

FACTORS MOTIVATING SIKH CANADIAN YOUTH
TO BECOME INVOLVED IN THE KHALISTAN MOVEMENT

by

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to catalogue and analyse factors that motivate Canadian Sikh youth in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) to become involved with the Khalistan movement. Two research questions were posed: (1) How does the Khalistan movement serve to order and manage intra-Sikh relationships, primarily those involving young people, in the Greater Toronto Area, Ontario? (2) How does the Khalistan movement manage the Sikh identity vis-à-vis the non-Sikh realities of India and Canada? Using the theoretical frames of symbolic interactionism, functionalist homeostasis, and, to a lesser extent, postcolonial theory, applied through a case study method, three main conclusions were reached. The first finding of the study was that family influences solidified Khalistan-involved youth's attitude of differentiation from other Canadians. Personal identity interpretations led Khalistan-involved Sikh youth to develop and reinforce a sense of differentiation from other Canadians. Khalistan thus provided an important pivot of differentiation for these participants. The second finding of the study was that participation in Khalistani movements was discovered to be a means for men to build a masculine Sikh identity in interaction with each other, women to build a general social identity based on interactions with each other, and men and women to interact with each other on the basis of collective socio-religious identity exploration and affirmation. Participation in Khalistani movements also came to be understood as a means of

expression and differentiation for Sikhs that identified as Sikh only, or Sikh and Canadian, or Canadian only. The study presented a general sociological model for understanding the politicised actions of immigrant youth in Canada.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Background of the Study

Sikh youth constitute an increasing proportion of Canadian society. In 2001, Sikhism was the third-most widely represented religion among Canadian youths under 15, coming after Christianity and Islam (Statistics Canada, 2001). In 2001, the last year in which the Canadian government collected data on religions sorted by age group, roughly 25.75% of all Sikhs were under 15 (Statistics Canada, 2001). Sikhism thus has a higher percentage of young adherents than any other religion in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2001).

From the 1980s onwards, one of the issues confronting all Canadian Sikhs, young and old, has been the fate of Sikhs in Punjab (Basra, 1996; Bombwall, 1986; Chima, 1994, 2002; Gill & Singhal, 1984; Hirst & Zavos, 2005; Khalsa, 2012; C. K. Mahmood, 1989; Mitra, 1995; Mohanka, 2005; Oberoi, 1987; Pettigrew, 1991a; Purewal, 2011; B. Puri, 1984; Shani, 2000, 2002, 2010; Gurharpal Singh, 1991, 1997; Gopal Singh, 1994a; Pashaura Singh, 1998; D. S. Tatla, 2001, 2006). Punjab, or “the Punjab,” as it is sometimes known, was divided between India and Pakistan upon the British departure from India in 1947. Today, both India (see Figure 1) and Pakistan (see Figure 2) have Punjab provinces, reflecting the division of a part of the Indian Subcontinent that was long characterized by ethnic, linguistic, and cultural homogeneity (I. Ahmed, 1994; Alavi, 1980; Ali, 1978; Blake, 1979; Callewaert, 1998; Cole & Sambhi, 2005; Cox & Robinson, 2006; Deol, 2000; Dhavan, 2007; Heesterman, 2004; Lal, 2005; Loehlin, 1939; H. McLeod, 1999; W. McLeod, 1997; W. H. McLeod, 2005; Nesbitt, 2005, 2012;

Parrinder, 1971; Shani, 2008b; T. Sharma, 1985; Jogendra Singh, 2004; Pashaura Singh, 1996; S. H. Singh, 2009; Singha, 2000; Sodhi, 2013; Telford, 1992a; Torri, 1998; Travers, 2007; Trumpp, 1871; Virdee, 2005). For Sikhs, the vast majority of whom live in the Indian Punjab, the province has immense religious and historical significance, as it is the location of the central shrine of Sikhism, the Golden Temple, and has been the cradle of Sikhism for centuries (Butler, 1973; Chilana, 2005; O. Cole, 1973; Copland, 2002; Dhanjal, 1976; Eleanor, 2014; Fenech, 2002; Gill & Kaur, 2008; Hirvi, 2010; Israel, 1991; W. H. McLeod, 1998; Nesbitt, 2014; Oren, 1974; Pettigrew, 1991b; H. K. Puri, 2003; Shani, 2000; Sian, 2012; Thobani, 2012). While the history of the Punjab unfolded a hemisphere away from Canada, this province plays a central role in the Canadian Sikh community (Nayar, 2008). The Punjab gives many Canadian Sikhs their heritage language of Punjabi, functions as a form of *umbilicus mundi* in terms of its religious and historical significance, and is a source of music, entertainment, idiom, and shared cultural life that unites the Sikh community throughout the world (Hudak, 2005; La Brack, 2000).

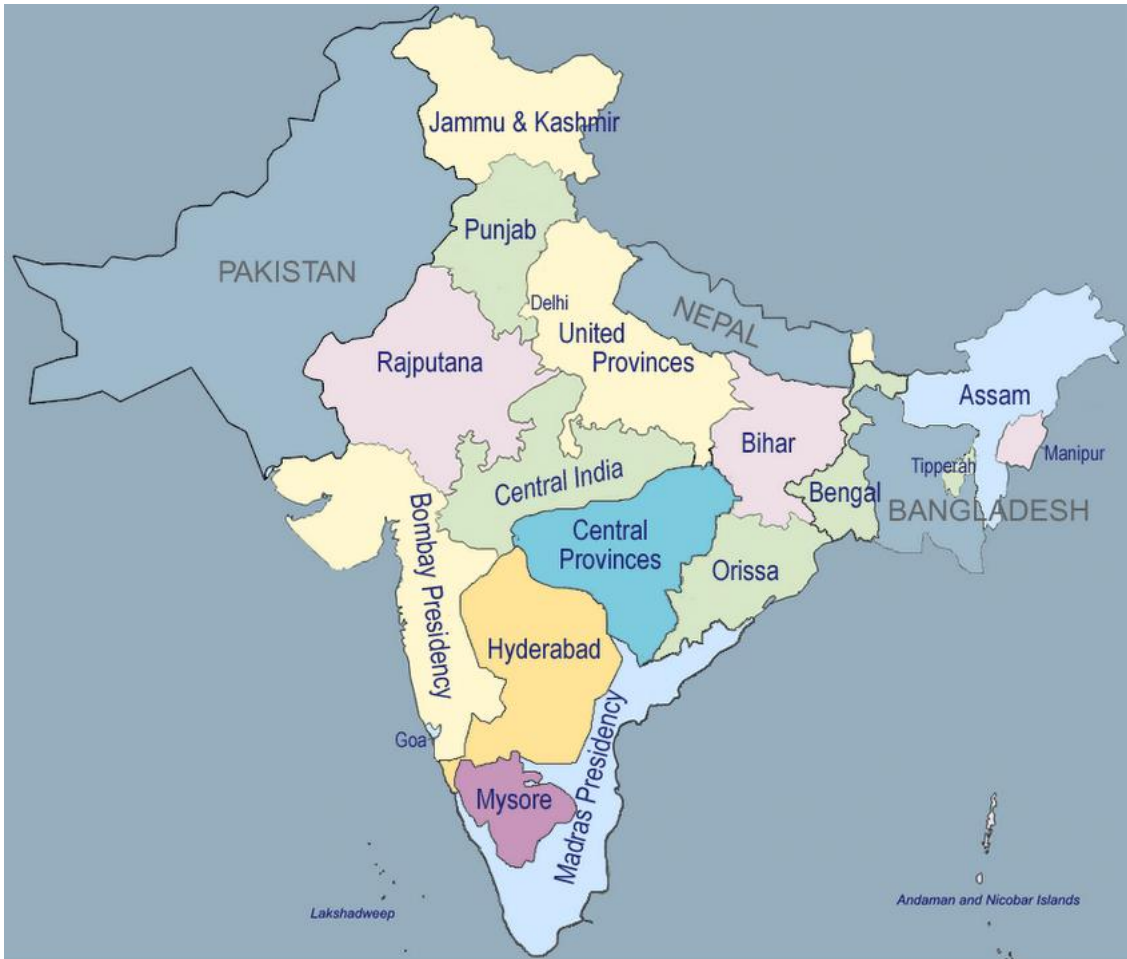


Figure 1. Punjab in the 1947 Map of India (IndiaToday, 2014)

As is clear from Figure 1 above, Punjab is a province in the north of India that borders the state of Pakistan. The borders of the Punjab were fixed in the 1947 partition of India, but were revised in 1966, when the province was subdivided into Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, and a now-shrunken Punjab (Bennett, 2000). Prior to 1947, when present-day India and Pakistan were British possessions, Sikhs lived in both the Pakistani and Indian Punjab; after partition, most Sikhs traveled to the Indian Punjab. As depicted in Figure 2, however, a significant portion of the historic Punjab remains in Pakistan.



Figure 2. Punjab in the Current Map of Pakistan (Majidyar, 2010)

Within the Canadian context, some members of the Sikh community who trace their roots to the Punjab have been seen by many to have extreme views that threaten the security of Canada. Most recently, the relationship between Canada and the Punjab has been defined in large part by the 1985 bombing of Air India Flight 182 by Sikh militants based in British Columbia. The roots of this bombing can be traced to the 1979 formation of the group Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) in Vancouver. BKI was formed by Talwinder Singh Parmar, a Punjabi-born Canadian, as an international adjunct to the Babbar Khalsa organisation founded a year earlier in India (Fair, 2005; McAndrew, 2005). Both Babbar Khalsa and BKI had the same goal: the formation of an independent

homeland for the Sikhs to be known as Khalistan. The formation of Babbar Khalsa and BKI took place at a time in Indian history when there was immense tension between the Indian government and Sikh separatists in the Punjab (A. Ahmed, 2010; Mohanka, 2005; Razavy, 2006; Telford, 1992). Throughout the late 1970s, and culminating in the 1984 Indian military storming of the Golden Temple (ostensibly to rout Sikh militants established there) the Indian government took violent measures to reassert its autonomy and power in the Punjab. These government actions contributed to the spirit of resistance, and sometimes outright terrorism, among the Sikhs of the Punjab (Dorn & Gucciardi, 2011; Van Dyke, 2009).

After the 1984 attack on the Golden Temple, which Sikhs worldwide took as an outrage to their religion, Sikh militancy increased. A few months after the attack, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was murdered in retaliation by her own Sikh bodyguards, triggering anti-Sikh pogroms throughout India (A. Ahmed, 2010; Ganguly, 1998). In Canada, members of BKI apparently conspired to place a bomb on Air India Flight 182, which flew from Montreal to Delhi, with a stopover in London. After one of the most extensive investigations in the history of Canadian law enforcement, one member of the BKI, Inderjit Singh Reyat, was identified as the bomb-maker and convicted accordingly. Reyat refused to implicate other members of the BKI, and thus remained the sole charged party. There is little doubt, however, (McAndrew, 2005) that Reyat was but part of a larger BKI conspiracy to commit what remains the largest mass murder in Canadian history—the slaughter of 329 people aboard Air India 182.

Air India 182 placed the issue of Sikh separatism firmly on the Canadian agenda. What had been a little-known and barely understood issue was now in the headlines. Canadian Sikhs themselves were divided between support for, and revulsion against, the bombing. The Canadian investigation of the bombing revealed a groundswell of support for the terrorist attack among many Canadian Sikhs (Turlej, 2001). Many other Sikhs refused to support the bombing, however (Turlej, 2001). The controversy over Air India 182 continues to this day, with some Canadian Sikhs in support, others in condemnation, and yet others maintaining that the bombing was a false flag operation carried out by India itself to further discredit and marginalise Sikhs (Turlej, 2001).

While the Air India bombing has faded in historical importance, the issue of Sikh separatism remains topical and relevant, even in Canada. Canada possesses the world's second-largest Sikh population, after India and well ahead of the United Kingdom. Some Canadian Sikhs, including those affiliated or in sympathy with BKI, continue to center their political activities and aspirations on the Punjab (Turlej, 2001). For the majority of Canadian Sikhs, who are peace-loving and loyal citizens, the Punjab might not be a theatre of political activity. The notion of an independent Sikh Punjab, or Khalistan, however, continues to be a compelling means of negotiating ideas of home, understanding and transmitting heritage, and otherwise forming identity.

The Emergence of Khalistan in Historical Context

The Khalistan movement is an expression of Sikh separatism with its roots in Sikh desire for temporal and symbolic authority over their home province of Punjab, which is currently divided between the sovereign states of India and Pakistan. The

Khalistan movement began as a desire to more firmly establish and expand the Sikh Empire as it existed in Punjab from 1799 to 1849. The movement was dormant for over a century, as the Sikhs came under increasing Muslim, Hindu, and British domination (Dorn & Gucciardi, 2011; Grover, 1964).

In 1947, the ancestral Sikh homeland of Punjab was apportioned between India and Pakistan as a result of the British departure from South Asia. For the first time in nearly a century, Sikhs had come a step closer to their goal of a homeland, especially since they had seen the Subcontinent's Hindu and Muslim populations receive what were essentially religious homelands (Banerjee, 2012). As the 20th century progressed, Sikhs—most of whom remained in India after the partition of the Subcontinent in 1947—came to feel increasingly oppressed under the framework of Indian sovereignty (Axel, 2004). In the 1970s and 1980s, galvanized by charismatic leaders and increasingly bitter towards a Hindu-dominated Indian government that seemed deaf to calls for Sikh autonomy, the Khalistan movement was reinvigorated (Banerjee, 2012; Biswas, 2004; Gupta, 1990; Shani, 2000).

Today, Khalistan is once more a viable concept in the minds of many Sikhs worldwide, including diasporic Sikhs and their families in Canada (Razavy, 2006; M. Singh, 2007). There are radical differences of opinion within the community, however, about what kind of state Khalistan might be, what means would be acceptable in forming the state, and how to frame the push for political sovereignty (Razavy, 2006; M. Singh, 2007). This research outlines a study in which Khalistan will be used as the point of origin to examine and analyse the behaviour of Canadian youths.

Punjab straddles the borders of modern India and Pakistan. A fertile region, the Punjab's very name is derived from the phrase *Panch ab*; or, in Persian, five waters, i.e. rivers (Schimmel, 2004). There are five rivers that run through the Punjab, and their names are iconic to every Punjabi: the Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Sutlej, and Beas. These rivers are tributaries of the Indus River.

It is important to distinguish between the many historical and contemporary significances of Punjab. Punjab is at once a political and administrative unit—a province in India, and another in Pakistan. In geographic terms, Punjab is a region. In historic terms, Punjab is also what Anderson (2001) would call an imagined community. Punjab has both an actual and a symbolic importance for all Punjabis, regardless of religion or citizenship, for Punjab is in some ways the quintessence of India itself. Punjab was home to the battles of the *Mahabharata*, the most important Indian national myth. It was also home to the Aryan invaders who, according to some theorists, give Indian Hinduism its distinctive rites and beliefs. In later times, the Punjab gave rise to personages ranging from Alexander the Great, the Maurya Dynasty, and the Mughal Dynasty (Schimmel, 2004). Punjab remains fertile and beautiful today.

Without understanding the vast historical and poetic importance of Punjab, it is impossible to understand Sikhism itself. While Sikhism as a religion is global in scope, Punjab has the same resonance to Sikhs as the Arabian peninsula does to the Muslims, or Anatolia has to the Turks (Chilana, 2005; Chohan, 2009; Eleanor, 2014). It is a national homeland and the heart of Sikhism, centered at the Golden Temple in Amritsar.

Sikhism is the youngest of the world's five largest religions. It was formed by Guru Nanak Dev Ji in the year 1499. Born a Hindu in what was then Mughal India, Guru Nanak lived through one of India's most tumultuous eras. At the time, Punjab was ruled by the Muslim Lodhi Dynasty, who traced their roots to Afghanistan. At the time of Guru Nanak's birth, India was demographically dominated by Hindus, whose presence in India goes back millennia. Muslims had by then also made inroads into government due to nearly eight centuries of conversion, conquest, and migration (Schimmel, 2004). Islam first entered India along its coasts in the early eighth century, when Arab traders introduced the religion of Muhammad to Indians and also established trading colonies for themselves. Later, Muslim mystics, or Sufis, from Central Asia entered India from the north, bringing with them a blend of religion, rite, laughter, and mystery that won many converts. Finally, from the steppes of Central Asia and the eastern planes of Iran came many more waves of Muslim conquerors: the Lodhis, who ruled Punjab when Guru Nanak was born; the Ghaznavis; the Mamluks; the Khiljis; the Tughluqs; and the Sayyids, who were collectively known as the Delhi Sultanate (Schimmel, 2004).

In 1499, Guru Nanak had a revelation and founded a religion based on a kind of monotheism, distinct from that of the Muslims and sharing some practices in common with the Hindus (Hasnain, 2013). The essence of Sikhism was a rejection of both Islam and Hinduism, deviating from the true worship of divinity. Following Nanak's subsequent teaching—expounded during the Guru's vast journeys taken on foot throughout India—Sikhs rejected their previous identities and came together to form a new religious community (Akhtar, 2010; Kaur Singh, 2008; Matringe, 1986). Had

nothing else transpired, Guru Nanak might have joined the Buddha as the creator of a new Indian religion whose followers would become absorbed into the mighty streams of Indian civilization. Events rapidly took place, however, that forced the new community to redefine itself not merely as a community of believers, but also as a nation, complete with a national homeland.

In 1526, Zahir-ud-Din Mohammad Babur, a Turkic ruler from Central Asia, sensed an opportunity to defeat the Lodhi Dynasty, which he did at the First Battle of Panipat (Schimmel, 2004). Consolidating his success, Babur then defeated the Rajputs, fierce Hindu warriors, at the Battle of Khanwa (Schimmel, 2004). While Babur died shortly afterwards, his dynasty—the Mughals, so-called because the unwitting populace believed that these warriors from the north were Mongols, instead of the Turks that they actually were—succeeded in establishing its hegemony over most of India. The Mughal conquest of India was fierce, and was lent an intolerant character by the uncompromising religious beliefs of the Mughal Emperors (with the exception of Babur’s grandson Akbar, who practiced syncretism and accommodation with other religions) (Schimmel, 2004). As part of the Mughal consolidation of power, the Empire came into increasing conflict with the Sikhs of Punjab. The Mughals treasured Punjab for its central location, vast agricultural wealth, and storied nature as the seat of the Delhi Sultanate (Schimmel, 2004).

Throughout the 16th century, the number of Sikhs, particularly in the Punjab, kept growing. The Sikhs had a series of Gurus who succeeded Guru Nanak, each of whom was both the temporal and spiritual ruler of the community. Under the Gurus, Sikhism

went beyond mere mediations and began to raise cities and communities of its own throughout Punjab (T. R. Metcalf, 2007; Pettigrew, 1995; Thandi, 1999). By then, Sikhs saw themselves as a community bound together not only by religion, but also by the need to take care of each other. Before long, the Sikhs of Punjab had emerged as essentially a rival state to the Mughals. The Sikhs had their own cities, armies, merchants, farmers, kings, and religion, beholden to no one (Schimmel, 2004). Moreover, like the Mughals themselves, the Sikhs claimed both temporal and spiritual authority and centered their ambitions in Punjab. It was therefore inevitable that these two communities would clash (Grover, 1964).

The fourth Guru, Guru Arjan, was put to death by the Mughal Emperor Jahangir in 1606. This event was the first marker of open warfare between the Mughals and the Sikhs, which endured throughout the 17th and 18th centuries (Schimmel, 2004). Sikhism became increasingly militarised during this long period of warfare, even though Sikhism had always insisted on the ability to fight as one of the attributes of the Sikh man. Over time, Sikhs were able to obtain several victories, and also benefited from the precipitous decline of the Mughal Empire during the 19th century. By 1799, the Sikhs of Punjab had become strong enough to declare their own sovereign state, the Sikh Empire, which lasted until the British obtained victory in the Anglo-Sikh Wars in 1849 (Schimmel, 2004). For the next century, Sikhs remained a powerful community within Punjab, but were denied sovereignty by the British Empire. When the British departed India in 1947, the Hindus and Muslims of India each received their own sovereign states—India and Pakistan, respectively—but the Sikhs' ambitions for sovereignty were never recognised.

In 1947, with much of Punjab on Indian land, and the Muslim orthodoxy of Pakistan opposed to Sikh presence on the Pakistani side of the Punjab, the next episode of Sikhism's history began.

Sikh life in post-partition India was fraught with many difficulties, given the tensions between the Hindu establishment and the teeming Sikh residents of Punjab. Sikhs began to re-articulate demands for sovereignty that had lain dormant since their defeat by the British (Shani, 2000; Singh & Purewal, 2013; Tatla, 2005; Telford, 1992). In the 1970s and 1980s, a new generation of Sikh leaders combined with the grassroots fervor of the youth led Sikhs to take more direct action towards sovereignty (Van Dyke, 2009). The pace of Sikh migration to Canada, which began at the end of the 19th century, continued unchecked throughout the same time period (Biswas, 2004; Hudak, 2005; Razavy, 2006; M. Singh, 2007; Turlej, 2001). The Sikh presence in Canada constitutes the immediate sociological background for this study.

