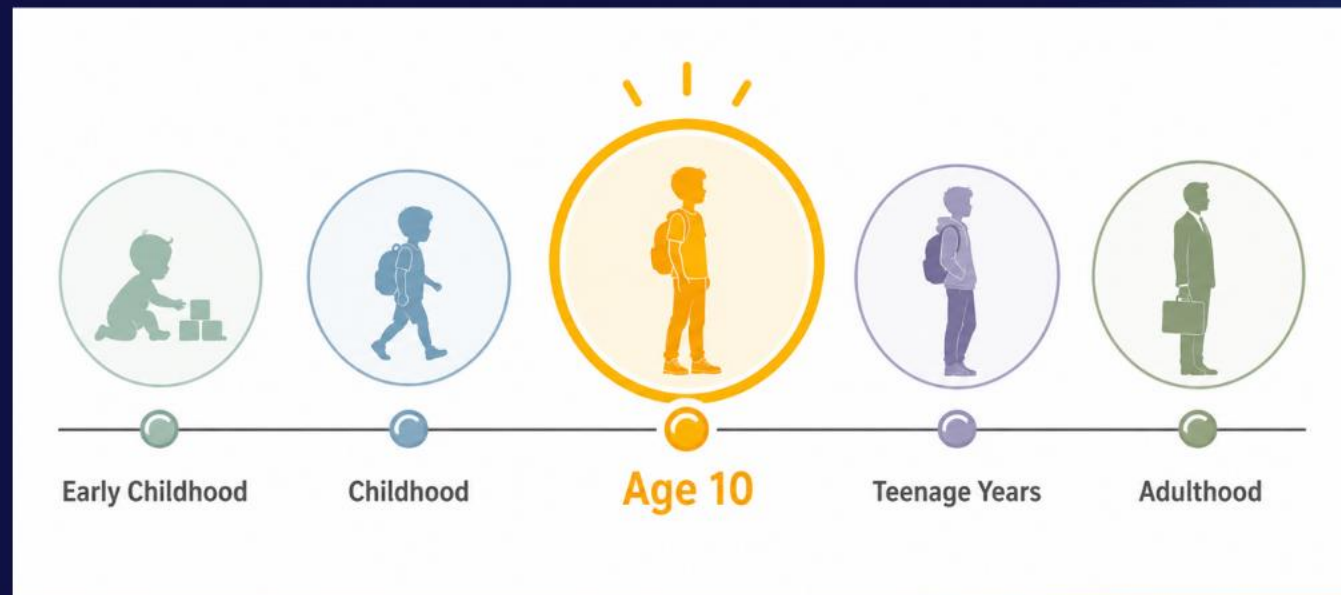
Anonymous community based survey conducted across Sikh and Panjabi diaspora networks.

- 453 responses received
- Self-selecting sample
- Not a prevalence study
- Evidence of repeated patterns

