

# Women & Gender in Sikhi

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hackettstown, NJ, 25 April 2023 – Sikh Research Institute (SikhRI) has published its ninth research report in the *State of the Panth* series titled *Women & Gender in Sikhi*. The report aims to understand and explore Sikh conceptions of women and gender, responses to gender-based inequality and oppression, and framings of masculinity. The discussion is informed by *Gurmat* (Guru's Way) and analyzes various perspectives based on *Bani* (wisdom), *Tavarikh* (history), and *Rahit* (lifestyle).

"The Sikh community must address gender inequality as a Panthic problem, with collective action and investment from all members, regardless of gender identity," said Kulvir Singh, SikhRI Chair. "The Sikh Gurus' teachings provide a powerful framework for addressing gender issues and promoting equality. However, a gap between precept and practice must be closed. Our research shows that most Sikhs worldwide understand gender equality as a fundamental principle with no gender-specific roles. The *Women & Gender in Sikhi* report provides actionable recommendations for individuals and institutions to create a more equitable global Panth."

In addition to the in-depth research, SikhRI has led a global survey of 689 self-identified Sikhs from 21 countries to learn more about how Sikhs worldwide understand gender equality, masculinity, and feminism within Sikh frameworks and in their relationships with their gender identity. The majority of respondents (86%) understand that women and men may be the same or different, but they are equal with no gender-specific roles.

Harinder Singh, SikhRI's Senior Fellow, remarked: "Immersing ourselves in Sikh ethos paired with the global survey allowed us to see this topic from various perspectives. We learned that an overwhelming majority of respondents (96%) believe all Sikhs, regardless of gender identity, are responsible for addressing women and gender issues. This points to understanding these issues as a Sikh problem that requires cooperation within the Panth to solve. We implore individuals and institutions to invest time, effort, and resources to revive the Guru's Infinite Wisdom to address these issues."

Jasleen Kaur, SikhRI's Researcher on the report, said: "Women's issues and the issues of gender as it applies to all gender identities are being grappled with globally, and every community has a long way to go. How did the Sikh Gurus address women's issues? How did they frame or reframe gender? Regarding women's and gender issues within the Panth today, why is there a disparity between principles and practice, and how do we close that gap? These are some of the questions we tried to answer."

A complete raw data set is included as a separate document to incentivize further academic research. To read the *Women & Gender in Sikhi* report for free, visit [SikhRI.org/SOTP9](http://SikhRI.org/SOTP9).

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### **About Sikh Research Institute**

Sikh Research Institute (SikhRI) is a global non-profit organization based in North America. SikhRI inspires individuals to connect with their roots and organizations to think critically based on Guru Granth Sahib's paradigm of IkOankar, 1Force. Since 2003, SikhRI has been making Sikh education accessible and presenting Gurmat (The Guru's Way) through various mediums, including webinars, podcasts, courses, presentations, publications, exhibitions, and social media. SikhRI seeks to make the wisdom of the Guru Granth Sahib accessible worldwide.

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