Problem Statement

Canadian Sikh society has been approached in fairly limited ways by sociologists. One common theme in the sociological literature on Canadian Sikhs is that of economic transnationalism. In this body of literature, Sikhs in Canada (and elsewhere outside the Punjab) have been understood as economic subjects whose migratory patterns, marriage and family relations, and transactions with the non-Sikh world have been placed into a relatively narrow spectrum of economic activity (Gibson, 1988; Model & Lin, 2002). While this body of literature leaves little doubt that Sikh migratory patterns and, for that matter, Sikh transnationalism have been shaped by economic issues, economically-

oriented literature fails to examine numerous other components of Sikh identity and social decision-making. Additionally, economically-oriented sociological literature of Sikhs fails to answer, or indeed even acknowledge, numerous interesting questions; such as why, despite possessing closer historical and economic ties to the United Kingdom, Sikhs have tended to prefer Canada as a destination for immigration. While economically-oriented sociological literature on Sikhism has answered several basic questions about the patterns and characteristics of Sikh migration, this body of literature has left Sikhs' identities largely unapproached and unexamined, most likely because of the methodological limitations arising from economics as an explanatory frame.

Another body of sociological literature on Sikhs outside the Punjab focuses on the transmission of culture (Axel, 2002; T. R. Metcalf, 2007). There are two conceptual gaps in this body of literature. The first gap is that such literature typically sidesteps controversial issues in actual Sikh communities (Razavy, 2006); such as, the question of Sikh separatism and the accompanying possibilities of violence and terrorism. Some of the sociological literature on Canadian Sikhs can therefore be described as what Campesino called a, "naïve celebration of interesting cultural artifacts and practices of people" (Campesino, 2008, p. 300). Such literature does not engage some of the more difficult questions of how Sikhs negotiate their identities in climates of conflict, both with each other and with other, larger communities (such as, in the context of Khalistan, the Canadian and Indian communities). Other sociological literature focuses on topics that are of particular interest to Western scholars, especially Western feminists, and neglects core issues of identity and aspiration that Sikhs themselves struggle with. For example,

among Sikhs themselves, there is more controversy about the creation of a Punjabi homeland than about gender roles, which, according to Chohan (2009) and Gayer (2012), are relatively fixed in Sikh communities worldwide. Perhaps because Western sociologists are more likely to be interested in questions of gender than of the role played by the Punjab in the Sikh consciousness, there is far more work on Sikhism, identity, and gender (Chohan, 2009; Gayer, 2012) than on Sikhism, identity, and national aspiration. Yet it is for national aspiration, not gender roles, for which thousands of Sikhs have fought, died, and even killed for from the 1970s onwards (Biswas, 2004; Dorn & Gucciardi, 2011; Fair, 2005; Mohanka, 2005). Nonetheless, national aspiration (as represented by Khalistan) has not been a popular sociological frame for analysing Canadian Sikhs. The same gap exists for other stateless peoples, including Kurds. As Zheger pointed out, the national aspirations of Kurds have been utilised as theoretical frames far more frequently by historians and political scientists than by sociologists (Zheger, 2013).

In his seminal work, *Imagined Communities*, Anderson (2001) noted how the identity of a collective, and of the individuals within it, emerges from a commitment to principles and ideas. Anderson's work has important consequences for sociology and especially for the sociology of a stateless people such as the Sikhs. If the concept of an imagined community is accepted, then the identity of Sikhism does not so much emerge from economic transactions or even day-to-day interactions between Sikhs (such as gendered interactions), but rather from how Sikhs think of themselves and others. Anderson argued that the imagined community, of which any nation is an example, is

both limited and sovereign. An imagined community must exclude some individuals, and an imagined community must also be immune to control by others. In this way, an imagined community is a means for allowing members of a community to deal with, and think about, each other, as well as a means for setting the community apart from its neighbours.

Sociologically, then, the problem is that the diasporic Sikh community, particularly in Canada, has been infrequently studied as an imagined community, leading to gaps in the sociological knowledge of Canadian Sikhism as a both a community and an identity structure. As noted, some of the sociological literature on Canadian Sikhs falls into the category of what Campesino (2008) referred to as a naïve celebration of otherness, a mere recounting of difference. Other literature approaches Canadian Sikhs too narrowly, as either economic agents whose identities are reducible to cost-benefit calculations, or as gendered actors who act as a mirror for themes of interest to Western sociologists. As a body of literature, a Sikh-centric sociology of Canadian Sikhs has yet to be produced. There are, to be sure, isolated examples of sociological work focusing on Sikhs *qua* Sikhs, engaging the thorny questions of Sikhism and investigating some of what the imagined community of Sikhism means in the context of Canada. However, this approach to the sociology of Sikhs is in its infancy.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to catalogue and analyse factors that motivate Canadian Sikh youth in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) to become involved with the Khalistan movement. Khalistan is, as discussed in the problem statement, more of a

theoretical prism than a subject. Using Khalistan as the basis for investigating the beliefs, cognitions, actions, behaviours, and, in a word, identities, of Canadian Sikh youth is a means of reaching richer and more interesting conclusions about what it means to be a Sikh youth in Canada than if such youth were asked bland, undirected questions about their identities. As such, the purpose of the study is not to reach conclusions about the sociological meaning of Khalistan, but to contribute towards the construction of a sociology of Canadian Sikh youth based on their reactions to both the concept and the practical project of Khalistan. Understanding what mobilizes, or fails to mobilize, Canadian Sikh youth vis-à-vis the Khalistan movement is a means of interrogating Sikh youth identity itself, in a more dynamic and culturally compelling manner than has hitherto been attempted.

In particular, this sociology of Canadian Sikh youth is organised around two conceptual questions, namely: (a) How do Canadian Sikh youth maintain or respond to cultural homeostasis? (b) How do Canadian Sikh youth manage transnationalism? The concepts of homeostasis and transnationalism are abstract, and asking youth about such concepts directly is unlikely to yield usable sociological data. At the same time, especially for the Sikh community in Canada, two of the most salient questions pertaining to youth involve homeostasis and transnationalism. Sikhism, with its well-defined and long-maintained traditions, contains a great deal of homeostatic pressure—that is, pressure on adherents to remain true to a set of existing precepts, principles, and practices. At the same time, Sikhism in Canada is its own transnational frontier, as Sikhs

define and represent themselves in relation to other communities that are not like them and that in some cases are hostile to them.

Khalistan is an interesting frame through which to explore questions of homeostasis as well as transnationalism. Khalistan is more than a political project; it is a self-avowedly pure representation of Sikhism in which there is an emphasis on a return to Sikhism in its most traditional and allegedly pure form. The main point of contention around the role of Khalistan is that, while the Sikh religion is over five centuries old, Sikhs enjoyed national sovereignty for only 50 years, from 1799 to 1849. The majority of Sikh history has unfolded in the context of Sikh coexistence with the two larger and more well-established religions—Islam and Hinduism—of the Subcontinent. The adoption of sovereignty as a goal, or as a focus for Sikh practice, is a contingent choice, one that plays an important role in the definition and practice of Sikh identity throughout the world. The history of the Sikh Gurus' orientations and of Sikhism itself is a complex intertwining of themes of militarism, pacifism, asceticism, ecumenicalism, and exceptionalism. The Khalistani project engages some of these aspects of Sikhism, thereby designating them as normative or desirable.

An important point of consideration is that this study is limited to the participants that were recruited and selected, and may or may not be indicative of what all Sikh youth both in and outside of Canada believe. Though the findings of this research do not speak for all Sikh youth, it is important to note that this is one of the only studies that has interviewed Sikh youth in the context of Khalistan to see what markers they see as central to their identity.

Thus, whatever other roles Khalistan plays, it is a frame through which a variety of Canadian Sikh youth's homeostatic environment and responses can be explored. The factors that motivate Canadian Sikh youth to embrace or reject Khalistan can also be understood as the factors that motivate Canadian Sikh youth to embrace, reject, redefine, or otherwise interact with the homeostatic pressures of Sikhism in a pressing form. Similarly, the relationship between Canadian Sikh youth and the Khalistan movement can yield insight into how such youth manage, both conceptually and practically, the relationships between themselves and non-Sikhs.

The ultimate purpose of the study is to move towards an understanding of some of the themes, forces, pressures, and challenges in the identities and identity formation processes of Canadian Sikh youth, with Khalistan serving as a key gateway for such an understanding. Khalistan is a likely to be a fruitful means of approaching issues of Canadian Sikh youth identity because Khalistan evokes strong feelings, lies close to the heart of the Sikh collective identity, serves as a lynchpin of what Anderson (2001) called an imagined community, and involves both conceptual and practical / political identity commitments.

Theoretical Frames for the Study

A movement such as Khalistan provides innumerable exploratory opportunities to sociologists; it can be used as a gateway to studying many sociological phenomena. As discussed earlier, Khalistan offers two particularly promising frames for sociological researchers of Canadian Sikh youth. The first frame that I have selected is that of homeostatic functionalism as defined from a postcolonial perspective. This frame

suggests that, for Canadian Sikh youth, participation in the Khalistan movement is an artifact of the Sikh desire to maintain homeostasis—of the values of language, land, and religion, among others—in the midst of a diaspora. I suggest that the use of the homeostatic frame actually has three functions and benefits within this study. First, it grounds the data gathering, coding, and interpretation in a classic form of sociological theory. Second, it distinguishes the research from a general exploration of the Khalistan phenomenon and suggests a specific hypothesis about how Khalistan functions homeostatically in a Sikh environment. Third, the homeostatic frame is a means of linking the study to Anderson's (2001) idea of an imagined community.

While Indian Sikhs may expect the movement to obtain sovereignty and to actually live in Khalistan, many Canadian Sikhs may instead participate in Khalistan not out of an expectation or even a desire to live there, but rather to affirm and maintain the continuity of other aspects of their identity as Sikhs (Hudak, 2005; La Brack, 2000). The theoretical frame of functional homeostasis has been used before in a similar way to study the meaning of Kurdistan for young European Kurds (Zheger, 2013), and I argue it is an equally fruitful means of exploring the homeostatic significance of Khalistan for Canadian Sikh youth as well.

Homeostasis can be understood within the theoretical frame of functionalism. Functionalism is also often referred to as structural functionalism to emphasise the ways in which it envisions societies to be superstructures built out of norms, traditions, customs, and institutions (Alexander, 1998). Functionalism, unlike interactionism, features some limitations; notably, it is likely not well suited to analysing the give and

take between individuals. It is well suited, however, to explaining both how individuals interact with society and how societies interact with other societies (Colomy, 1990). It is in this latter sense that functionalism was deployed in this study.

Functionalism posits that societies maintain their integrity and character through an ongoing cyclical process of articulation, exercise, reinforcement, and modification of its four key components: Norms, traditions, customs, and institutions (Crothers, 2010). The goal of such a process is a form of homeostasis; that is, intact maintenance of the community's four key components, which includes fending off the influences of other societies (Cuzzort, 2002).

It is in the realm of homeostasis that postcolonial theory becomes particularly relevant to the Sikh Canadian experience. To be sure, postcolonial theory is not monolithic (Bromley, 2000; Phillips, 2001), but various strands of this theory are of particular importance in this study. One especially helpful frame is contributed by Bromley's concept of the postcolonial conquest, which is an "attempt to localize and contextualize the 'nomadic,' to ground it in a particularizing and specific experience of difference" (p. 128). The postcolonial condition, as Phillips (2001) has written, is precisely this feeling of nomadism: "I recognize the place, I feel at home here, but I don't belong. I am of, and not of, this place" (p. 70). Phillips has referred to the postcolonial identity as "a plural notion of home" (p. 56) and the conclusion that, for the postcolonial subject, "this body is your only real home" (p. 66).

For diasporic Sikhs, Khalistan may function as a sort of body, or, in Bromley's (2000) terminology, a localization and contextualisation of the nomadic. The existence of

the idea of Khalistan, a movement associated with it, and the utilization of Khalistan as a means of creating intra-Sikh solidarity and meaning construction all contribute to the increased coherence of the body politic of the Sikh diaspora in Canada, especially during the post-9/11 climate (Falcone, 2006). In this way, Khalistan becomes a bulwark against the loss of Sikh identity as a whole, and a means of articulating Sikh identity against Indian identity and Canadian identity.

Postcolonial theory is a worthwhile means of exploring functionalism homeostasis in the young Canadian Sikh community, but it poses certain complexities in terms of study design. In terms of the practical application of methodology, the main challenge faced by the researcher is ensuring that data gathered is coded properly into either the interactionist or the functionalist categories. As such, there must be keen attention paid to the distinction between Khalistan as a pivot for intra-Sikh identity formation, and Khalistan as a way for young Sikhs to assert their national identity against outsiders. The distinction seems to be a narrow one, but it does exist. There is a difference between, e.g., (a) a young Sikh for whom participation on a Khalistan Web site functions as a means of making Sikh friends who bond over the shared interpretation of the meaning of their Sikh identity and (b) a young Sikh whose participation in the movement is not primarily a means of intra-Sikh experience, but rather a means of managing the difficulties of also belonging to other polities, in particular India and Canada. Postcolonial theory seems to apply most relevantly to situation (a), where the maintenance of Sikh identity can be understood as a means of resisting the identity pressures generated by the postcolonial condition.

The other theoretical frame used in this study is that of symbolic interactionism (Denzin, 2010; Hirsch, 1984; Ovanessian, 1999). Symbolic interactionism is a branch of sociological theory, and of interactionism in particular, that focuses on the character of human encounters. One of the key figures of symbolic interactionism, Blumer (1969) defined the basis of the theory as having three components: (a) Human action toward things (ideas, people, concepts) as directed by the meanings ascribed to these things; (b) the derivation of meanings from social interactions with subgroups of society; and (c) an interpretive process that mediates between the individual and the encountered thing. At the heart of symbolic interactionism is the notion of the interpretive process, which itself arises out of the ascription of meaning. In defending this theory, Blumer was parting ways from behaviourists and other theorists who did not, in Blumer's view, acknowledge the true nature or value of human interaction (Blumer, 1969). Behaviourists coded human interaction as a series of stimuli and responses, with little or no room for the human as an agent capable of responding to stimuli in different ways (Isajiw, 1998). Behaviourism was, in this sense, a deterministic theory of human interaction, whereas symbolic interactionism reserved some agency for the human as interpreter of the meanings that arose out of contact and communication with other humans (Wolf, 1995).

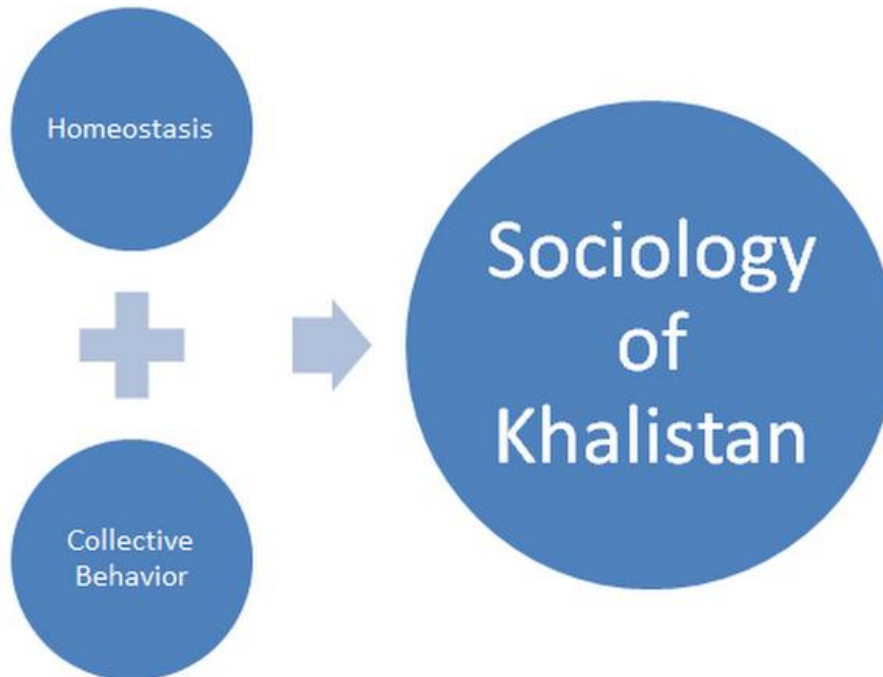
Symbolic interactionism can be used to study relationships within a community or between communities. In this study, symbolic interactionism was used to understand how the concept of Khalistan organises the relationship between Canadian Sikh youth and two other communities: The non-Sikh Indian community and the non-Sikh Canadian community. Historically, the concept of Khalistan has been used to distinguish Sikhs

from non-Sikhs, and in this sense the adoption of symbolic interactionism in this study was a means of understanding how Khalistan continues to serve as a means of allowing Canadian Sikh youth to differentiate themselves from the non-Sikh communities that are of relevance to their identities. The use of symbolic interactionism in this study complemented the homeostatic approach: Symbolic interactionism was used as a theoretical frame for understanding Sikh identity vis-à-vis non-Sikhs, while homeostasis was used as a theoretical frame for understanding intra-Sikh identity transactions and processes.

Both homeostasis and symbolic interactionism can be situated within the larger theoretical frame of Anderson's (2001) imagined community. In Anderson's theory, any community is defined by two key characteristics: Limitedness and sovereignty. A community must be bounded by some organising principles, ideas, practices, and concepts, to which members of the community give some loyalty. The community must also be free to assert its identity against rival communities. Khalistan is, of course, an actual political project for sovereignty, but even the concept of Khalistan can be used to understand how sovereignty defines or fails to define the identities of young Canadian Sikhs. From the perspective of Anderson's theory, as well as Sikh history, there are good reasons for taking sovereignty as a sociological frame that applies to identity, especially communal identity. Sikhism is a practice that is non-sovereign, in that India has always been hostile to Sikh autonomy in the Punjab (A. Ahmed, 2010; Dorn & Gucciardi, 2011; Ganguly, 1998; Gayer, 2006) and Canada is both not-India and not-Punjab (Biswas, 2004; Milan & Anita, 2014). As such, the Sikh identity is in some ways more vulnerable

to collapse, because it can be folded into either the larger force-field of Indian identity or into the newer and more immediate Canadian identity. Given these vulnerabilities, and the history of postcolonialism that lies behind them, it is possible to understand conceptual or political commitment to Khalistan among Canadian Sikh youth as a means of asserting the Sikh identity against rival communities. Khalistan does not actually need to succeed as a political project for it to succeed as a means of preserving Sikh youth's identity in the midst of larger, stronger communities. At the same time, a casual attitude towards Khalistan among Canadian Sikh youth can indicate that anxieties about communal identity in the midst of challenge are successfully managed by youth, by means other than Khalistan.

Focus: Internal. How does
Khalistan order and manage
intra-Sikh relationships?



Focus: External. How does
Khalistan manage the Sikh
identity vis-à-vis the non-
Sikh social realities of India
and Canada?

Figure 3. Interaction of Theoretical Frames. Note: Original graphic.

Figure 3 is meant to depict how, without denying the common conceptual roots of homeostasis and collective behaviour, they were used in a distinct manner in this study. As a frame, the collective behaviour component of symbolic interactionism focused on the role of Khalistan in relationships between Sikhs and non-Sikhs. The frame of homeostasis focused on Khalistan's role in managing the Sikh identity within the Sikh

community, with reference to the values that the community has historically tried to perpetuate.

Integration of Theoretical Perspectives

Interactionism can be thought of as a means of internal focus, as it was used to code and organise the data pertaining to Sikh identity vis-à-vis non-Sikh communal realities, while functional homeostasis and postcolonial theory are a means of understanding how Khalistan serves a role in establishing intra-Sikh identities and meanings. This synthesis is represented in Table 1.

Table 1 *Creating a Single Explanatory Perspective*

	Interactionism	Functionalism	
Theoretical Influences	Purposive behaviour as a building block of collective behaviour	Efforts to maintain homeostasis in conditions of postcolonialism	SYNTHESIS
	1 General signs of utility of Khalistan movement as an enabler of intra-Sikh relationships. 2 Disconfirming signs and other data.	1 General signs of utility of Khalistan movement as a means of managing intra-community relationships between Sikhs and non-Sikhs given the alienation, confusion, and contradictory nature of postcolonial life 2 Disconfirming signs and other data.	