Data presented here is aggregated and anonymised



Finding 1: Harm Begins Early

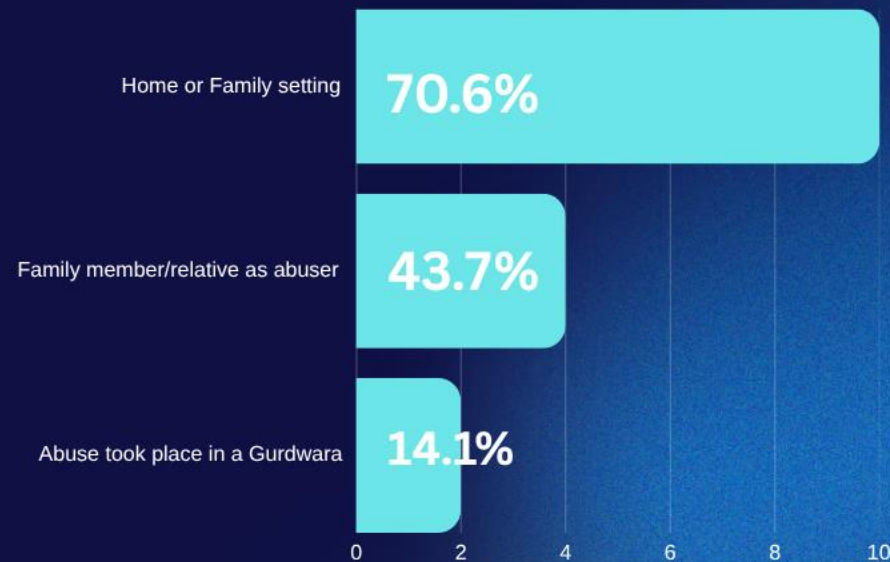


Among interpretable age-onset responses: n = 393

- Median age abuse began: 10
- 83.2% began under 18
- Many described repeated or recurring harm