Methodology of Study

The population for this sample consisted of young (18-25 years old) Canadian Sikhs in the Greater Toronto Area, Ontario. The sample was a convenience sample obtained from recruitment of subjects in Sikh temples, community temples, and other gathering places known to the researcher. There were three primary means of qualitative methodology and data collection. These methods were the (a) interview, (b) focus group, and (c) ethnographic observation. Data were collected by means of audio recordings and field journal entries, and were analysed through the dual coding approaches of symbolic interactionism and functional homeostasis. After data analysis, theories of young Canadian Sikh behaviour vis-à-vis Khalistan were generated through not only the classic interpretations of collective behaviour in symbolic interactionist and functionalist theory, but also through the lens of postcolonial identity theory.

Qualitative methodology was the original methodology employed for sociological research in the 19th century, when the discipline was first codified and practiced. In the 20th century, quantitative methods became increasingly popular in the discipline of sociology. For this study, qualitative methodology is appropriate for a number of reasons. First, the ontology of the study was subjective and phenomenologically oriented; Khalistan is not merely a movement, but also a concept that figures differently in the mental and social lives of Sikhs. In this way, both understanding Khalistan and determining how it functions is thus aided by qualitative approaches. Qualitative approaches were also appropriate in terms of axiology and rhetoric because of the researcher's position as an insider, intention to conduct ethnographic observation, and

inability to create a meaningful separation between self and subject. Thus, on all counts, qualitative methodology was appropriate for the purposes of this study, although of course it would be legitimate for some other kind of study design to employ quantitative means to explore the phenomenon of Khalistan.

There were a number of means by which the reliability and trustworthiness of participants were established. First, the use of three means of data collection—interviews, focus groups, and ethnographic observation—made it possible to cross-correlate the stated positions of participations in a triangulated fashion. This form of triangulation was used to ensure that both the derivation of themes and their interpretations were justified.

Without imposing a strict constraint on authenticity, some attention was paid to statements or forms of behaviour that, in any one research context, are radically different from how they appear in another research context. Data that were deemed to be unreliable, were still useful for the study, precisely because conflicting data gives evidence of social pressures, postcolonial contexts, and identity battles. Many scholars have noted that the experiences of diasporic communities, particularly when they live in countries connected to former colonial experiences, are fragmented, partial, and self-contradictory. While Canada was not a substantial colonial power, as an emanation of British power it recreates some psychic challenges for people whose ancestors were subject to British imperial power. For this reason, data that were also fragmented, partial, and self-contradictory were conscientiously evaluated, rather than uncoded.

Research Questions

Research Question 1: How does the Khalistan movement serve to order and manage intra-Sikh relationships, primarily those involving young people, in the Greater Toronto Area, Ontario?

Research Question 2: How does the Khalistan movement manage the Sikh identity vis-à-vis the non-Sikh realities of India and Canada?

Brief Review of the Literature

The Khalistan movement is not unitary. It is, founded on the idea of Sikh sovereignty embodied in the form of a nation-state for Sikhs in the Punjab (A. Ahmed, 2010; Banerjee, 2012; Biswas, 2004; Devgan, 2013; Gayer, 2012; Mohanka, 2005). Many nation-states have been founded in exactly the same way; that is, as the result of communal imagination and aspiration hinging on a sense of religious belonging (Anderson, 2001). In recent decades, the founding of both Pakistan and Israel was the end result of much the same process of imagined community that characterizes the modern Khalistan movement. At the present moment, the sovereign aspirations of both the Palestinian and Kurdish people similarly depend upon deep identification with a state-in-formation that has strong ethnic, linguistic, and religious meanings for them.

It is important to make this point at the outset, because not all studies on Khalistan take this broader perspective into account. There is a rich tradition of vilification of the idea of Khalistan in Canada based upon the admittedly terrorist actions of numerous supporters of Khalistan over the years, peaking with the 1985 bombing of Air India Flight 182 (for examples of this attitude operating in the Canadian policy sphere, see

Turlej, 2001). Other writers, while not vilifying the idea of Khalistan per se, have studied the Khalistan movement solely in its violent manifestations (Tharu, 2007).

Scholarly discussions on Khalistan typically take place within the broader domain of Sikh history, including history centered in both Punjab and the diaspora (Axel, 2002; Bennett, 2000). This literature treats Khalistan as a complex phenomenon, one that has theological, political, and cultural overtones. One of the reasons for the paucity of scholarly and objective work on the Khalistan movement is that the movement itself is highly fragmented; it is not associated with or spearheaded by a charismatic and unitary movement, such as the PKK is for the Kurds of Turkey (Zheger, 2013). There are dozens of movements, magazines, spokespeople, politicians, and Web sites associated with the Khalistan movement, and it is splintered into several distinct ideological, cultural, and political expressions (Taylor, 2013). Additionally, no spectacular acts of violence have been associated with the Khalistan movement since 1985, whereas both the Palestinians and the Kurds have been far more vocal, militant, and organised in trying to carve out nation-states for themselves.

As a religion with a proportionately fewer number of adherents, Sikhism has attracted less scholarly attention than have either Islam or Hinduism. The general scholarly neglect of Sikhism, coupled with the fact that the Sikh struggle for sovereign identity is more inchoate, fragmented, and dramatic than other ongoing national struggles, helps to explain where there are so few scholarly studies on Khalistan.

Sikh Youth in Canada

Nearly one in 100 Canadians is a Sikh (Hudak, 2005). Moreover, there are more Sikhs in Canada than either Muslims or Hindus, with a total representation that may be approaching 400,000—by far the largest concentration of Sikhs anywhere outside the Punjab (M. Singh, 2007). The numerical representation of Sikh youth, which is particularly strong in British Columbia, does not tell the whole story, however. Sikhs are a visible minority, distinct from the Anglo-French majority of Canada on the basis of not only appearance but also the distinctive Sikh dress, which includes turbans for men. As Sikhs immigrate or settle in well-established communities, their children face a choice: To assimilate at the cost of losing an important component of Sikh identity; or, to remain Sikh at the cost of being even more profoundly ‘other,’ not only in relation to Anglo-French Canadians but also Muslims and Hindus (Biswas, 2004; Hudak, 2005; La Brack, 2000).

Similar to the research gap with respect to Khalistan, and for much the same reason, there is also a gap in the sociological literature on Sikh youth. One such gap is that of the insiders’ perspective. Because the Sikh community, in Canada no less than in Punjab, can be insular (Hudak, 2005; M. Singh, 2007), there is a limit to the perceptiveness and comprehensiveness of outside judgments and observations. Moreover, many insider accounts of the Sikh community are written from the perspective of nominal Sikhs who may not closely affiliate with the community. The sociology of Sikhs by Sikhs is, as of yet, largely a blank space. As a result, the Sikh community, despite

having well over a century of history in Canada, remains opaque to not only sociological observers but also to many members of the non-Sikh Canadian public.

Gaps in the Literature

What emerges from the literature review is mainly a discernment of gaps. There is a lack of extensive scholarly work on Khalistan and the sociology of Canadian Sikh youth, and an even bigger lack of work that combines these two themes as a means of interrogating social meaning, identity, and community. What is missing from the literature is a compelling perspective of (a) how Khalistan functions as a means of managing intra-Sikh relations and (b) how Khalistan functions as a means of managing relations between Sikhs and non-Sikhs. This gap will be partially closed by the proposed research.

Delimitations of the Study

The study was delimited to Canadian Sikh youth who had some form of tangible transaction with the Khalistan movement, for example: Membership in a group, subscription to a newsletter, participation on a Web site, wearing of specific clothing, use of certain phrases with a particular political meaning, and other tokens of belonging, such as possession of Khalistani literature or art. Even though many Sikh youth have ideas about Khalistan, the subjects of this study were participants in what might be deemed the Khalistan movement, even though their intensity of participation varied.

Another important delimitation has to do with the role of theory. The title of the study is *Factors Motivating Sikh Canadian Youth to Become Involved in the Khalistan Movement*. Whether in sociology or any other discipline, motivations can be studied in

any number of ways, for example: As the autonomous decisions of an individual who derives uses and gratifications (Skidmore, 1979) from participation in a movement; or, as a deterministic model of group conformity. There are surely highly important personal motivations that Sikh youth have for joining the Khalistan movement; for example, a sense of pride might be motivation enough. The theoretical frames in this study employ a larger filter, however; the study is therefore less concerned with what Khalistan means to individual Sikh youth in his or her own representational space, and more interested in how Khalistan functions as a mediator of intra-Sikh activity and inter-community activity involving Sikhs. Thus, while the personal perspective is not altogether lost, it will be delimited to social interaction rather than, for example, personal rumination.

Conclusion of Introductory Chapter

This chapter has offered a brief introduction to Khalistan and to the role that it plays for Sikhs. Additionally, the introduction established how Khalistan can be a vehicle for exploring numerous sociological theories, of which the collective behaviour theory within symbolic interactionism and homeostasis within functionalism will serve as frames. Finally, the introduction discussed how interactionism, as informed by theories of purposive action, can provide an intra-community understanding of Khalistan while homeostasis, as informed by postcolonial theory, can provide an inter-community understanding of Khalistan.

Chapter two, the literature review, provides the necessary background information on Sikhs, both in India and Canada, and on the Khalistan movement. The survey of studies provides an overall context for the discussion of the study's framework in chapter

three, which draws upon general theories of symbolic interactionism and functionalism and specific theories in the form of purposive action theory and postcolonial theory. Chapter four, the discussion of methodology, explains how data will be collected, validated, coded, analysed, and used to build and test theories. Chapter five outlines how results and findings will be coded, while chapter six outlines the implications that the research might have, and what can be concluded. References will follow.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The literature review has been organised into six sections, which move from the general to the specific:

1. Punjab
2. Sikhism
3. Khalistan
4. Relevant Theoretical and Empirical Literature on Khalistan
5. Sikh Youth in Canada
6. Khalistan in Canada

The logic behind this organisational scheme is as follows: Khalistan can only be understood as a specific facet of the Sikh experience, which is itself a subset of the Punjabi experience. As such, the appropriate progression of literature is from Punjab to Sikhism and from Sikhism to Khalistan. Once an overview of these three organising spheres of experience is presented, the literature review will move to a more specific consideration of Khalistan as a theoretical and empirical object for sociological study, the experience of Sikh youth in Canada, and the phenomenon of Khalistan in Canada. Thus, there is a clear conceptual division between sections 1-3 and sections 4-6 of the literature review.

The Punjab

Any discussion of Punjab in a sociological context ought to be bounded theoretically. One such theoretical boundary has been provided by Abrams, who has argued that

Historical sociology is thus not some special kind of sociology; rather, it is the essence of the discipline. All varieties stress the so-called ‘two-sidedness’ of the social world, presenting it as a world of which we are both the creators and the creatures, both makers and prisoners; a world which our actions construct and a world that powerfully constrains us. The distinctive quality of the social world for the sociologist is, accordingly, its *facticity*—the way in which society is experienced by individuals as a fact-like system, external, given, coercive, even when individuals are busy making and re-making it through their own imagination, communication, and action. (Abrams, 1982, p. 2)

The Punjab is a large area of land with a long and complex natural as well as social history. In undertaking any historical or sociological discussion of the Punjab, the concept of facticity can provide an appropriate delimitation. Using Abrams’ (1982) approach, the Punjab can be understood both as a fact-like system that has determined the subsequent identities of its inhabitants as well as an imaginative product of its inhabitants. In this sense, the Punjab itself is both a cause and effect of sociological facts about its inhabitants, and these dual aspects of the facticity of the Punjab can serve as useful points of demarcation for discussing this province.

The Punjab as a Fact-Like System

In the *Mahabharata*, the national epic of India, Punjab is referred to as the land of the five rivers (Audrey, 2011). Although the *Mahabharata* has not been precisely dated, there is a scholarly consensus that it was compiled in the 8th or 9th centuries B.C.E., and

might plausibly reflect an even older oral tradition (Audrey, 2011). Thus, some acknowledgement of the Punjab as a distinct region appears to have been in the Indian national consciousness for at least 3,000 years, and probably longer. Geographically, the Punjab is part of the Indo-Gangetic Plain, where, archaeological evidence suggests, Indian civilization began in c. 3,300 B.C.E. with the Indus Valley Civilization (N. Singh & Sontakke, 2002). The confluence of the five rivers in the Punjab and other parts of the Indo-Gangetic Plain made it possible for the Indus Valley Civilization to support a fairly large population base through food cultivation and access to potable water. The Indo-Gangetic Plain has been continuously inhabited by large numbers of people for over 5,000 years, benefiting always from the fertile soil and plentiful water of the region. The Punjab is among the best agricultural zones within the Indo-Gangetic Plain (Gatrad, Jhutti-Johal, Gill, & Sheikh, 2005; N. Singh & Sontakke, 2002).

These facts about the Punjab take on a sociological importance when considered as determinants of the feelings, imaginations, and, in a word, identities of Punjabis. To this day, the Punjabi self-concept (held not only by Sikhs but also by Hindus and Muslims from the region) is closely bound to the idea of a fertile homeland (Bombwall, 1986; Gatrad et al., 2005; Himadri, 2012, 2013; Juergensmeyer, 1988; Kaur, 1986; Parihar, 2006). In terms of facticity, this self-concept can be thought of as the end product of cultural self-imagining, but it is also rooted in the geography of the Punjab itself.

Another important component of the facticity of the Punjab is the idea of openness. With its five rivers connected to the Himalayas, The Punjab is tied to the Central Asia lands that lie beyond India. The Punjab is also the centerpiece of the Indo-

Gangetic Plain. In this sense, the Punjab occupies a geographically important position that has, over the centuries, helped to determine the identities of its inhabitants. Depicted in the *Mahabharata*, the Kurukshetra war took place in the Punjab. According to the opinions of several historians, the epic reflects genuine battles between various principalities that had sprung up in the region, including the Indo-Aryan Kuru tribe, which might be a fictional version of the so-called Black and Red Ware Culture that flourished in Iron Age India between the 12th and 9th centuries B.C.E (Audrey, 2011). At the time of the *Mahabharata*, India was a remarkably hybrid country that included both aboriginal elements and incoming invaders, a theme that would define the subsequent millennia of Indian, and Punjabi, history (Bayly, 1985). The location of the Punjab makes the region an unavoidable point of encounter for invading forces entering India from the north. Indeed, long after the events written of in the *Mahabharata*, the Punjab was invaded by figures including Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan, Darius I, Babur, and many other notable conquerors (Dhavan, 2007). The Punjab is thus a historical crossroads; a place in which people from innumerable races, tribes, and backgrounds have mixed, fought, reproduced, and given rise to a blended culture (Dharamjeet, 2011). The diversity of the Punjab is and always has been strongly influenced by its geographic placement. To this day, the Punjab contains perhaps the most historical and linguistic diversity of any region within either India or Pakistan (Crossette, 2004).

The Punjab from Mahmud of Ghazni to the Mughal Invasion

The Punjab has been home to settled civilizations for 6,000 years. The history of Punjabi culture as relevant to the Sikhs, and, later, to the idea of Khalistan, can be dated

to the first military foray of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni into the Punjab, which took place in 1001 C.E. (Anooshahr, 2008). At this time, Sikhism as a religion did not exist. Because Sikhism arose in the context of intense Hindu-Muslim rivalry within India, and because Sikhism is in a sense a synthesis and denial of both of these larger Indian religions, it is appropriate to begin a detailed overview of Punjabi history with the Ghaznavid conquest, which established a firm footing for Islam in India.

By the 10th century C.E., there had been a westward migration of various Turkic tribes into Central Asia and even various parts of Europe. Inter-tribal rivalries on the Central Asian steppes had caused animist Turks to migrate in search of better pasture for their animals as well as greater political freedom for themselves (Alam, 2009). Following the rise of Islam (dating from the c. 610 prophetic mission of Muhammad, and culminating in the rise of an Arabo-Islamic Empire in the 630s, after the conquest of Persia), Arab Muslims had moved increasingly closer to Central Asia (Balabanlilar, 2010). Arabs were extremely influential in converting Turks to Islam by three means: (a) Asking for prominent Turkish kings and princes to convert to Islam, in order to receive Arab military support against the Chinese and other enemies of the Turks; (b) converting Turks by exposing them to Sufism and other forms of Islamic belief that were somewhat close to the steppe religion already practiced by the Turks; and (c) hiring Turks as mercenaries to fight in Arab armies, thus bringing them into contact with Islamic civilization.

As a result of these activities, many Turks had accepted Islam by the 10th century C.E. Mahmud of Ghazni, who invaded India and the Punjab 17 times during his reign,

was himself a Turk enthroned in present-day Afghanistan. Like other Turkish rulers and generals of the time, Mahmud of Ghazni had emerged from one of the most militarised societies in the world (Balabanlilar, 2010). Indeed, the Arabs themselves, who at the time were unstoppable in their conquest of lands from Spain to Africa, never defeated the Turks in direct battle, and came to believe that the Turks were the finest soldiers in the world (Balabanlilar, 2010). The Turks of Mahmud's time were masters of horsemanship and mounted archery, which at the time conferred enormous advantages in warfare against immobile, armored enemies (Balabanlilar, 2010).

Looking south at India, Mahmud saw a fertile land that was ill-prepared to repel an invasion from a Turkish army. Mahmud made numerous incursions into India, where he gained infamy for ransacking temples and destroying villages. The precedent set by Mahmud was disastrous for the local populations of India, as Mahmud's successful gathering of booty from India signaled other Central Asian kings and adventurers that India was ripe for the taking (Balabanlilar, 2010). After the death of Mahmud, the Ghaznavids attempted to consolidate their hold on northern India, but they were displaced by Muhammad Ghori, founder of the Ghurid Empire. Muhammad Ghori appointed Qutb-ud-Din Aybak, who, like Ghori himself, was a Turkish-speaking Muslim, to the governorship of the Punjab. Upon Ghori's death, Aybak declared himself to be independent and founded what historians came to know as the Delhi Sultanate. Aybak's reign was of historical interest because it was the first time that a Turko-Muslim king ruled a part of India from within India. The Ghaznavids, who had seized parts of the Punjab before the Delhi Sultanate, ruled from Ghazni, not India. In this sense, Aybak's

reign was the beginning of an ongoing period of Muslim habitation of the Punjab (Balabanlilar, 2010).

The Delhi Sultanate lasted from 1206 to 1526. During this time, the Sultanate was ruled by five distinct dynasties: The Mamluk dynasty (to which Aybak and his successors belonged), the Khilji dynasty, the Tughluq dynasty, the Sayyid dynasty, and the Lodhi dynasty. For a time during the Tughluq dynasty, the seat of the Delhi Sultanate was sacked by Timur. Timur's incursion into India was tremendously traumatic for both Muslims and Hindus (Balabanlilar, 2010). There are reliable reports that, when Timur sacked Delhi, his army created giant pyramids of human skulls, slaughtered hundreds of thousands of people, and engaged in other tactics of absolute warfare that Timur had inherited from one of his distant ancestors, Genghis Khan (Balabanlilar, 2010). While Timur's sack of Delhi was perhaps the most egregious example of Muslim militarism in India, Hindus (and later, Sikhs) suffered under various forms of Muslim violence, organised and unorganised, for centuries. Indeed, as the discussion of Sikhism later in the chapter will disclose, the formation of the Sikh identity owes much to the military oppression of the Muslim Mughals.

The founder of Sikhism, Guru Nanak, was born near Lahore, in the heart of the Punjab (Arvinder, 2012). At the time, Lahore was under the governorship of Daulat Khan Lodhi, the brother of Ibrahim Lodhi, the last king of the Delhi Sultanate. Large swaths of the Punjab were firmly in the hands of the Delhi Sultanate. Indians belonging to the Rajput clan prevented the Delhi Sultanate from expanding much beyond the Punjab, however.

In 1499, when he was 30, Guru Nanak experienced a revelation and later told those around him that both Hinduism and Islam were false. Guru Nanak claimed to be traversing a new path, God's path, that was neither Hindu nor Muslim (Arvinder, 2013). At the time, this sort of statement was extraordinarily dangerous, as India was militarily and politically dominated by Hindus and Muslims. Nonetheless, Guru Nanak did not come to harm. Instead, he undertook five major journeys throughout India to spread the message of what would become Sikhism. Upon his death in 1539, the seeds of Sikhism had been sown deep into Indian soil.

Between the years of 1499 and 1539, when Guru Nanak was active in the cause of Sikhism, India underwent a revolutionary change. Dissatisfied with his brother, Daulat Khan Lodhi and his uncle, Ala-ud-din Lodhi, both settled on the idea of inviting Babur (the great-great-great-grandson of Timur and also a descendant of Genghis Khan) to invade the Punjab (Dale, 1990, 1996; Quinn, 2008). Babur, who left behind a fascinating autobiography, the *Baburnama* (literally, the Book of Babur), was aware of his imperial lineage, and was tempted by the idea of conquering the Punjab. Timur had also conquered the Punjab about 120 years before Daulat Khan Lodhi and Ala-ud-Din Lodhi wrote their letter of invitation to Babur. However, perhaps more importantly, Babur was embroiled in an unwinnable power struggle against the Uzbeks, who had taken his capitol of Samarkand and left him without a base of operations in Central Asia. Under these conditions, nearing 40 but in the possession of a loyal and well-trained army, Babur decided to cross into India and try his luck in the Punjab in 1519.

Unfortunately for Babur, the dynamics of the Punjab changed shortly after he entered the province (Quinn, 2008). Ibrahim Lodhi had learned of the duplicity of his relatives and supporters, and had begun a purge of local governors and generals. When Babur reached Lahore, expecting to find Daulat Khan Lodhi, he found the loyalist forces of Ibrahim Lodhi instead. Babur was faced with two choices: Retreat back to Central Asia and Samarkand, where the Uzbeks awaited him; or, direct confrontation with the resurgent Ibrahim Lodhi. Babur chose the latter. In 1526, in the First Battle of Panipat, Babur and his army of perhaps 15,000 men faced the numerically superior army of Ibrahim Lodhi. Babur's superior strategic thinking, his battle-hardened soldiers, and the novel use of artillery, which had never yet played a role in an Indian battle, all turned the tide in favor of this new conqueror. Babur slew Ibrahim Lodhi and laid the foundations of the Mughal Empire (Quinn, 2008). For the next three centuries, the Mughal Empire controlled the Punjab.

Guru Nanak's last missionary trip ended just a few years before the Battle of Panipat. Guru Nanak would not necessarily have been aware of the importance of the fall of the Delhi Sultanate in the context of the nascent religion of Sikhism. After all, the Delhi Sultanate had itself been ruled by five dynasties, and briefly overrun by Timur; an observer like Guru Nanak might have concluded that rulership of the Punjab was passing to yet another Turko-Muslim adventurer from the north. Indeed, when Guru Nanak died in 1539, the Mughal Empire passed from Babur's son, Humayun, to Sher Shah Suri, who defeated Humayun at the Battle of Chausa (Dale, 1990). At the time, no one could have

predicted that Humayun would return, rout Sher Shah Suri, retake the Mughal Empire, and lay the foundations for its expansion across all of India, transcending the Punjab.

From 1206 to 1539, the Punjab remained exclusively under the political control of Muslim dynasties. Surrounding the Punjab were other Indian states, ruled and demographically dominated by Hindus. In this sense, Guru Nanak and his early disciples lived in, and inherited, a Punjab that was dichotomously divided between Hindu and Muslim influence (Blake, 1986; Dewhurst, 1931). Political or commercial advancement in the Punjab required cultivating influence in the court of the Delhi Sultanate, and, later, in the Mughal court. There appears to have been some degree of religious leniency at the time, however. Guru Nanak was able to broadcast his message, which repudiated Islam as well as Hinduism, in the center of a Muslim-ruled state, and was also able to travel freely to spread his message.

It is not clear whether Guru Nanak's mobility reflects the ineffectiveness of the Delhi Sultanate's rule, or the relative tolerance of its leaders. In this context, it is worth noting that the Delhi Sultanate underwent five major dynastic changes and a disastrous invasion from Timur in just a few centuries, which might have precluded the ability of any one ruler to create a zone of orthodoxy. It is also worth noting that the Delhi Sultans were descended from Turks whose acceptance of Islam was itself less than orthodox, and who might therefore have been uninterested in policing the orthodoxy of figures such as Guru Nanak. Finally, as noted, the Punjab had been a remarkably diverse place since at least the Iron Age, so local rulers or individuals of all religions might have been unthreatened by the presence of religious diversity. For whatever reason or combination

of reasons, Guru Nanak found the Punjab of 1499 to 1539 to be a fruitful place to spread the message of Sikhism.

The 10 Gurus: Sikhism Establishes a Claim to the Punjab

This section of the literature review contains a narrative description of the lives, achievements, and importance of each of the 10 Gurus in the Sikh tradition. It is followed by a discussion of the Sikh experience until the end of the Sikh Empire and a transition to the contemporary situation of the Punjab. Data about the 10 Gurus were obtained from numerous sources synthesized into a single narrative.

Prior to his death in 1539, Guru Nanak appointed a successor: Guru Angad. Under Guru Angad, Sikhism expanded significantly. The second Guru was responsible for many innovations, including (a) the creation of the Gurmukhi script, which remains the most common means of writing Punjabi today; (b) the expansion of the Guru Granth Sahib, the collection of Sikh scriptures; (c) and the founding of numerous schools and centers of worship (Matringe, 1986; Murphy, 2007; White & Ray, 1977). Guru Angad appears to have risen to a position of some prominence in the Punjab, going well beyond the influence he possessed as the leader of the Sikhs. There is some evidence the second Mughal Emperor, Humayun, sought Guru Angad's benediction prior to retaking Delhi (Lal, 2001; Muhammad, 2009). Before Guru Angad died in 1552, he chose a third Guru—Guru Amar Das—and left behind a greatly expanded Sikhism.

Guru Amar Das continued to build on the legacy of the previous two Gurus. By the time of Guru Amar Das, the Punjab was firmly under the control of the Mughals descended from Babur. Humayun had been pushed out of India by the Afghan Sher Shah

Suri, an interloping claimant to the Mughal throne, but later returned and reclaimed power. By the time Guru Amar Das ascended to the leadership of the Sikhs, Humayun's son Akbar had expanded Mughal leadership over much of northern India. By all accounts, Akbar and Guru Amar Das had an amicable relationship (Alam, 2009; Graham, 1969; Habib, 1997). Akbar was well-known for his tolerance. Although born a Muslim unlike Guru Nanak, Akbar suspected that true worship of the divine could not be accomplished through sectarian worship. Akbar gathered together many great religious thinkers from across India, including Sikh thinkers. Together, they attempted to form a new religion, the *din-i-ilahi* (literally, 'divine religion') on the basis of the points of consensus in the Indian religions. This syncretic approach had interesting parallels with Sikhism, which had also combined ideas from Islam (e.g., monotheism) with ideas from Hinduism (e.g., reincarnation) and Buddhism (e.g., the quest to purge worldly desire and striving) and yet transcended all these religions by generating a unique set of beliefs and practices. During Akbar's reign, Sikhs grew in number because of the absence of Mughal persecution. The personal favour that Akbar showed to Guru Amar Das, by visiting him repeatedly and making several land bequests to the Sikh community, impressed many Mughal subjects (Alam, 2009; Habib, 1997; Jain, 2012).

Guru Amar Das was responsible for numerous innovations in Sikh life. He divided India into Manjis, or preaching districts, each of which had a Sikh leader at its head. The creation of the Manjis enormously improved the Sikh organisational structure, without which the religion would not have spread as rapidly as it did (Fenech, 1997; Matringe, 1986; White & Ray, 1977). In addition, Guru Amar Das was notable for his

condemnation of Hindu and Muslim practices that he found socially and spiritually unacceptable. For example, Guru Amar Das condemned the Hindu practice of *sati*, the immolation of widows upon the deaths of their husbands. He also condemned the Hindu custom of castes, and the Muslim custom of veiling for women. These kinds of doctrinal statements went a long way towards establishing a distinct identity for Sikhs (Dhillon, 1988; Griffin, 1901; W. H. McLeod, 2005). Given that Hinduism itself contained a number of renegade movements, and that the founder of Sikhism had been born a Hindu, it was important for the new religion to differentiate itself from Hinduism in particular, upon threat of being re-assimilated into Hinduism. As a monotheistic religion, Sikhism had much in common with Islam; however, the Sikh insistence on doctrines such as reincarnation, which is mentioned repeatedly in the Guru Granth Sahib and which is anathema to Muslims, also ensured that Sikhism would resist theological confusion with Islam.

The fourth Guru of the Sikhs, Guru Ram Das, was the first of the Gurus to be born in Mughal India. Born in 1534, eight years after Babur's decisive victory at the Battle of Panipat, Guru Ram Das was came of age in a Punjab that was firmly dominated by the Mughals. Guru Ram Das was the son-in-law of Guru Amar Das. His nephew married Babi Amro, the daughter of the second Guru Angad. Thus, there had been close family ties between each of the Gurus who had succeeded Guru Nanak, supporting the inference that Sikhism was not only a religious family but also a consanguineous one. To this day, endogamy remains extremely common about Sikhs and ensures the continuity of

Sikh identity, both in the Punjab and in the Sikh diaspora (H. McLeod, 2008; T. R. Metcalf, 2007; Gurpreet Singh, 2003; Jasjit Singh, 2014b).

One of Guru Ram Das's most important contributions to both Sikhism and the culture of the Punjab was the construction of a temple at Amritsar, known as the Golden Temple. The Golden Temple is the most iconic site in Sikhism and one of the most recognisable buildings in the world. Over the years, the Golden Temple has come to function as a focal point for Sikh communal identity, including ambitions to found Khalistan (Arvinder, 2013; Basra, 1996; Gurharpal, 2006; Mohanka, 2005; Rimpay, 2013). At the time of Guru Ram Das, however, the site consisted mainly of a well for ritual ablutions and a number of huts in which the Guru's well-diggers and followers lived. Over time, the site began to attract merchants, mendicants, and spiritual seekers from all over the Punjab, resulting in the eventual formation of the city of Amritsar as well as of the Golden Temple at its heart. The establishment of Amritsar by Guru Ram Das was a signal achievement for Sikhism: by creating a central site for worship and trade, Sikhism spread even more rapidly and began to acquire more prestige throughout India, but especially in the Punjab.

Guru Ram Das appointed one of his sons, Arjan Dev, as the fifth Guru of the Sikhs in 1581. By then, 82 years had passed since Guru Nanak experienced his revelation and founded the religion of Sikhism. Until Guru Arjan Dev, every Sikh Guru had, despite occasional tensions with Muslim rulers and the Hindu populace, avoided violence and advanced the cause of Sikhism across the Punjab, and, to a lesser extent, through the rest of India. Guru Arjan Dev came to a violent end. His time as Guru was the demarcation

point between two phases of the era of Gurus: A phase of peaceful expansion, and a phase of violent contestation by the Mughals (Mohanka, 2005).

Guru Arjan Dev's time as Guru began well. Akbar, the famously tolerant emperor, was still on the Mughal throne when Guru Arjan Dev succeeded Guru Ram Das. Moreover, Guru Arjan Dev was successful in extending the building of Amritsar, presiding over the erection of the Golden Temple itself. Guru Arjan Dev also extended the Sikh-majority city of Ramdaspur. Guru Arjan Dev also compiled the hymns and writings of the earlier Gurus into the *Guru Granth Sahib*, giving Sikhism an official scripture. During Guru Arjan Dev's time, pretenders to the position of Guru had begun to insert their own compositions into Sikh scripture, threatening to dilute the doctrinal purity and continuity of the religion; Guru Arjan Dev put an end to this dangerous trend. Guru Arjan Dev's relentless construction projects, compilation of the *Guru Granth Sahib*, and other services on behalf of Sikhism were remarkable. In his 25 years as Guru, he elevated Sikhism to a place among the other great religions of India. The Guru's spiritual and secular powers were so great that his followers took to calling him the True King (Pashaura Singh, 1996).

Akbar died in 1605, leaving the throne to his far less tolerant and more warlike son Jahangir. Guru Arjan Dev was tortured and put to death by the new Mughal Emperor Jahangir in 1606. By this time, the Sikh community had become quite large, particularly in the Mughal power center of the Punjab; historians agree that Jahangir and the subsequent Mughals saw the Sikhs as a growing threat (Alam, 2009; Ali, 1978; Blake, 1979). Sikhism was particularly vulnerable to Mughal attempts at coercion because the

Guru figure could easily be identified and slain by the enemies of Sikhism. Jahangir's own character should not be discounted as a motive in his murder of Guru Arjan Dev. In his autobiography, Jahangir noted that his intentions were to bring Sikhism (which he misconstrued as a form of Hinduism) into the fold of Islam, or else to exterminate it (Alvi, 1989; Lefèvre, 2007). In doing so, Jahangir was currying favour with his own constituency of orthodox Muslims, who had become increasingly displeased with the spread of syncretism throughout India, particularly in the Punjab. By this time in the Mughal reign, the *ulama*, or collective body of Muslim scholars and leaders, had come to exert a great deal of influence on the state. In Jahangir they found an orthodox Muslim who combined a streak of personal intolerance with a desire to bring Sikhism to heel. These dynamics led to the death of Guru Arjan Dev in 1605, giving Sikhism its first true martyr and bringing an end to the era of Sikhism's peaceful expansion.

Aware of their vulnerability to Mughal domination, Sikhs underwent a fairly radical change between the time of the fifth and sixth Gurus. The son of Guru Arjan Dev, Hargobind, became the sixth Guru. He is best remembered for wearing two swords (one representing spiritual power and the other representing secular power), as well as for encouraging the Sikhs towards militancy (Mansukhani, 1993; Murphy, 2007). Under Guru Hargobind, Sikh men trained as soldiers. Guru Hargobind was of a different character than the previous Gurus. Whereas his predecessors had tended to be gentle, meditative men, Guru Hargobind was a warrior who enjoyed activities such as wrestling, hunting, and military exercises. Given the circumstances of Jahangir's crackdown on Sikhism, Guru Hargobind was the right Guru for the times. He constructed a fort called

Logarh at Amritsar, designed a Sikh flag, and assembled a small army of Sikhs. Thus, Guru Hargobind took the first steps towards establishing the Sikhs as an independent temporal power, steps that would culminate in the formation of the Sikh Empire in 1799 and that continue to resonate in contemporary calls for Khalistan.

Guru Hargobind fared better with Jahangir than had Guru Arjan Dev. Jahangir had Guru Hargobind imprisoned for roughly a year and a half. Due to a combination of pressure from heterodox Muslims (including the Sufi Mian Mir) and the deterrent effect created by Hargobind's newly militarised followers, Jahangir eventually had Guru Hargobind released from imprisonment (Alvi, 1989; Lefèvre, 2007). Jahangir and Guru Hargobind coexisted in relative peace until the death of Jahangir in 1627. Sikh-Mughal relationships deteriorated considerably when Jahangir's son, Shah Jahan, took the throne in 1628. Much like his father in 1606, Shah Jahan was aware of the tenuousness of his position as the Mughal Emperor and sought to strengthen his position by appealing to his base constituency of orthodox Muslims and *ulema* (Alvi, 1989; Blake, 2002). Shah Jahan began his reign by ordering that two Hindu temples and a Sikh temple in Lahore be demolished and replaced with mosques. Under Shah Jahan, Mughal forces skirmished with Guru Hargobind, but there was never a full-fledged Mughal war on the Sikhs at this time. Such a strategy could have proven costly to Shah Jahan, given that the Sikhs had grown in both number and militancy over the time of Guru Hargobind.

The seventh Guru, Guru Har Rai, was a grandson of Guru Hargobind. Guru Har Rai's leadership of the Sikhs overlapped with the reigns of two Mughal emperors: Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb. Shah Jahan was reasonably tolerant towards the Sikhs, owing

partly to the tolerant nature of the emperor's son, Dara Shikoh. Aurangzeb was no friend of the Sikhs, however. Upon his ascension to the throne, Aurangzeb decided that the best way to deal with Sikhism was not to fight it directly, but to seize control of its internal power structure (Graham, 1969). Aurangzeb reasoned that the best approach to the Sikh threat was to ensure that the Guru was loyal to the emperor. Aurangzeb courted Ram Rai, the eldest son of Guru Har Rai, and found that Ram Rai was willing to work with the Mughals. Ram Rai's political maneuverings were noticed by his father, however, who disowned Ram Rai and established his younger son, Har Krishan, as eighth Guru of the Sikhs (Fenech, 1997; White & Ray, 1977).

Guru Har Krishan was only five when he became Guru. The decision to appoint Har Krishan as Guru was clearly associated with Guru Har Rai's desire to skip over Ram Rai, who was open to Mughal influence. By not appointing Ram Rai the Guru, however, Guru Har Rai had gambled that a five-year-old boy could lead the Sikhs. Guru Har Krishan received considerable help from a council of five Sikhs, but did not have time to mature in the office of Guru or put his stamp on the steadily deteriorating relationship between the Mughals and the Sikhs (Dorn & Gucciardi, 2011). Guru Har Krishan contracted smallpox and died at the age of eight, at which time Tegh Bahadur, the youngest son of Guru Hargobind, became Guru. Tegh Bahadur's ascension was not without difficulty. Upon Guru Har Krishan's death, there were numerous claimants to the position of ninth Guru. In particular, Dhir Mal, the nephew of Tegh Bahadur, made a forceful claim to the office. Indeed, for the first time in the history of the Sikhs, succession to Guruship became physically violent. Upon realising that Tegh Bahadur

would likely be installed as the next Guru, Dhir Mal's followers attacked and wounded Tegh Bahadur.

Aurangzeb, who had perhaps grown tired of trying to secure a Mughal loyalist in the position of Guru, had Tegh Bahadur brought in chains to Delhi, and offered him a choice: Conversion to Islam, or death. During Tegh Bahadur's tenure, he had travel extensively to preach, and had vocally defended the rights of Hindus to remain unconverted to Islam; activities that had drawn the further ire of Aurangzeb (Graham, 1969). Aurangzeb's forces had grown stronger over time through a combination of taxation, rigorous military training, and ongoing allegiances with Hindu Rajputs. Moreover, since the time of Guru Hargobind, the Sikh community had grown weaker because of difficulties involving succession to Guruship and constant pressure from the Mughals. Accordingly, the Mughals were now positioned to demand concessions from the Sikhs, the most important of which was conversion to Islam. Tegh Bahadur resisted this forced choice and became the second martyr among the Gurus; after a litany of tortures, he was beheaded by Aurangzeb in 1675.

The 10th and last Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, was the only son of the martyred ninth Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur. Gobind Singh became Guru at the age of nine. Guru Gobind Singh renewed the military preparations of his ancestors, in particular Guru Hargobind, understanding that Sikhism could not survive the Mughal onslaught without an army—and accompanying national consciousness—of its own.

In 1699, at the Baisakhi festival, Guru Gobind Singh created the order of the Khalsa, or "pure ones." Guru Gobind Singh chose five Sikh men at the festival, baptised

them, had himself baptised by them, and also created a means for transforming Sikhs into a physically distinct, ritually-bound order (Dorn & Gucciardi, 2011; Hardip Singh, 2014; H. McLeod, 2008; Shani, 2008b). Guru Gobind Singh gave all Sikh men the name of Singh ('lion'), all Sikh women the name of princess ('Kaur'), and gave the collective Sikh community its so-called 'Five Ks': Kesh (uncut hair), Kangha (a wooden comb), Kara (an iron bracelet), Kirpan (a sword), and Kacchera (an undergarment representing virtue).

For the next nine years, Guru Gobind Singh engaged in various skirmishes with the Mughals. He was assassinated in 1708. Dying of his wounds, he stated that the next (and timeless) Guru of the Sikhs would be the Guru Granth Sahib, and that the direction of the community would be left to the five Sikhs, the Khalsa, that he had baptised in 1699 (Nikky-Guninder Kaur, 2010; Radhakrishnan, 1957; Pashaura Singh, 2008). The era of the 10 Gurus in the Punjab was over, but Sikhism would prosper.

These first two centuries of Sikhism were ably summarized by Cunningham as follows:

Thus, at the end of two centuries, had the Sikh faith become established as a prevailing sentiment and guiding principle to work its way in the world. Nanak discouraged his little society of worshippers from Hindu idolatry and Muhammadan [*sic*] superstition, and placed them free on a broad basis of religious and moral purity; Amar Das preserved the infant community from declining into a sect of quietists or ascetics, Arjun gave his increasing followers a written rule of conduct and a civil organisation; Har

Gobind added the use of arms and a military system; and Gobind Singh bestowed on them a distinct political existence, and inspired them with the desire of being socially free and nationally independent. (Cunningham, 1918, pp. 89-90)

The era of the 10 Gurus is of vast sociological importance for the Sikhs. It was during this time (1499 to 1708) that the core components of Sikh identity were defined. The beliefs, rituals, clothing, names, and main centers of worship of Sikhism were established by the time of Guru Gobind Singh's death, and have retained their relevance to Sikh identity into contemporary times. Sikh identity, whether individual or collective, cannot be understood without reference to events that took place during the lifetimes of the 10 Gurus. Moreover, the concept of Khalistan only makes sense against the backdrop of the 10 Gurus.