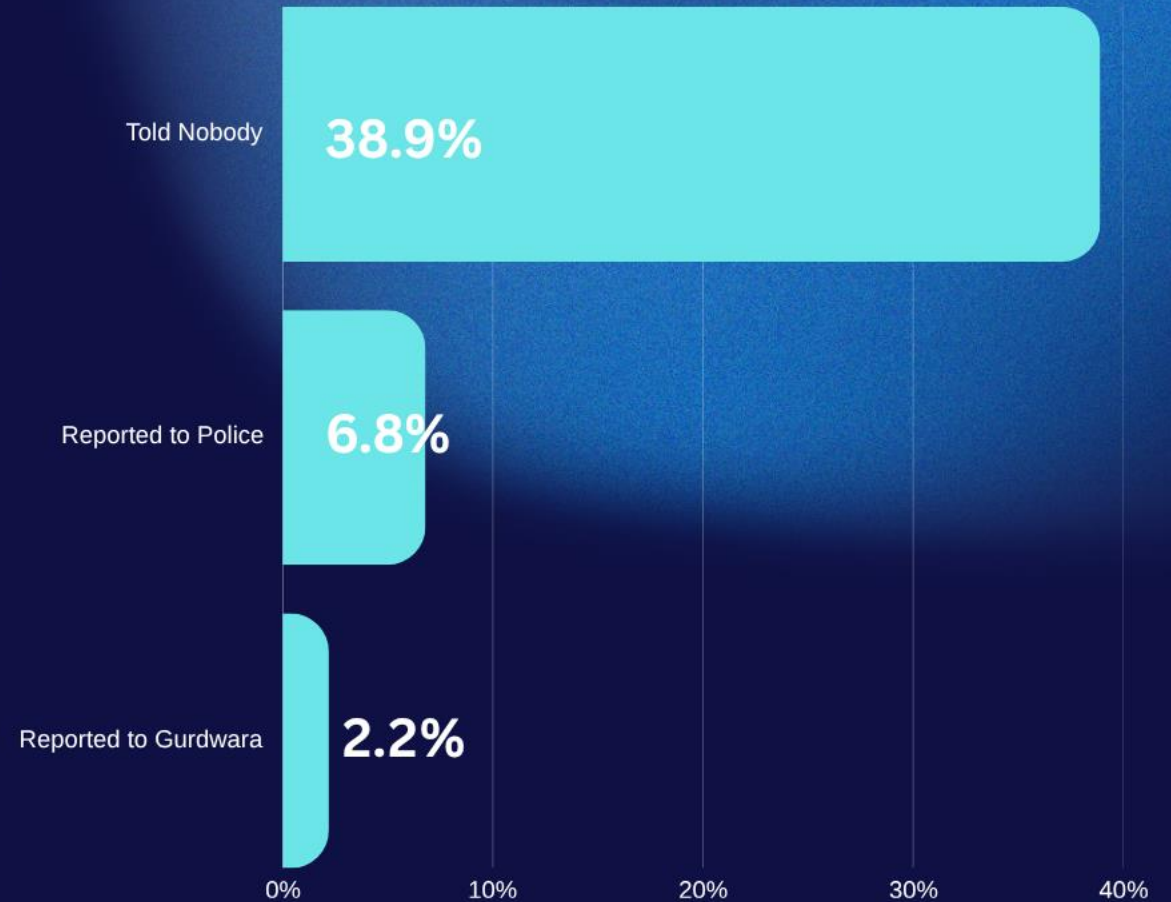
Safeguarding Issue

Finding 2: Hidden in Familiar Spaces



Harm occurs through familiarity, kinship, trust and authority, not through strangers or unknown spaces.

Finding 3: Disclosure as Risk



Finding 4

The Accountability Gap

This gap is legal, social, institutional, cultural and religious.

Perpetrator Not Held Accountable

66%

Perpetrator Held Accountable

7.9%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70%

The Cost of Silence

65.3%

reported depression, anxiety,
fear or distrust

46.8%

reported PTSD symptoms

23%

reported loss of faith in
religion/community



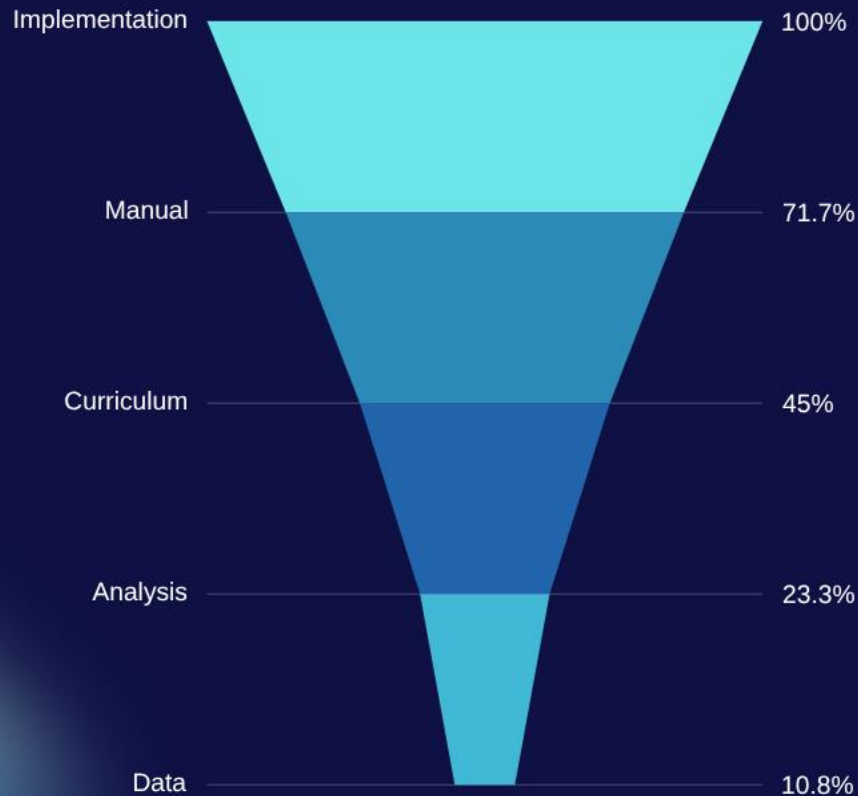
A Gurmat Informed Frame

- Daya (compassion) without justice is incomplete
- Forgiveness without safety can become coercion
- Reputation is not the same as righteousness
- Sikh spaces must be transformed if they cannot protect the vulnerable

Gurmat Ethics



From Data to Intervention



Curriculum already piloted in:

- Sikh ethos schools
- gurdwaras
- community settings in the UK, USA and Canada

Now being formalised as a safeguarding manual for Sikh and South Asian faith spaces.

Closing Question

If this research develops Gurmat informed, survivor centred safeguarding tools...

Will Sikh academics, organisations and leaders support implementation?

Silence protects harm.

Accountability protects community.



Thank You

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