Backdrop to Khalistan: The Era of Sikh Empire in the Punjab

During the lifetimes of the 10 Gurus, Sikhism never claimed formal sovereignty as a state. Although Sikhism had a flag, forts, soldiers, an organised leadership, and other signs and symbols of autonomy, the Sikh community neither had nor seemed to aspire to sovereignty. Of course, the Sikhs did possess de facto sovereignty over places such as Amritsar in the Punjab that were inhabited almost exclusively by Sikhs. Moreover, despite the occasional clashes between the Mughals and the Gurus, ordinary Sikhs seem to have been relatively free to practice their religion. The Mughal emperors Jahangir and Aurangzeb focused their attempts at forced conversion on the Gurus and other Sikh religious leaders, not on the rank and file of Sikhism (Alvi, 1989; Lefèvre, 2007).

Moreover, the Mughals did not attempt to eradicate large segments of the Sikh civilian population—that strategy would be employed later in the 18th century, but not during the time of the 10 Gurus (Ali, 1978; Schimmel, 2004). Guru Hargobind and Guru Gobind Singh in particular exercised what could be called a national consciousness, but it is not clear whether such a consciousness was leader-driven or emerged organically from the aspirations of ordinary Sikhs.

After the death of Guru Gobind Singh, the idea of a Sikh principality appears to have impressed itself on both Sikh leaders and ordinary Sikhs. The violent deaths of three Gurus, combined with Guru Gobind Singh's overt attempts to create a physically, spiritually, and temporally distinct Sikh polity within India, aroused Sikh desire to seize land of their own. This desire was not necessarily for expansionist or violent purposes, but rather as a means of obtaining freedom and self-determination (Louis E. Fenech, 1997; Kaur Singh, 2008; Matringe, 1986).

The history of the Punjab does not give much evidence of ethno-religious state or identity building. The rulers (first the Delhi Sultans and later the Mughals) of the Punjab were Muslims in a part of India that remained demographically dominated by Hindus. The invading Muslims did not intend to create an Islamic state; however, by the time of Jahangir's accession in 1606, the Mughals did appear inclined to Islamise as much of India, particularly northern India, as was feasible. Sikhism threatened the Mughals precisely because it resisted such a scheme of assimilation (Dorn & Gucciardi, 2011). As such, the idea of Khalistan must be understood against the backdrop of changing Mughal politics in the Punjab at the beginning of the 17th century. Without the Mughal push to

forcibly Islamise India, it is doubtful that Sikhs would have moved so aggressively to militarise and nationalise their organisational structures and underlying ideology. After all, under the first four Gurus, Sikhism expanded peaceably throughout the Punjab. Moreover, as a belief system, Sikhism was opposed to the idea of domination over others. Whereas Sikhs surrendered themselves to their Gurus, the Gurus themselves were remarkably accommodating to people of different religions—who were fed in Sikh communal kitchens and who received various other forms of charity and assistance from the Sikh faithful (Griffin, 1901; Nesbitt, 2005; Gurpreet Singh, 2003). The idea of Khalistan emerged in the aftermath of Mughal power politics. The Sikhs were left with little doubt that they could only live peaceably if they controlled the apparatus of state power. Guru Hargobind certainly acted on these principles, and Guru Gobind Singh brought them to their natural conclusion: The creation of what can be called a Sikh national identity rooted in the Punjab.

The death of Guru Gobind Singh thus signaled an important turn in Sikh aspirations in the Punjab. The Sikhs had the ability and desire to pursue self-determination. The Sikhs had military experience, they were suspicious of the Mughals, and they had embraced the communal identity that Guru Gobind Singh had given them. The Sikhs of the early 18th century were on a path to self-determination that would culminate 91 years later, upon the formation of the Sikh Empire under Ranjit Singh. The Sikh Empire, which lasted from 1799 to 1849, constitutes perhaps the high point of Sikh autonomy in world history. The Sikh Empire exercised sovereignty over the provinces of Lahore, Multan, Peshawar, and Kashmir. It also provides a template for Khalistan, in that

the empire functioned, at least for a time, as a Sikh homeland. Although long deceased, the Sikh Empire remains a beacon to those who would reinstitute Sikh rule in the Punjab; it is therefore an appropriate backdrop to any discussion of Khalistan, and to what Khalistan means to Sikhs.

After the death of Guru Gobind Singh in 1708, Banda Singh, a disciple of the Guru, took temporal authority over the Sikhs, although no one would ever again combine this kind of authority with the spiritual power of a Guru. Banda came to lead the Sikhs at about the same time as the Emperor Aurangzeb died. Aurangzeb's son Bahadur Shah became the new Mughal emperor. , He had to contend with his rebellious brother, Kambaksh. While Bahadur Shah was busy with Kambaksh, as well as with the restive Marathas and Rajputs, Banda Singh took a Sikh army to the province of Sirhind. Banda Singh's sack of Sirhind was the first time that a Sikh army had attacked a civilian settlement; previous Sikh military engagements had been largely defensive in nature (Dorn & Gucciardi, 2011). The sack of Sirhind came as an enormous surprise to Bahadur Shah; his death in 1712 left a power vacuum in which Sikh influence in the Punjab grew further. Bahadur Shah's death triggered yet another succession struggle among the Mughals. At first, Bahadur Shah's son Jahandar Shah took command, but was soon put to death by his nephew Farrukhsiyar. During this time, the Sikhs under Banda Singh built a new fort at Gurdaspur and marched once more towards Sirhind. During this expedition, Banda Singh was wounded (probably by a Muslim mercenary in the pay of Mughals) and the military momentum that the Sikhs had built over those five years dissipated. Banda Singh was eventually captured and executed at Delhi by the Mughals.

As badly as Sikh fortunes declined with the death of Banda, however, Mughal fortunes declined even more precipitously (Edwardes, 1930; Heesterman, 2004). The death of Bahadur Shah was, in effect, the beginning of the end of the Mughal empire. The Mughal state was invaded by Nadir Shah of Persia, and later by Ahmad Shah of Afghanistan. Numerous Mughal nobles broke away from the authority of the emperor and created their own principalities throughout India. By the middle of the 18th century, the Sikhs re-emerged as a regional power under Jassa Singh. Jassa Singh named the Sikh army the Dal, and explicitly associated it with the Khalsa. As such, the Sikhs of the Punjab were now an armed theocracy with the same aspirations of autonomy as other groups who were rejecting Mughal rule. The Mughals were by this time a spent force, as the Punjab was effectively under the rule of Ahmad Shah of Afghanistan. For the Sikhs, though, not much had changed, as Ahmad Shah and forces allied to him continued to fight Jassa Singh's Dal. Finally, in 1756, the Afghan forces retreated from the vicinity of Lahore, which was promptly occupied by rejoicing Sikhs.

The occupation of Lahore marked another important phase in the Sikh transition to sovereignty. In 1756, Jassa Singh used the discarded Mughal mint to strike a coin in Lahore, a coin that was named in honour of the Khalsa. In 1762, Ahmad Shah returned from Afghanistan to lead another expedition into the Punjab. On this occasion, Ahmad Shah's army inflicted a signal defeat on the Khalsa at Ludhiana, but, a year later, the Sikhs destroyed an Afghan army under Zain Khan. By 1764, the Sikhs were masters of a substantial portion of the Punjab (T. R. Metcalf, 2007). The absence of a Guru meant that the Sikhs had no unified leadership over what could properly be termed the first Sikh

state. Rather, the Sikhs entered into a form of confederacy in which there were 12 recognised Misals, or confederated units. The Sikhs continued to drive back waves of invading Afghans, and, by the end of the 18th century, had consolidated an empire for themselves under the leadership of Ranjit Singh. At the same time, the Sikhs entered into dealings with the British, who represented the newest political power in India.

At the beginning of the 19th century, the Sikh Empire under Ranjit Singh was master of essentially the entire Punjab, and had begun to move towards other provinces. However, the Sikh Empire's ambitions came into direct conflict with those of the British. The Anglo-Sikh War was the natural sequel; at the end of the conflict, Sikh power had been greatly reduced and the British were masters of India. In 1857, following the Sepoy Mutiny, the British declared India a colony and took formal possession of it under Queen Victoria. The era of Sikh power in India had come to an end.

In terms of the formation of contemporary Sikh identity, the period of Sikh sovereignty between 1708 and 1849 or 1857 represents a period against which Sikhs can contrast their current status as a people without a nation. During the high tide of Sikh power in the 18th and 19th centuries, the Sikhs were able to live unmolested as Sikhs, apply the principles of Sikhism to their own governance as well as to the governance of non-Sikhs in the Sikh state, and otherwise temporal power of a kind that has eluded Sikhs ever since. Naturally, then, this period is especially important for contemporary Sikhs who are committed to the Khalistan movement. They can look back to an actual era of Sikh sovereignty as (a) a political template for the present and (b) a building block in their identities as Sikhs.

The Punjab Comes of Age, 1857 to the Present

From the Sikh perspective, the time from the end of the Sikh Empire in the middle of the 19th century to the present has been dominated by the same concern: The survival of a relatively small and increasingly powerless community surrounded by greater, hostile powers. Deprived of their empire, Sikhs living in the Punjab between 1849 and 1946 had to contend with two challenges. The first challenge was surviving as Sikhs in a country that was now run by the British. The second challenge, mirroring the early days of Sikhism, was of maintaining a fully distinct identity despite the demographic, cultural, and doctrinal pressures exerted on Sikhs by Muslims and Hindus. Despite the seriousness of these challenges, the Sikhs maintained their presence in the Punjab primarily by allying with the British. The Sikhs, whom the British knew from the Anglo-Sikh War to be redoubtable fighters, were recruited into the British Indian Army in large numbers (Akhtar, 2010; Oberoi, 1987). The British came to rely on the Sikhs' military prowess, while the Sikhs came to rely on the British for administering all of India, and in particular the Punjab, in a manner that would respect the autonomy of the Sikhs despite their more numerous Hindu and Muslim neighbours. This relationship of convenience between the Sikhs and the British lasted for nearly a century. However, when it became clear that the British would be forced to quit India, the Sikhs began to nurture some of the same national aspirations that were spreading in Hindu and Muslim quarters.

By the 1940s, India was heading towards partition (Ganguly, 1998; Pinch, 2003), with Muhammad Ali Jinnah advocating for a separate homeland for the Muslims, and Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru arguing for an undivided India. Jinnah was at the

forefront of the All-India Muslim League. Founded in 1906, the purpose of the Muslim League was to advocate on behalf of Muslims under British rule, and also to make common cause with Indian Hindus in shaping the destiny of their respective peoples after the inevitable British departure from India. In the 1920s, however, the movement toward Hindu-Muslim political unity faltered in the wake of increasing communalism and sectarianism in India. In 1930, the poet and philosopher Sir Muhammad Iqbal gave an address to the Muslim League, in which he called for the establishment of a separate state in India for the Muslims. In the same time frame, the Indian National Congress was formed in 1885, and continued to push for an undivided India after the departure of the British.

During the 1920s and 1930s, Sikhs came to cast their political lot with the Indian National Congress and the movement on behalf of Indian unity. This decision was based on Sikhs' intuition that they would be treated better among Hindus than among Muslims. Indeed, there was strong historical support for this position, given that Sikhs had been systematically killed and persecuted under the rule of the Muslim Mughals, and Afghans who succeeded them. Despite Sikhs' repudiation of Hinduism, they had never been subject to the same kind of mass violence from Hindus. Given that Sikhs did not represent a large or influential population, there was no basis for an ethno-religious Sikh state. Indeed, even the demands of the Muslim League were fiercely resisted by both the British and by those Indians who supported the cause of unity. Pakistan emerged only because there were tens of millions of Muslims who supported its case; with no such

constituency, the Sikhs could not hope for sovereignty in the wake of the British departure from India.

The term *Khalistan* appeared for the first time in a 1940 pamphlet published by Dr. Vir Singh Bhatti, who advocated for an independent Sikh state to be run on theocratic principles (Mohanka, 2005; Pritam Singh & Purewal, 2013). At the time, the Indian National Congress was exerting itself mightily to keep the Sikhs in its corner. As early as 1929, Motilal Nehru (the father of Jawaharlal Nehru) and Mahatma Gandhi has promised Sikhs some special form of accommodation in any independent Indian state. In 1946 Jawaharlal Nehru emphasised that Sikhs would enjoy semi-autonomous status in the Punjab. This promise was articulated in a constitutional agreement enacted on December 9, 1946. After independence, however, the Indian state reneged on its promise of semi-autonomy to the Sikhs. The Sikhs were a minority in the Punjab; they lacked the kind of political representation they were led to believe they would get upon independence.

While Sikhs had supported the cause of Indian unity, the actual division of India into India and Pakistan imposed a great deal of hardship on Sikhs. Sikhs were, for obvious historical reasons, concentrated in the Punjab, which the British divided between Pakistan and India. However, there were also many Muslims throughout the Punjab. On August 17, 1947, the publication of the Radcliffe Line revealed the new contours of India and Pakistan, which had gained their official independence a few days earlier. Tens of thousands of Sikhs learned that they were living in Pakistan, while many Muslim residents of the Punjab found themselves in India. There began a massive population exchange, probably the largest in history, between Pakistan and India. Nearly all Hindus

and Sikhs residing in Pakistan made their way to India, and large numbers of Muslims residing in India made their way to Pakistan. Unfortunately, the Sikhs traversing Punjab to reach India were subject to many atrocities from Muslim neighbours; Sikhs also perpetrated numerous atrocities of their own on Muslims. Some scholars estimate that over a million people died in the population exchange between India and Pakistan. The atrocities committed both sides were unspeakable, including the murder of many women and children.

The Sikh transition to the Indian Punjab was marked by two traumas. The first trauma was the trauma of the population exchange and its attendant loss of life. The second trauma was a cultural trauma. The new state of Pakistan contained many of the most important sites of Sikhism, including the birthplace of Guru Nanak. Sikhs first tasted independence in Lahore, which was now a Pakistani city. Sikh roots on the Pakistani side of the Punjabi border ran deep, and the loss of access to what was half of the Punjab left Sikhs with many emotional scars.

To make matters worse, the transition to life in an independent India was not necessarily easy for the Sikhs of the Punjab. As mentioned, the Indian Punjab was not, in its 1947 form, a Sikh-majority area. Rather, the Indian Punjab was contiguous with Hindu-dominated regions such as Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. Even as the Punjab was folded into Hindu-majority areas, the Indian government practised a policy of linguistic assimilation (Crossette, 2004; Helweg, 1987). The Sikhs, who spoke Punjabi, found that Punjabi was not recognised as an official language in the Punjab itself. It was

against this historical backdrop that Sikh calls for Khalistan, which is discussed in detail later in the literature review, multiplied.

Sikhism

As constructs, Sikhism and the Punjab are inseparable from each other. Some distinct purposes will be served, however, in the review of Sikhism presented in this section of the literature review. First, the precepts of Sikhism will be discussed in greater detail. Second, because the discussion of the Punjab in historical context did not present extensive empirical details about the contemporary Sikh experience, such details—pertaining to both India and Canada—will be presented here. Data for the background of Sikhism was collected from numerous sources.

The Core of Sikh Belief

To an outsider, one of the most remarkable aspects of Sikhism is the balance staked by this religion between Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Aspects of each of these religions are echoed in Sikhism (Bhogal, 2012; Chilana, 2005; Cox & Robinson, 2006). Indeed, one of the difficulties in providing an overview of Sikh belief is according respect to the Sikh self-view while also being able to treat the formation of the religion as a historical rather than divinely imbued phenomenon. To strike a balance between these two positions, this section of the literature review will contain both perspectives; that is, a discussion of what Sikhs themselves believe, and a more scholarly discussion of how and why Sikh belief evolved within the material context of Indian history.

Historically, the development of Sikhism can be viewed as part of the same trends that generated Buddhism (in the 5th century B.C.E.) and Jainism (between the 9th and 7th

centuries B.C.E.). Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism all emerged from within the larger framework of Hinduism; to some extent, each of these three newer religions came to define and differentiate themselves against Hinduism (Jain, 2012).

There is intense debate (Murphy, 2007; Prill, 2009; Schofield & Channan, 1974; Gopal Singh, 1994b) about when Hinduism emerged as a distinct religion, with the consensus being that the Hindu tradition is at least 4,000 years old. At the time of Guru Nanak's birth in 1469, Hinduism was about 3,500 years old, Buddhism was about 2,000 years old, and Jainism was perhaps 2,700 years old. Meanwhile, Islam had been firmly established in the Punjab for about 300 years, dating from the start of the Delhi Sultanate. India had been exposed to Islam in one way or another, however, since the Umayyad conquests of Sindh and Multan in the early 8th century. Guru Nanak was therefore born into a religious environment characterized by the propagation and acceptance of fairly ancient traditions, with the exception of the relatively more recent Islam. Like the Buddha, Guru Nanak was born a Hindu and found the Hindu tradition lacking as a comprehensive and satisfying spiritual system (Arvinder, 2012, 2013; N.-G. K. Singh, 2013). Whereas the Buddha's religious mission emerged solely from a rejection of Hinduism, Guru Nanak's mission emerged from a rejection of both Hinduism and Islam. In the time of Guru Nanak, Islam and Hinduism were in a battle for supremacy in the Punjab, with Hinduism possessing the demographic advantage (i.e., there were more Hindus than Muslims) and Islam possessing the advantage of being the religion of the rulers of Delhi. The spiritual distinctions between the religions were just as important as the temporal distinctions.

The existence of Islam and Hinduism in such close proximity was, in many cases, an invitation to religious strife. However, especially in the Punjab, the existence of Islam and Hinduism in close proximity was also an invitation and inspiration to poets, philosophers, and prophets to attempt to bridge the two religions (Dwyer, 1981; Gaeffke, 1985, 1998; Grierson, 1911; Hedayetullah, 1977; Novetzke, 2007; Saral, 1997; Turbiani, 1992).

The shortcomings as well as strengths of Hinduism, as least as a sociological system, need to be acknowledged. With its rigid caste system, Vedic Hinduism stated that salvation was only available to a limited number of Hindus; specifically, men who belonged to the Brahmin, Kshatriya, and Vaishya castes. Brahmins in particular were enormously influential in both the spiritual and secular lives of Hindus, so much so that the name of Brahmin has, in English, become a synonym for a member of an elite group. Thus, while Hinduism was deeply interwoven into the lives of innumerable ordinary Indians, the caste system as it evolved in Vedic Hinduism locked large numbers of people out of the logic of Hindu salvation and the possibility of worldly advancement as well.

There were numerous Hindu protest movements that attempted to undo some of the strictures of Vedic Hinduism. For example, the Bhakti movement of the 7th century, which had an efflorescence during Guru Nanak's lifetime, rejected the idea of limited salvation, claiming instead that all were capable of salvation. At the same time, the Bhakti movement dispensed with the highly ritualised and priest-intermediated system of Vedic Hinduism, suggesting instead that people could enter direct and personal relationships with the divine. Bhakti Hinduism is similar to Islam and Christianity, not in

terms of belief content, but rather in that Islam, Christianity, and Bhakti Hinduism all injected themes of simplicity, directness, and universality into religious environments that had been complex, ancient, and heavily intermediated (Dwyer, 1981; Gaeffke, 1998; Grierson, 1911; Hedayetullah, 1977; Novetzke, 2007; Saral, 1997). In pre-Islamic Arabia and Persia, as well as in Israel during the time of Jesus, there had been large and influential priestly classes, highly exclusive systems of salvation (particularly biased against women and people of lower socioeconomic status), and complex doctrines that had been difficult for ordinary people to grasp. Before the emergence of Bhakti tradition, Christianity had simplified Judaism, replaced the importance of priests and rituals with direct communion with God, and promised salvation to all believers. Arguably, Muhammad played the same role in Arabia, ridding it of its complex and discriminatory polytheistic system with a plain and appealing universal monotheism. India was not immune to these currents. For example, there is credible scholarship supporting the claim that Bhakti Hinduism was influenced by Sufi Islam in terms of emphasising personal, non-intermediated relationships with the divine.

When Guru Nanak was born in the 15th century, the Bhakti movement had become increasingly influenced by Islam. An important historical progenitor of Guru Nanak is Kabir, who was born a Shudra Hindu (that is, a Hindu who was not among the three prestigious castes, and who was one step above the so-called untouchables, or Dalits). Kabir, who was a poet and mystic, attracted a large following of both Muslims and Hindus, and, through his work and teaching, he attempted a synthesis between these religions. Indeed, Kabir's name was taken from Arabic, in which it represents the 37th

name of God, and much of his poetry had Sufi themes. Kabir rejected the caste system, the worship of idols, and other aspects of Hinduism. At the same time, Kabir referenced Hindu ideas such as reincarnation, karma, and Brahmanic reality. Kabir was aware of, and actively promoted, his interstitial stance, exhorting his followers that the path of real religion could not be encompassed by orthodox devotion to either Islam or Hinduism.

Kabir's importance to the emergence of Sikhism cannot be overstressed. Indeed, the work of Kabir appears in the Guru Granth Sahib, the holy text of Sikhism, alongside the writings of the 10 Gurus themselves. Kabir, like others within the Bhakti movements and others who had bridged the Hindu-Muslim divide through mysticism, pointed the way to a syncretism with the potential to end religious strife in India. Kabir was only 29 when Guru Nanak was born, and, although it is not clear that the two men met, it is likely that Guru Nanak was aware of Kabir. Guru Nanak may also have been influenced by the larger trend of Bhakti spirituality that Kabir so compellingly represented. Indeed, Bhakti saints had existed in the Punjab since probably the 13th century, and their contribution to religious discourse would surely have been known to someone like Guru Nanak, who was closely attuned to the religious thinking of the Punjab.

In this sense, Guru Nanak's declaration in 1499 that neither Islam nor Hinduism were the paths to divine reality or salvation was not unique. Rather, Guru Nanak's statement can conceptually be classified as part of the Bhakti movement. Several years beforehand, Kabir had also written that Islam and Hinduism were too narrowly conceived to be the paths to salvation and had exhorted his followers to transcend the distinction between the religions (Dwyer, 1981; Gaeffke, 1985, 1998; Grierson, 1911; Novetzke,

2007; Saral, 1997; K. Sharma, 1987). Even Guru Nanak's blending of Hindu and Muslim doctrine (including the acceptance of monotheism, the rejection of the caste system and Hindu ritual, the rejection of idols, and the Sufi-inspired achievement of ecstatic worship through recitation of divine names and hymns) had precedents in Bhakti systems. Given these facts, it is necessary to provide a more thorough explanation of how Sikhism became distinct from the Bhakti tradition, such that Sikhism is recognised as a religion rather than as another school of Bhakti practise.

The distinct identity of Sikhism as a belief system did not emerge all at once. Nonetheless, the seeds of Sikhism as a distinct religion can be found in the introduction of the Guru Granth Sahib, in particular in Guru Nanak's three sections: The Mul Mantra, Japji, and Sohila. Kabir and many other members of the Bhakti movement had primarily been poets, content to express religious feeling in poetic language. While Guru Nanak's compositions had undeniable poetic power, they also had a different colour, the colour of religion. The introduction of the Guru Granth Sahib is the Mul Mantar, the core affirmation of the Sikh faith. It indicates that there is a one God, universal and all-powerful. In its succinctness, poetic power, and unswerving commitment to monotheism, the Mul Mantar is in some ways reminiscent of the Qur'an's Sura Al-Ikhlās. The Sura Al-Ikhlās contains the following verses:

Say: He is Allah, the only one.

Allah helps and does not need help.

He does not produce a child, and He was not born of anyone.

There is no one equal to Him.

While the Mul Mantar contains the following text: “One universal creator God, the supreme unchangeable truth, the creator of the universe, beyond fear, beyond hatred, beyond death, beyond birth, self-existent, by the Guru’s grace.”

In this sense, Guru Nanak’s writing had more a religious tint than the work of Kabir and other mystical poets who did not use their work as a vehicle to express core beliefs and dogmas, but rather to explore mysteries and pose questions. Guru Nanak’s religious bent can be glimpsed even more clearly in the Japji, a collection of several meditations on the nature of faith and the divine. The difference between Guru Nanak and the Bhakti devotees was not merely in Guru Nanak’s tone of certainty versus the devotees’ tone of questioning; Guru Nanak was also a more systematic and prolific writer (Matringe, 1986; W. H. McLeod, 1968). While Kabir and other mystic poets often wrote only short couplets, and strayed from subject to subject. Guru Nanak’s Mul Mantar, Japji, and Sohila compositions were sharply focused, however, and functioned as part of a single structural theme pertaining to divinity and faith. These aspects of Guru Nanak’s writings helped to elevate the Guru from being another Bhakti devotee to being the founder of a religion.

The essential beliefs of Sikhism are already evident in the compositions of Guru Nanak. These beliefs can be articulated as follows:

- There is one, all-powerful, universal God
- Salvation cannot be achieved through mere rituals
- The individual personality can be subject to spiritual development that can result in salvation

- People should strive to be humble and modest, to love each other and the divine
- The passions ought to be restrained
- There are some among us (in particular, the Gurus, but also other prophetic figures) who have achieved a degree of spiritual enlightenment and can serve as a beacon for others

These core expressions of Sikhism have not changed over the years. To be sure, Sikhism has evolved; for example, by adding militancy to its DNA in the face of the Mughal onslaught, by taking on distinct rituals and dress that were unknown in Guru Nanak's time, and by otherwise expanding. The compositions of Guru Nanak, however, still contain the essence of Sikhism in accessible, succinct writing. The ways in which Sikhism has figured in the individual and collective belief systems and identity formations of Sikhs will be examined later in this literature review.

One point of special note about Sikhism is the remarkable juxtaposition of themes in the religion, which gives the impression that Sikhism is, in some ways, a reflection of every major religious tradition in India (Dhillon, 1988). The Sikh ideas of renunciation of ego-driven desires and taming of the passions are strongly allied to Buddhism, while monotheism is related to Islam, and the collectivist and duty-bound impulses of Sikhism can be related to Hinduism (Griffin, 1901). Over the centuries, there has been particularly close contact between Sikhs and Hindus, with many Hindu families having raised eldest sons as Sikhs and visiting Sikh temples. Thus, while Sikhism is certainly a distinct religion, it can also be located within the matrix of other, older religions in India.

Khalistan

There are numerous scholarly opinions about the genesis of the Khalistan movement (Axel, 2002; Banerjee, 2012; Biswas, 2004; Devgan, 2013; Dorn & Gucciardi, 2011; Fair, 2005; Falcone, 2006; Gayer, 2012; Gupta, 1990; T. R. Metcalf, 2007; Mohanka, 2005; Oberoi, 1987; Shani, 2000; Pritam Singh & Purewal, 2013; Sunit, 2005; Telford, 1992; Van Dyke, 2009). The Indian Punjab was formally created in 1966. Until then, the area had been part of East Punjab, a state in which Sikhs were not the majority. In 1966, many of the Hindus of East Punjab were given a new state: Haryana. The emergent Punjab was, and remains, a Sikh-majority state. The creation of a Sikh-majority state in India reinvigorated long-stifled dreams of Sikh autonomy. At about the same time that the borders of the Punjab were redrawn, Sikhs in the global diaspora were becoming more assertive about their individual and collective identities. The phenomenon of increased identity awareness among immigrants, especially immigrants who in their countries of origin are denied key forms of expression and autonomy, has long been noted by sociologists. Sikhs outside the Punjab not only came to long for the land that they had left behind, but also to seize to their identities as Sikhs all the more tightly. Thus, the psychological infrastructure for supporting Khalistan existed both in the Punjab and globally, particularly in the West.

Based on the extensive review of the history of the Punjab provided earlier in the literature review, however, it would surely be a mistake to date the Khalistan movement to the latter half of the 20th century. In 1756, Jassa Singh minted a coin in Lahore with the

inscription of the Khalsa, or the purified community of Sikhs. That event marks the first time that Sikhs (a) exercised formal sovereignty over one of the traditional capitol of the Punjab, (b) branded themselves to outsiders as members of a distinct and purified community, and (c) indulged what can surely be described as a national consciousness. For that matter, Khalistan could also be dated to the decision of Guru Gobind Singh, to create a baptised community of Sikhs with a highly distinct appearance. Indeed, Cunningham (1918, p. 89) ascribed the beginning of a national consciousness, and therefore of Khalistan itself, to the actions of Guru Gobind Singh in 1699. Finally, the foundation of the Sikh Empire in 1799 is also a plausible starting point for the Khalistan movement. Under Rabjit Singh, the Sikhs came to control the whole of the Punjab and to run the province under Sikh law and custom. It is clear that Khalistan, whether as a concept or as an actual Sikh state, can be dated to the 18th or very late 17th century. While it is certainly legitimate for sociologists and historians to discuss Khalistan in the context of 20th- and 21st-century developments, the provenance of Khalistan ought to be traced back to earlier periods of Sikh history. Given that the Sikh community is extremely aware of, and sensitive to, this history, situating Khalistan solely in the past 50 years does violence to Sikh memory and experience.

Khalistan and the Sikh Diaspora

Sikh youth in Canada are part of the Sikh diaspora, which can be dated to the fall of the Sikh Empire in 1849. Duleep Singh, son of the founder of the Sikh Empire, was ordered into lifelong exile by the British in 1849. After winning the Anglo-Sikh War, the British annexed the Punjab and banished the 15-year-old Duleep Singh to London, where

he could play no role of consequence in Sikh political life. Duleep Singh spent the rest of his life in London, and died in Paris. Over the next 150 years, many Sikhs would go the way of Duleep Singh. When the British left India in 1947, the Punjab was split between India and Pakistan. Many of Sikhism's most important cultural, religious, and demographic centers were located in the Pakistani Punjab. Large numbers of Sikhs were forced to cross to India and were subjected to violence by their Muslim neighbours. Given the deep roots so many Sikhs had cast into what was now the Pakistani Punjab, the events of 1947 can surely be seen as part of a Sikh diaspora, albeit a coerced one.

Owing partly to a softening of the immigration laws in the United Kingdom and North America in the 1960s, many Sikhs began to leave their homelands for the West. This era of the Sikh diaspora was defined by the search for economic opportunity. Many Sikhs were farmers; with the encroachment of industry and other forms of modernized economic activity on what had been agricultural land, the hereditary living of the Sikhs came under significant pressure. In particular, Sikh men who stood little chance of inheriting their fathers' land or of being able to stake out an agricultural living for themselves chose to go overseas instead.

On October 13, 1971, a full-page advertisement for Khalistan appeared in the *New York Times*, containing the following text: "The Sikhs demand an independent state in India [...] the only guarantee for peace on the subcontinent. No power on earth can suppress the Sikhs. They are a people with a destiny. There will always be a Sikh nation." The advertisement had been placed by Dr. Jagjit Singh Chauhan, who had once been finance minister of the Punjab, but who now served as the head of the London-based

Khalistan Council. Jagjit Singh had emigrated to Britain in 1971, and continued to lead the campaign for an independent Sikh nation among the Sikhs of the diaspora. Jagjit Singh's advertisement, and subsequent slew of media appearances and activism, constituted the West's first exposure to the idea of Khalistan, which had previously been nurtured by Sikhs in the Punjab.

The idea of Khalistan came to be extremely attractive in the Sikh diaspora, for a number of reasons. First, diasporic Sikhs were especially nostalgic about their homeland and therefore perhaps more inclined to push for independence as a means of asserting their identity as Sikhs. Second, Sikhs who lived abroad could afford to support Khalistan, because such a commitment did not put them in danger of crossing India's security forces. Sikhs in the Punjab who advocated for Khalistan risked being jailed, killed, or otherwise persecuted by the Indian government; there were no such consequences for supporters of Khalistan who lived outside India. Third, many Sikhs in the diaspora were intellectuals and professionals who were appreciative of political and cultural commitments to the cause of Sikhism. These Sikhs were no longer worried about basic issues such as hunger and housing, but had reached a stage at which they could think of their larger legacy as Sikhs. For all of these reasons, the idea of Khalistan has been widely supported among the Sikh diaspora, and cannot be fully understood outside the context of the diaspora.

Relevant Theoretical and Empirical Literature on Khalistan

The theoretical literature on Khalistan can be divided into several categories. Scholars from the realist school of politics and international relations, which

acknowledges the roles of power, unfairness, and *stare decisis* in the political arrangements, have approached Khalistan not as a viable proposal for an actual political entity, but rather as a form of wish fulfillment for Punjabi Sikhs (Axel, 2002; Banerjee, 2012; Biswas, 2004; Devgan, 2013; Dorn & Gucciardi, 2011; Fair, 2005; Falcone, 2006; Gayer, 2012; Gupta, 1990; T. R. Metcalf, 2007; Mohanka, 2005). The theoretical orientation of realist scholars who examine Khalistan obliges them to recognise the impossibility of Sikhs carving out an independent state from a nuclear-armed power that has repeatedly stressed territorial integrity as a principle and policy foundation that cannot be compromised. There are some differences in proposed maps of Khalistan; proposals that include the Pakistan Punjab are, if anything, even more implausible than an imagined Khalistan solely within the current Indian border. Like India, Pakistan is armed with nuclear weapons and has made territorial integrity one of the central pillars of policy. The borders of South Asia established by the British in 1947 have undergone only one major change: When what was formerly East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) seceded from Pakistan. The secession of East Pakistan took place well before Pakistan had developed nuclear weapons, however, and with active Indian support. In the contemporary environment, the chances of a Khalistan actually emerging from Pakistan, India, or a combination of both are vanishingly small. In this sense, the concept of Khalistan as a political entity is closely related to Kurdistan, a proposed nation-state for the Kurds that would overlap with parts of Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria. Although the emergence of a politically independent Kurdistan is also unlikely, consider: There is now an autonomous Kurdish region in Iraq; the Kurds are more numerous than the Sikhs; and,

the surrounding non-Kurdish populations are not as large as the Hindu and Muslim majorities that engulf Sikhs in South Asia. These facts have all led scholars to conclude that Kurdistan is a more viable political entity than Khalistan.

There is a close relationship between theoretical orientation and empirical practice. Because realists do not approach proposals for Khalistan as viable, they tend to treat Khalistan as a container for Sikh aspirations, passions, and even terrorism. The same empirical orientation is retained by scholars who approach Khalistan from an anthropological or sociological viewpoint. These kinds of scholars do not necessarily assume Khalistan to be *prima facie* impossible to achieve, but, regardless, are more interested in Khalistan as a window into Sikh identity and experience rather than in Khalistan as a political or social phenomenon in its own right. This theoretical orientation is also the one adopted in the current study.

Relatively few scholars treat Khalistan as a purely political phenomenon (Oberoi, 1987; Shani, 2000; Pritam Singh & Purewal, 2013; Sunit, 2005; Telford, 1992; Van Dyke, 2009). Scholars that share this theoretical orientation emphasise that the emergence of the Sikh Empire was swift and unexpected. After the violent campaigns waged against the Sikh community and religious leadership by figures such as Jahangir and Aurangzeb, it was scarcely plausible that the Sikhs would become masters of the whole of the Punjab for nearly half a century. Moreover, there has been a resurgence of scholarly interest in stateless people (including the Kurds and Palestinians) as political actors, rather than anthropological subjects.

From the perspective of political theory, Khalistan aligns closely with the idea of a nation-state. The theoretical foundation of the proposed nation-state is homogeneity. Khalistan would be centralized in the Indian Punjab, where, as demonstrated earlier in the literature review, there is already a significant Sikh majority. Sikhs are both endogamous and homogenous; they have been distinct from their Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, and Jain neighbours for over 500 years. They are united by ties of language, consanguinity, religion, and culture. On this basis, Khalistan has been held to make sense as a political entity.

The empirical literature is highly limited. There do not appear to be quantitative studies that have surveyed Sikhs about their opinions on Khalistan using a validated survey instrument. In the realm of qualitative studies, there are a few case studies of Khalistan (Biswas, 2004; Devgan, 2013; Gayer, 2012; Shani, 2000; Sunit, 2005); however, these case studies do not tend to draw upon individual Sikhs as sources of information, but rather function more like historical recapitulations of recent Indian and Sikh history. These kinds of studies are historical, but not necessarily sociological, in nature. The story of Khalistan is thus told collectively and historically, with the unit of analysis being the Sikh community rather than the individual Sikh. In the absence of this kind of scholarly engagement, perhaps the most viable way of gathering information about Khalistan is to look at popular literature and Web sites, which aggregate information that scholars have not utilised.

Sikh Youth in Canada

The discussion of Sikh youth in Canada is divided into two parts. The first part conveys theoretical perspectives on Sikh youth life in Canada. The second part consists of a series of empirical insights into the demographics of Sikh youth in Canada.

Theoretical Background and Some Empirical Studies

Sikh youth in Canada are bound by multiple cultures. Culture is a large and enormously complex variable; it refers to the entire scope of human activity in areas such as language, religion, ritual, beliefs, behaviours, and relationships (“Culture”, 2015).

There are several influential definitions of culture. Scruton (2010) pointed out that sociologists, ethnologists, and anthropologists all describe culture in different ways, each relevant to particular disciplines. The Oxford English Dictionary (2001) defined culture, in the sense that it is relevant to this study, as follows: “The distinctive ideas, customs, social behavior, products, or way of life of a particular society, people, or period. Hence: A society characterized by such customs, etc.” (no page number). This definition of culture entered the English language in the 19th century; however, from the 15th century onwards, the word had been used to mean the cultivation of land (Oxford English Dictionary).

The definition of culture advanced by the Oxford English Dictionary, and indeed by many sociologists, is an all-enveloping one; customs, communication, and other aspects of human life are subsumed under the heading of culture. It is possible to define culture in a slightly narrower way, however, as the precursor and blueprint of both customs and communications. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, this usage of

culture entered the English language in the middle of the 20th century, when sociologists began to distinguish between culture as a code, with customs and communications as physical manifestations of that code. It is possible that the changing definition of *culture* came under some influence from growing scientific knowledge in other fields; for example, by the 1953 discovery of the double-helix structure of DNA. The discovery of DNA was a powerful spur to new kinds of thinking in other fields. Theorists of culture were influenced by the metaphor of DNA as a code for the construction of tangible manifestations of human activity. Today, the metaphor of culture as DNA is highly influential among many theorists. Rapaille (2007) championed this view as follows:

[...] every species is distinguished by the structure of its DNA. I call this the biological scheme. In addition, every culture has a cultural scheme that is an extension of the biological scheme. The biological scheme identifies a need, and the cultural scheme interprets it within the parameters of a particular culture... For example, our human biological scheme dictates that our physical comfort peaks within a certain air temperature range. If the air is too hot, we become lethargic. If it is too cold, we run the risk of illness and, in the extreme, death. To address the heat issue, we developed air conditioning. Each culture, however, regards the use of air conditioning differently [...](p. 93).

To Rapaille, culture is akin to DNA. Just as DNA contains the code required to build a unique human, culture contains the codes—indeed, culture is the code—needed to build unique customs, communications, and other social expressions. Thus, in Rapaille’s metaphor, culture ought to be considered distinct from its expressions. In the example

given by Rapaille, the cultural code is what dictates the necessity, but this necessity is then interpreted differently, and manifests differently, in places such as France (which generally minimizes the use of air conditioning) and the U.S. (which maximizes the use of air conditioning). Rapaille's theory offers a way of studying culture in a bifurcated way, with the cultural scheme, or code, preceding the manifestations of that code in terms of customs and communications.

Having defined and provisionally accepted the theory of culture as a code or scheme that generates specific manifestations in terms of customs and communications, it remains to try to define the code of culture more precisely and to answer the following kinds of questions: What does the culture code consist of? What determines the contents of the code? And, looking ahead to the other sections of the literature review, what helps to determine how the code is translated into tangible behaviours and structures?

The question of what the culture code actually consists of is fraught with disagreement. First, as Lewis (2010) explained, the waters are muddied because it is not yet clear (a) how much of culture is in fact genetically determined and (b) how culture and genetics interact. Separating culture from genetics is an extraordinarily difficult endeavour. Lewis approached the problem by trying to differentiate, as Rapaille (2007) did, between the existence of a basal culture manifesting itself in very simple patterns that duplicate across all known cultures—for example, the ritual sharing of food between kin, and care-taking of the young—and other forms of culture on which factors of climate, environment, history, and language have acted to create distinct forms of cultural expression. Scientists are interested in a more precise understanding of the origins of

culture, and its interactions with genetics and biology. For purposes of sociological theory, however, it is sufficient to accept the two-tiered theory of culture advanced by Lewis and Rapaille. In this sense, culture is treated as both (a) a set of universal or nearly-universal behaviours and values that have roots in the basic facts of the human condition (e.g., the need to survive, communicate, nurture, reproduce, etc.) and (b) a set of specific values that are distinct to specific peoples and that are the result of specific influences that vary from place to place and time to time. These specific influences are the true content of the cultural code as it interested scholars such as Rapaille, Lewis, and Hofstede (2001).

What determines cultural differences? Lewis (2010) identified four independent variables, namely, climate, environment, language, and history. Other scholars have advanced radically different theories of what determines cultural difference. For Marx (1996), for example, the key determinant of cultural difference was economic life. Marx argued that, despite superficial differences superimposed by differential factors such as language, religion, etc., all of human society could essentially be divided into three main groups: Owners, workers, and the go-betweens of these two classes. Marxist theories of culture were enormously influential between the 1920s and the 1980s; even though, for obvious reasons, such theories have made little headway among business theorists. While it might seem that Marx's division of all of humanity into three classes was indifferent to the demonstrated diversity and richness of cultural variation, this mode of thinking is not uncommon, even among non-Marxist theorists of culture. For example, in contemporary times, Huntington (1993) advanced the thesis that the main two cultural divisions in

humanity were between ‘the West and the rest’. Huntington followed in the general line of historians such as Toynbee (1987) and Spengler (1991), who had thought of *culture* as synonymous with *civilization*. These theories share a common factor: That culture is a single construct which is broadly shared by tens, even hundreds, of millions of people, and that smaller cultural differences (such as the differences between, say, Punjabi Sikhs and Punjabi Hindus) were, in the larger scheme of history, unimportant.

In a way, the controversy over what determined cultural difference has been closely allied to the question of what culture itself consists. To anthropologists such as Mead (1948), culture has always been enacted on the same scale, and it is possible to speak of innumerable cultures. To historians such as Toynbee (1987), culture is what is enacted and represented in large-scale human enterprises such as empires and economics. Neither side can be described as ‘right’, as there is no objective measure to judge what culture ought to consist of; rather, historians and anthropologists ought to be thought of as using different tools to examine the same phenomenon. To employ a useful metaphor, anthropologists examine culture with a microscope whereas historians examine culture with binoculars; the level of detail that is of interest to these scholars varies.

With this theoretical background in mind, there are at least two major cultural systems that are relevant to Sikh youth: (a) The culture of Punjabi Sikhism and (b) the culture of Anglo-French Canadian society. In terms of (a), and bearing in mind Lewis’s (2010) discussion of the importance of climate, environment, language, and history in the formation of cultural difference, there are a number of salient points that can be made about Sikh youth. First, Sikh youth’s parents and grandparents hail mainly from the

agricultural environment of the Punjab. Older Sikhs tend to have deep-rooted beliefs about the importance of farming, land ownership, and semi-feudal distinctions between people based on their relationships to the land. The importance of the land as a motivating factor in the generation of feudal and semi-feudal Punjabi Sikh culture arose when the land itself came to be shared by a larger number of people, making it more difficult for individuals and families to rise above their neighbours. By contrast, in majoritarian Canadian society, there is and has been an abundance of land, and little to no experience of the kinds of population and agricultural pressures that have made it increasingly difficult for Sikhs to rise economically and socially in the Punjab. Canada has long since made the transition to a service economy, in which wealth and status are largely determined by the ability of the individual to add value to an information-driven society. Thus, young Sikhs in Canada have to navigate between their own families' deep-rooted ideas about land, privilege, and hierarchy, and the majoritarian culture's relatively classless, non-land-driven concepts of economic and personal identity.

Another important tension faced by Sikh youth in Canada is the tension between the Sikh cultural value of ego reduction and selfless service to the community and majoritarian Canada's materialism and individualism. De Graaf, Wann, Naylor, and Horsey (2002) described this as *affluenza*, a term that the authors invented to refer to a combination of greed, competitiveness, consumerism, and anxiety. Robinson and Murphy (2008) used the term *maximization* to refer to much the same phenomenon, defining it as, "The desire to make money, regardless of how much is already being earned" (p. 72). Both De Graaf et al. and Robinson and Murphy drew distinctions between how affluenza,

maximization, or whatever one chooses to call this phenomenon, manifests itself. De Graaf et al. argued that elements of affluenza have spread globally, because affluenza is the ideology of capitalism itself. In other words, according to De Graaf et al., whatever country adopts capitalism as its guiding form of economic life will eventually catch the ‘disease’ of affluenza. Robinson and Murphy argued that, in the West, maximization is most advanced in North America and less advanced in many parts of Europe; collective values retain their value alongside the individual desire for self-advancement. While Canada might suffer from less affluenza than the United States, Canada remains highly individualistic and, particularly in recent years, driven by the zeal to accumulate and consume.

There are several reasons that affluenza or maximization have come to predominate in the era of late capitalism. To begin with, capitalist countries have been in the vanguard of rejecting previous values of social, economic, and political organization. As early as 1848, Marx (and later, Engels (2006)) recognised that the onset of capitalism meant the erosion of the existing order; henceforth, religion, conscience, and even sex would be determined not by the transmission of ancient cultural codes, but by the imperatives of capitalism: Buying and selling. In capitalism, Marx and Engels both argued all relationships—at all levels of society—are determined by the marketplace. Even though Sikhs historically participated in market activity, Sikhism is ultimately a religion of collectivism and self-sacrifice that is difficult, if not impossible, to align with a culture in which materialism and individualism are paramount.

It is worth tracing the history of capitalism as a means of understanding how and why Western consumer culture—perhaps the dominant strain of cultural behaviour in the world today—came to exist. Zelizer (2005) argued that the era of capitalism was distinguished by continuous production. In the era of agricultural economies, most productive work was centered on the planting and harvest seasons. The rhythms of human life were more relaxed, in that people did not always exist in their economic roles. With the onset of capitalism, and especially with the spread of machines and factories, it became possible to perform productive work every moment of the day, throughout the year. At first, capitalists responded to this change in economics by mandating their workers to work for between 12 to 16 hours a day, with only Sundays off. All of a sudden, the space for being anything other than a worker was diminished, as millions of people’s lives were now defined by the clock. On the other hand, as discussed earlier in the literature review, the Indian Punjab remains highly agricultural, and the collective memory and practices of the Sikhs are also attuned to an agricultural lifestyle. While few Sikh youth in Canada lead an agricultural lifestyle, they are, from their parents and grandparents, the recipients of a cultural code in which pre-capitalist notions of non-economic value matter deeply. Young Canadian Sikhs are impressed with the importance of serving their community, engaging in worship, and learning or improving their Punjabi, all activities that have reduced importance in a culture that prioritises economic activity over all other kinds of activity.

Noya and Clarence (2007) defined the social economy as, “The space between the market and the state” (p. 10). It is this interstitial nature of the social economy that

prompts theorists to refer to the social economy as the “third sector” (Fontan & Shragge, 2000, p. 1). Historically, one of the functions of the social economy has been to negotiate the ways in which both the market and the state, often colluding, have structured what Everling (1997) called, “Social space and time” (p. 29). Everling argued that the logic of capitalism requires an “intensification of labor” (p. 29) in order to achieve ever-higher concentrations of surplus. Young Canadian Sikhs, too, are faced with the urgency of acquiring job skills and finding jobs as quickly as possible. In the Punjab, however, many young and even middle-aged adults continue to live with their extended families and are not under the same pressure to build their identity and demonstrate their self-worth in the economic sphere. The social economy of the Punjab is, in this sense, highly different from the social economy of Canada, creating pressures on young Canadian Sikhs who are caught between these two spheres.

Moving beyond the realm of economics, young Canadian Sikhs are also caught between the idea of Canadian culture (distinguished by values of openness, heterogeneity, and mixing) and Punjabi Sikh culture (endogamous, less open to change, and more willing to construct differences as threatening). Many young Canadian Sikhs are expected to marry within their religion and retain their identity as Sikhs. At the same time, Sikh youth grow up in a Canada in which this kind of endogamy and tribalism come under pressure from Canadian social values. Negotiating these two sets of expectations creates many anxieties for young Canadian Sikhs.

Young Sikh Canadians are challenged not only by the clash between Punjabi and Canadian cultural codes, particularly codes related to the economy and cultural life, but

also by the facts of their life in an imperfectly multicultural Canada. Saloojee (2004) argues that, “The multicultural society is the site where the First Nations communities and racially marginalized and newcomer communities contest the ideas of identity, citizenship and cohesion” (p. 421). By “site,” Saloojee is referring to a conceptual space, not a physical one. While it is certainly true that the experience of multiculturalism takes place partly in the mind, it is also an intensely physical condition. In *The Rum*, Cecil Foster’s short story about the difficulty faced by West Indian immigrants trying to feel at home in Canada, the physical distance between the Caribbean and Canada depicts the loneliness and anomie of immigrant Caribbean people themselves. The islands are rendered inaccessible not only by physical distance, but also by political and economic distance. To travel back and forth, for example, one requires updated passports, visas, and money. This dynamic is true of Canada and any homeland left behind; for example, the Punjab.

Saloojee (2004) defines multiculturalism as what emerges from a struggle between various minority groups. While this judgment is correct, the fact is that multiculturalism is also what takes place when an individual, or single community, leaves one home for another. To invoke *The Rum* once more, multiculturalism is something that begins for immigrants as soon as they leave their homelands. That simple decision has stripped them from natural participation in a community that they already understand, and forces them to engage with a community that they have to imagine and construct as they go along.

Just as physical places are important, so are physical bodies. To define multiculturalism as solely or even predominantly conceptual is to omit the bodily aspects of multiculturalism: Endurance of the gaze of many others; the struggle to find one's neighbourhood in a new and confusingly polyglot society; the inspection of one's hair, clothing, and customs, etc.; the transformation from normalcy to what Kamboureli (2000) calls a scandalous body (p. 1). The situation of young Canadian Sikhs is particularly poignant in this regard, because they are marked by skin colour, clothing, headwear, and other signs and tokens of their otherness. They are possibly one of the most visible of Canadian minorities.

Young Canadian Sikhs also suffer because of the unequal power conditions that exist in the country, regardless of multiculturalism. In Canada, for example, the very ground on which multiculturalism is staged and restaged has been prepared by white people in such a way as to preclude certain forms of expression, and privilege others (Saloojee, 2004). For example, insofar as the provincial and federal governments of Canada are dominated by white men implementing the constitutional and legal rulings of other white men, multiculturalism is—long before it gets to the stage of being an equal conversation between ethnics—an unequal conversation between empowered white men and immigrant groups seeking some form of political or social capital (Saloojee, 2004). Which languages will be taught in schools? Which forms of cultural expression will receive government funding? Which kinds of buildings can be erected in which neighbourhoods? Multiculturalism emerges in part from answers to these kinds of questions, the answers to which are determined by the white political and business elite

of Canada. The fact that Punjabi is the most widely spoken language behind English and French in Canada still does not elevate it into “official language” status, for reasons that have to do with the historical (and, for that matter, racial) privilege of English and French (Saloojee, 2004).

To make this point is not to argue that ethnic communities do not interact with each other, or that these interactions are not fruitful in determining the character and valence of multiculturalism. It is only to argue that before ethnic groups reach the stage of contestation and compromise with each other, they must navigate the terms of their existence with the majoritarian English and/or French cultural groupings in Canada. From passing laws that determine how many people from what backgrounds will be allowed into Canada for what reasons, to presiding over the public policies that grant ethnic communities a seat at the table at the urban, provincial, and national levels, the rules of the game are already established by white people (Saloojee, 2004). Young Canadian Sikhs enter this playing field on existentially unequal terms, perpetuating the Sikh dilemma of forever being marginalised by larger, stronger communities.

Majoritarian Canada has a self-indulgent view of its attitude and policies towards multiculturalism. In comparison with the U.S., Canada has earned the right to some self-congratulation on this count. It should never be forgotten that, for good or ill, Canada is in the hands of only two cultures: The Francophone and the Anglophone, the majority of which are white. These two cultures, having officially shared power in Canada since 1774, are the ones who determine how other cultures fall in line; that is, how ethnic groups interact with each other on the levels of law, immigration, language and public

policy (Saloojee, 2004). This fact goes some way towards explaining why Sikh youth in Canada continue to experience and report racism, alienation, and mistreatment in schools and job settings throughout Canada and the Western world (Bombwall, 1986; Hussain, 2005; Jaspal, 2013).

One of the very few empirical studies on Sikh youth in Toronto was provided by Nijhawan in 2014. Because this study is nearly unique in the field, and because of its high relevance to the current study, it will be discussed in detail. Elements of Nijhawan's study will also be actively connected to some of the theoretical themes presented earlier in this section of the literature review.

The 1984 attack on the Golden Temple was the starting point for Nijhawan's study. Dubbed Operation Blue Star, the attack was a turning point in Sikh identity formation, both in India and in Canada. The Babbar Khalsa Society of Canada was created as a non-profit organisation in British Columbia very soon after the events of 1984; the attack was also used as justification by Babbar Khalsa members for the terrorist attack on Air India Flight 182. The attack on the Golden Temple is thus a plausible historical point from which to approach various aspects of the formation of Sikh identity in Canada.

Nijhawan's (2014) work is particularly interesting given that very few of the Sikh youth in Toronto in the study were actually alive at the time of either Operation Blue Star or the Air India bombing. Nonetheless, for these youth, the events of 1984 function as an important part of what Benedict Anderson (2001) might have called the imagined community of Canadian Sikhs. Nijhawan explored several reasons that the Golden

Temple attack functioned as part of the identity development of Sikh youth in Toronto. First, Nijhawan emphasised that these youth were diasporic; they and their families continued to maintain some awareness of the Punjab as the epicenter, conceptual if not physical, of their communal life and aspirations, regardless of their own history in Canada. Diasporic identity for Sikh youth is rendered more difficult by the facts that (a) the Punjab, while being a Sikh-dominated province in terms of demography, is still part of a united India in which Sikhs have limited autonomy; and (b) a major portion of the Punjab belongs to Pakistan, a nation with which India has been to war three times and which remains other to Sikhs. Thus, while Sikh youth in Toronto retain affections for, and connections to, the Punjab, the Punjab presents a difficult tableau for such youth to project themselves onto. The Punjab is both home and alien to Canadian Sikh youth, echoing Caryl Phillips' (2001) description of what it meant for him, as a Black person from the Caribbean and Britain, to be in Sub-Saharan Africa: "I recognize the place, I feel at home here, but I don't belong. I am of, and not of, this place" (p. 70). Nijhawan's interviews of Toronto Sikh youth uncovered the same kind of ambivalence among them about what the Punjab meant. On one level, Sikh youth in Toronto professed deep passion for, and connection to, the Punjab; many youth also demonstrated that their practical connection to the Punjab, for example through language or physical visitation, was quite limited. This kind of ambivalence appears to be part of what it means to be a diasporic youth of colour in a white-majority country in the West.

Second, Sikh youth in Toronto are inescapably part of a white Canadian power structure that, according to Nijhawan (2014), continues to dictate what it means to be a

‘real’ Canadian, despite the concessions made to multiculturalism over the years. In this way, Sikh youths in Toronto experience the same kind of ambivalence with respect to Canada that characterises their relationship with the Punjab. Based on Nijhawan’s data, Sikh youth in Toronto love various aspects of Canada and do in fact consider themselves Canadian; they also subscribe to numerous Canadian values, and are more a part of the culture of consumption and affluence than they might recognise. At the same time, however, Sikh youth in Toronto are aware that they are not part of the majority culture and are acutely aware of the ways in which they are excluded from certain kinds of recognition by, and participation in, Canadian culture. In this sense, just as Sikh youth from Toronto are Punjabi and not-Punjabi at the same time, they are also Canadian and not-Canadian.

Based on these considerations, Nijhawan (2014) generated a concept of both diasporic politics and aesthetics among Sikh youth in Toronto. According to Nijhawan, both diasporic politics and aesthetics are a way for Sikh youth in Toronto to navigate the two poles (Punjab and Canada) between which they find themselves. Nijhawan emphasised that, for Sikh youth in Toronto, a commitment to Khalistan was not a precursor or symbol of attachment to the cause of terrorism, but rather of a way of both expressing and responding to the traumas that characterise recent Sikh history. The Golden Temple attack was traumatic for all Sikhs. It has also functioned as a way for Sikhs, particularly diasporic Sikhs, to reassert their identities. For Sikh youth in Toronto, keeping the memory of 1984 alive, while also demonstrating commitment to the idea of Khalistan, thus serves as a means of preserving identity and continuity in trying

circumstances. There was no indication in Nijhawan's fieldwork that Sikh youth from Toronto anticipated actually being able to live in a Khalistan, or even to go back to the Punjab as currently figured. Rather, Khalistan is one of the cornerstones of a kind of identity politics that is springing up among the younger generation of Sikhs in Toronto.

These young Sikhs are aware that, for many other Canadians, Khalistan is not associated with either the Sikh historical experience or identity politics in a multicultural Canada, but rather with the bombing of Air India Flight 182. For some of the young Sikhs interviewed by Nijhawan (2014), affiliation with an idea considered dangerous or subversive by the Canadian majority is actually a means of further cementing identity, as Khalistan becomes a shibboleth to indicate ever-higher levels of intra-Sikh solidarity. Some of these young Sikhs take pleasure in identifying with a movement, or with interests, that mark them as further outsiders to majoritarian Canadian culture, which they in any case reject. On the other hand, other young Sikhs interviewed by Nijhawan do not care about the threatening effect their affiliations have for other Canadians; rather, they see a commitment to Khalistan as part of a broader set of commitments to social justice. Indeed, social justice emerged as a major explanatory theme in Nijhawan's work. For young Sikhs in Toronto, deploying images of 1984 (for example, in cartoons, performance art, and other media) is a means of expressing their commitment to social justice, whether in India or Canada. These youth see themselves as part of an oppressive framework that, because they are Sikhs, follows them wherever they go. Their commitment to Khalistan is seen as a means of supporting the rights of the oppressed. In this sense, there is an interesting comparison between the function of Khalistan for the

Sikhs and the Battle of Karbala for Muslim Shi'ites. These historical allusions, which have certainly been marshaled by extremists, also represent cases of a minority unfairly persecuted by a majority. In this context, to support and invoke Khalistan is to signal a broader commitment to social justice. Moreover, many of the Sikh youth in Toronto who do cite social justice as a motivation for affiliating in some way with Khalistani movements are also involved in many other social justice projects, including projects that drew upon the politics and aesthetics of majoritarian Canadian culture. These youth are in search for recognition of themselves and their culture of origin as contributors to the Canadian fabric; for them, Khalistan is a means of asserting their identity in a manner that makes them visible and appreciated.

Overall, Nijhawan (2014) concludes that various kinds of trauma are at the center of the young Sikh experience in Canada, and Toronto in particular. These kinds of trauma are different from those faced by many Sikhs in the Punjab. The earlier generation of Sikhs, particular those resident in the Punjab during the period of Indian crackdown on the province after the Sikh assassination of Indira Gandhi, experienced widespread torture and extrajudicial killings. Young Sikhs in Toronto have not experienced this kind of trauma. However, they have experienced the diasporic traumas of dislocation, racism, and exclusion in Canadian settings; they have also experienced the secondhand trauma of hearing about relatives' experiences in the Punjab during the 1970s and 1980s. Affiliation with Khalistan is ultimately a means of managing trauma through proactive engagement with a cause that energises Sikh youth. What matters most, Nijhawan suggests, is the

management of trauma rather than the actual achievement of the Khalistani project in the political sphere.

Ironically, Sikh youth in Toronto and elsewhere in Canada might have greater freedom to define themselves as Sikhs, because they live under a less restrictive government and among other ethnic populations in which identity politics are practised (Nijhawan, 2014). In the Punjab, a long campaign of repression and official promotion of unified India policies have prevented Sikhs from being able to actively express their desire for an independent state. Indeed, individuals or organisations that express such desires in the Punjab are likely to encounter significant persecution from the central government. In Canada, on the other hand, freedom of Sikh assembly and identity politics is guaranteed. Although the Babbar Khalsa Association of Canada and the International Sikh Youth Federation ISYF were designated as terrorist organisations and shut down by the Canadian government, there continues to be numerous formal and informal associations throughout Canada that include the formation of Khalistan among their goals. These associations appear to be focused on the following goals: Recognition, identity-building, and trauma management rather than any form of political violence. It cannot be ruled out, however, that currents of extremism continue to exist among Sikh activists both young and old throughout Canada.

Nijhawan's (2014) study builds on the concept of diasporic citizenship (Nijhawan & Arora, 2013). According to Nijhawan and Arora, young Canadian Sikhs do not experience a unitary, uncomplicated form of citizenship. Rather, they are diasporic citizens, which means that they belong to both the Punjab and Canada. A diasporic

citizen faces the difficult task of rendering his or her transnational experiences intelligible in an integrative manner (Nijhawan & Arora, 2013). For Sikhs, this task is even more difficult because of what Nijhawan and Arora called issues of “migration, memory, and violence” (p. 299) that have to be negotiated before young Canadian Sikhs can claim any form of belonging. Clearly, as Nijhawan’s (2014) work demonstrated, the issue of violence is often referenced by the attack on the Golden Temple, which is the collective trauma *par excellence* for Sikhs of the past two generations. Operation Blue Star is not necessarily of living importance for young Canadian Sikhs; rather, it gives them a convenient, historically recent means of engaging with the multiple forms of violence to which the Sikh community has been subjected (Nijhawan & Arora, 2013). In this sense, Khalistan can be seen as symbolically complementary to the role played by the attack on the Golden Temple. If the Golden Temple represents Sikh trauma *par excellence*, then Khalistan is a curative fantasy, the contemplation of which gives young Sikhs respite not only from the traumas of the Sikh people as a whole, but also from the indignities and difficulties of life in an imperfectly multicultural Canada. For Canadian Sikh youth, both Operation Blue Star and Khalistan therefore function as a means of psychic engagement with the fundamental issues of diasporic citizenship, itself an important concept of Sikh identity.

Jaspal Singh’s (2013) paper on so-called Khalistani rap supports the general conclusions reached by Nijhawan (2014) and Nijhawan and Arora (2013). Singh argued that:

For some Sikh rappers and their audiences, the utopian concept of Khalistan serves as an ideological grid, in which specific masculine and militant logics become meaningful and acceptable. In diasporic settings, such as in the UK, memories of ancestral cultures serve as mythical resources for constructing coherent narratives vis-à-vis metaphorical discourses of contemporary youth cultures. (Jaspal Singh, 2013, p. 339)

Jaspal Singh supports the idea that, among Canadian Sikh youth in particular, Khalistan is more of a utopian concept than an actual call to arms. As Jaspal Singh pointed out, the amount of Sikh militancy in the Punjab is far lower than it was in the 1970s and 1980s, and there is no evidence that Canadian Sikhs are contributing to this militancy by actually taking up arms for Khalistan. Khalistan is better understood as a utopian concept that helps young Sikhs (such as Sikh rappers) make better sense of their officially conflicted and confusing identities in a diasporic setting. In terms of rap specifically, Khalistan appears to be not only a means of asserting Sikh identity, but also as a means of allowing Sikh youth to distance themselves from the perceived individualism, ahistoricity, and selfishness of an affluent Western culture. In this way, Khalistan can play a role in young Sikhs' development of anti-Western, anti-capitalist identities—even though, ironically, Khalistan becomes commodified in rap and other forms of cultural practise.

Empirical Insights into Sikh Youth in Canada

Sikh youth in Canada are not a frequently studied population. One approach to understanding more about Sikh youth in Canada is to generate systematic demographic insights into the population based on data provided by Statistics Canada (2011). These

data can then be used to support, extend, or contest other scholarly observations about Sikh youth in Canada.

To begin with, of Sikhs under 15 in all of Canada, the vast majority had been established in their domicile (i.e., as non-movers) in the calendar year before the 2011 Canadian National Household Survey (NHS):

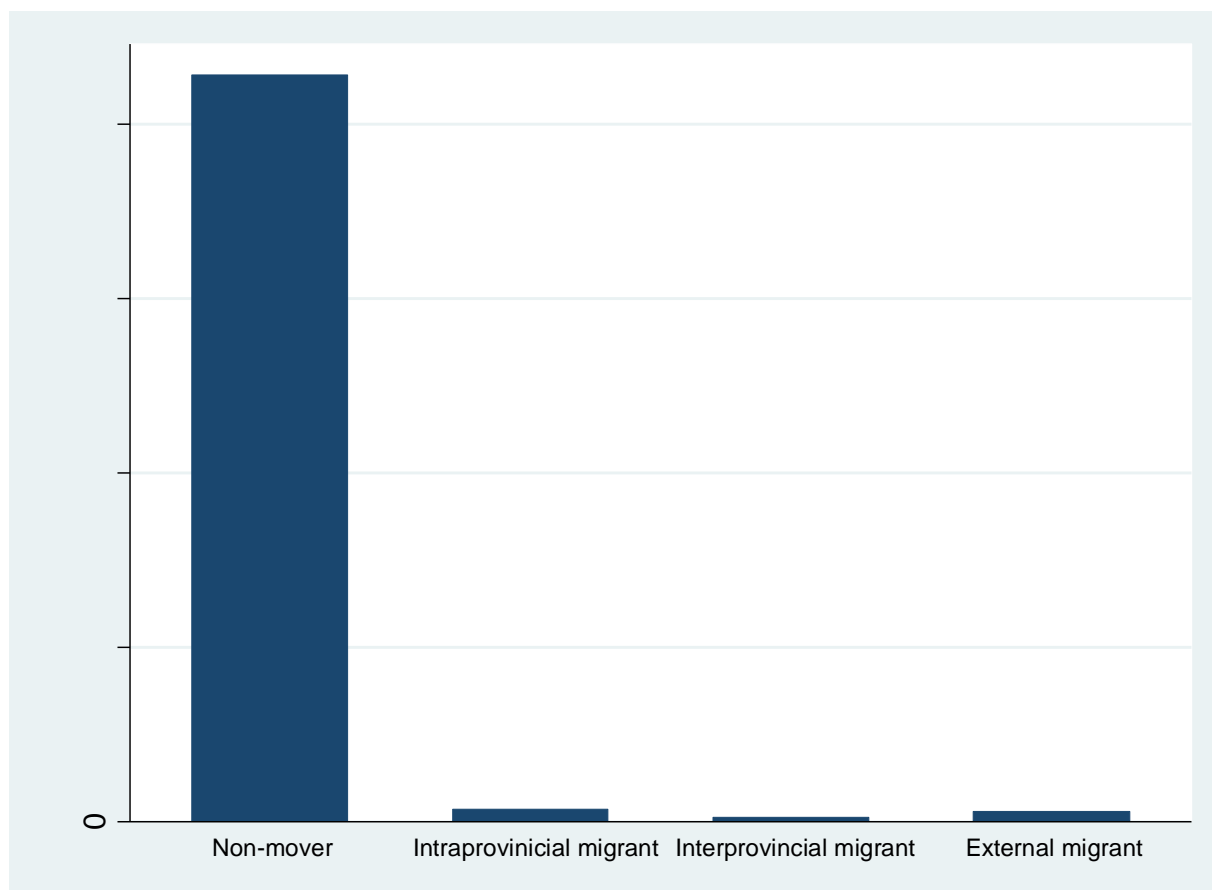


Figure 4. Mobility Status, Canadian Sikhs under 15.

Demographic records also indicate that more Canadian Sikhs under 15 speak a non-official language rather than English as their mother tongue. The non-official tongue most likely to be spoken by Sikhs in Punjabi, but the NHS data aggregated all non-

official mother tongues into a single category when queried for data about people who self-identified as Sikh.

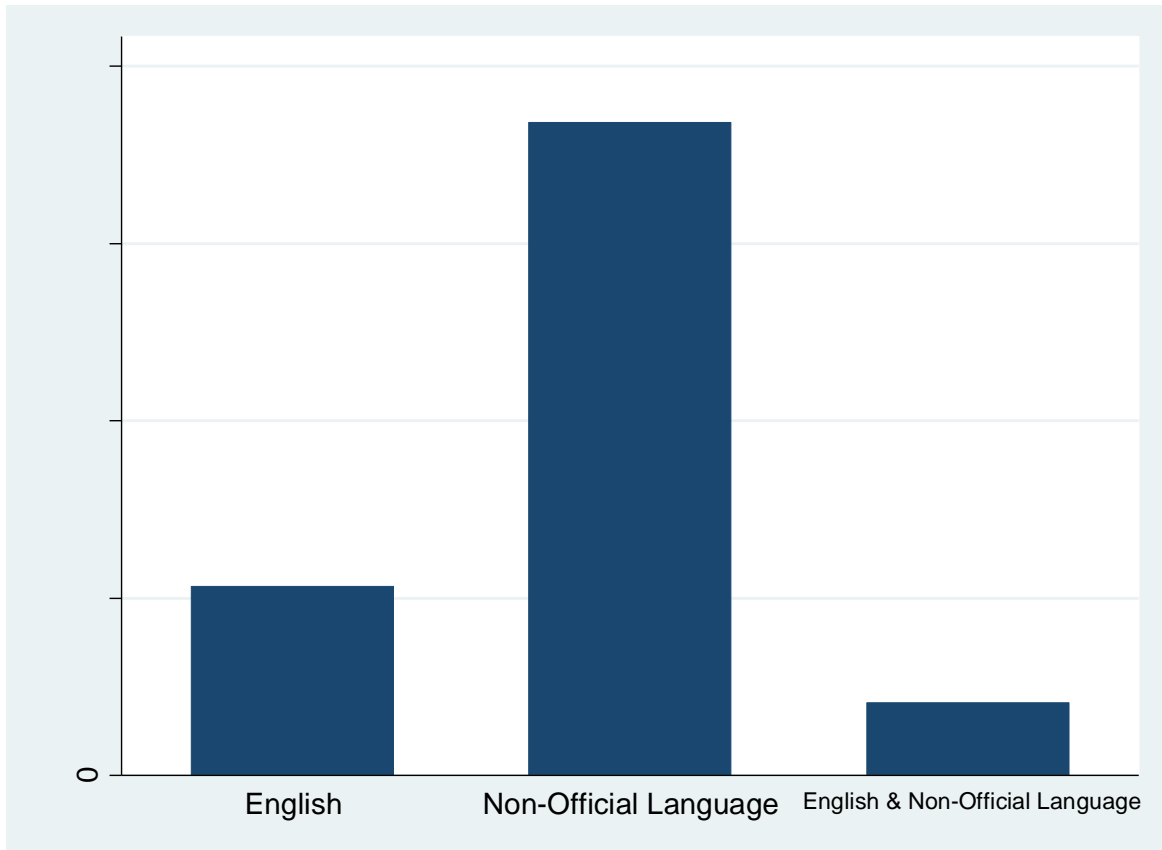


Figure 5. Common Mother Tongues, Canadian Sikhs under 15.

Moreover, young Canadian Sikhs tend to live in households in which the language spoken with most frequency (once again, Punjabi) is also a non-official language:

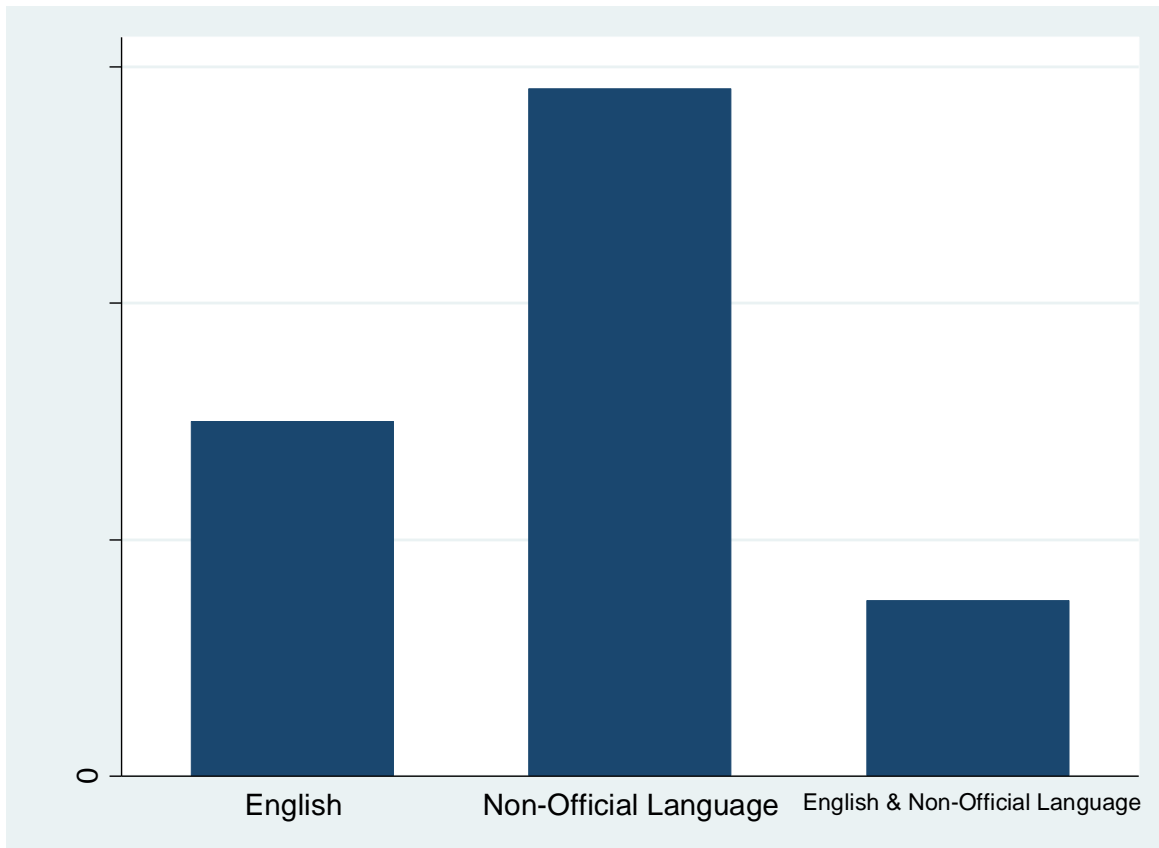


Figure 6. Tongue Spoken Most Frequently at Home, Canadian Sikhs under 15.

Note that, in Toronto, the disparity between the non-official language and English as mother tongues for children under 15 is greater than for Canada as a whole. These data indicate that speaking Punjabi is less common for young Sikhs in Toronto than countrywide, which could inform the development of Sikh identity in Toronto.

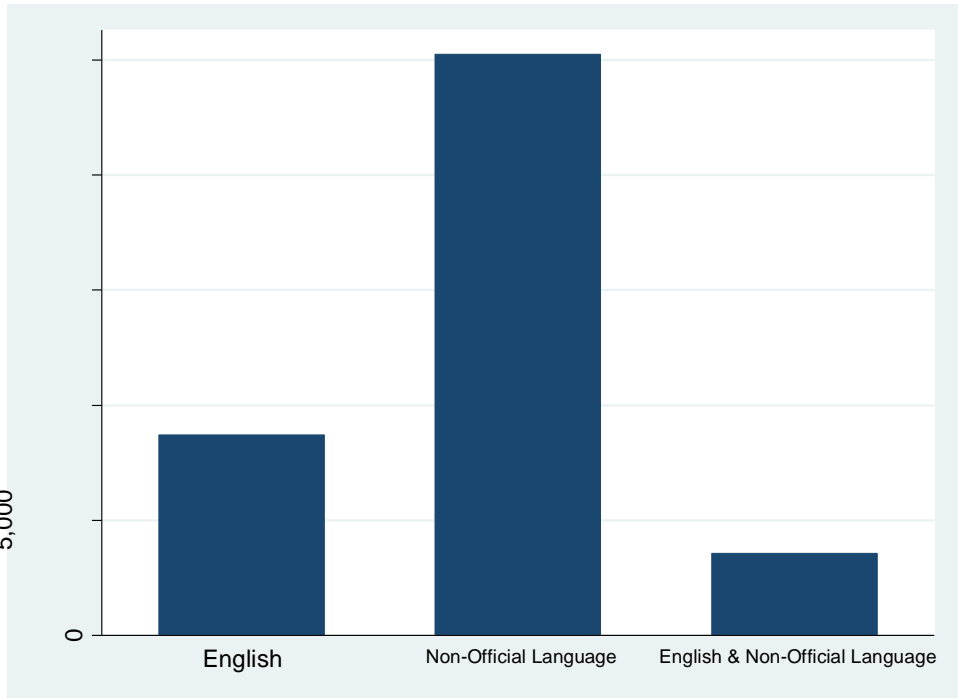


Figure 7. Common Mother Tongues, Toronto Sikhs under 15.

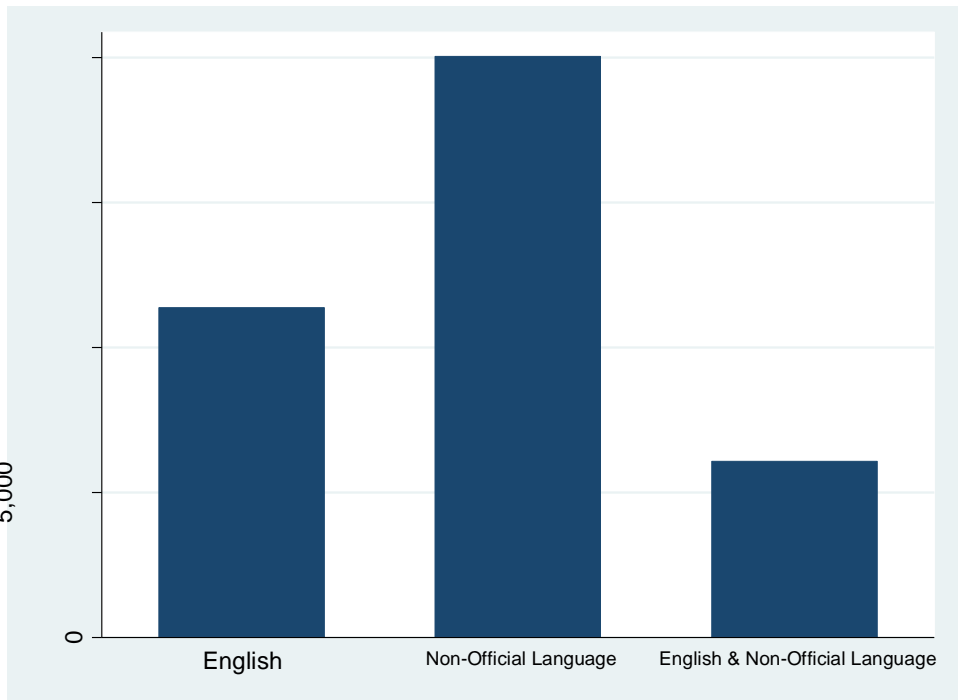


Figure 8. Tongue Spoken Most Frequently at Home, Toronto Sikhs under 15.

Interestingly, despite the fact that most Sikhs nationally are immigrants, the vast majority of Sikhs under 15 in Canada are non-immigrants, which could speak to a gulf between the values of older immigrants and younger non-immigrants among the Sikh population.

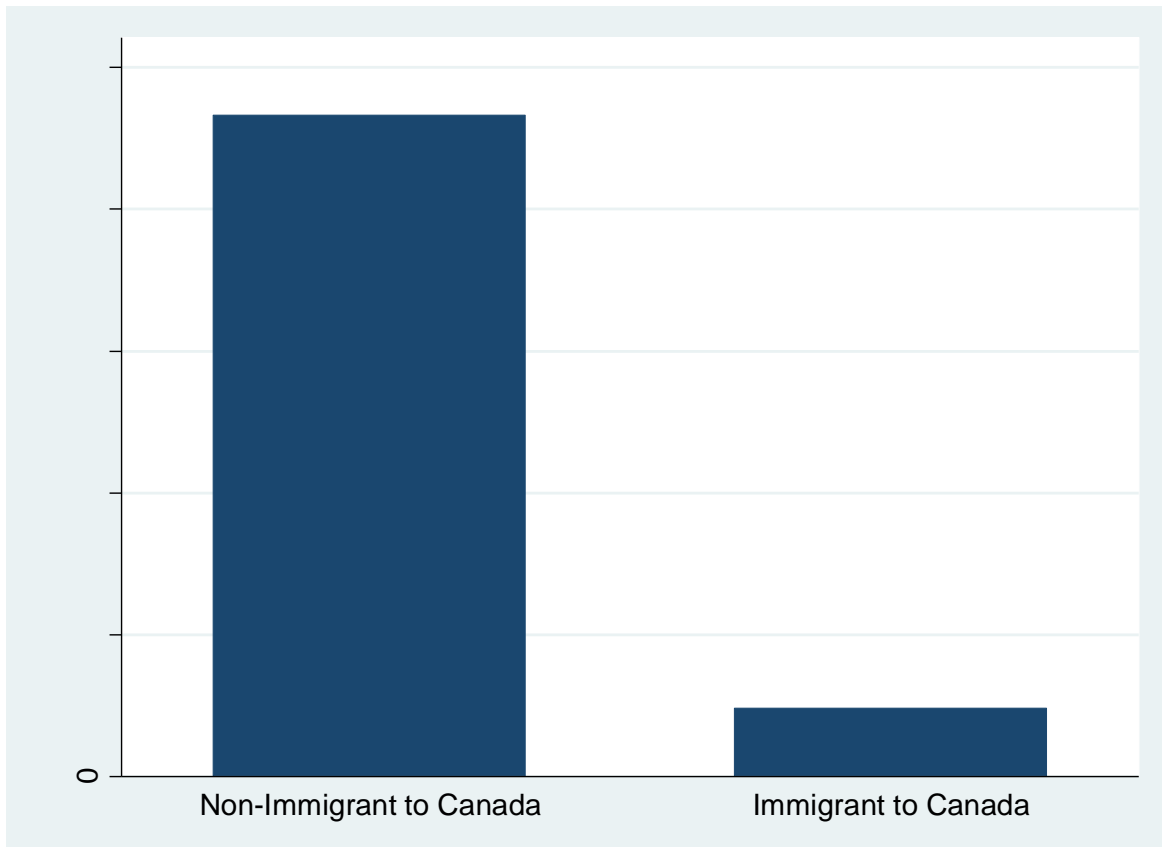


Figure 9. Immigration Status of Canadian Sikhs under 15.

The same patterns exist in Toronto as in the rest of Canada, with most Sikh youth under 15 classified as non-immigrants:

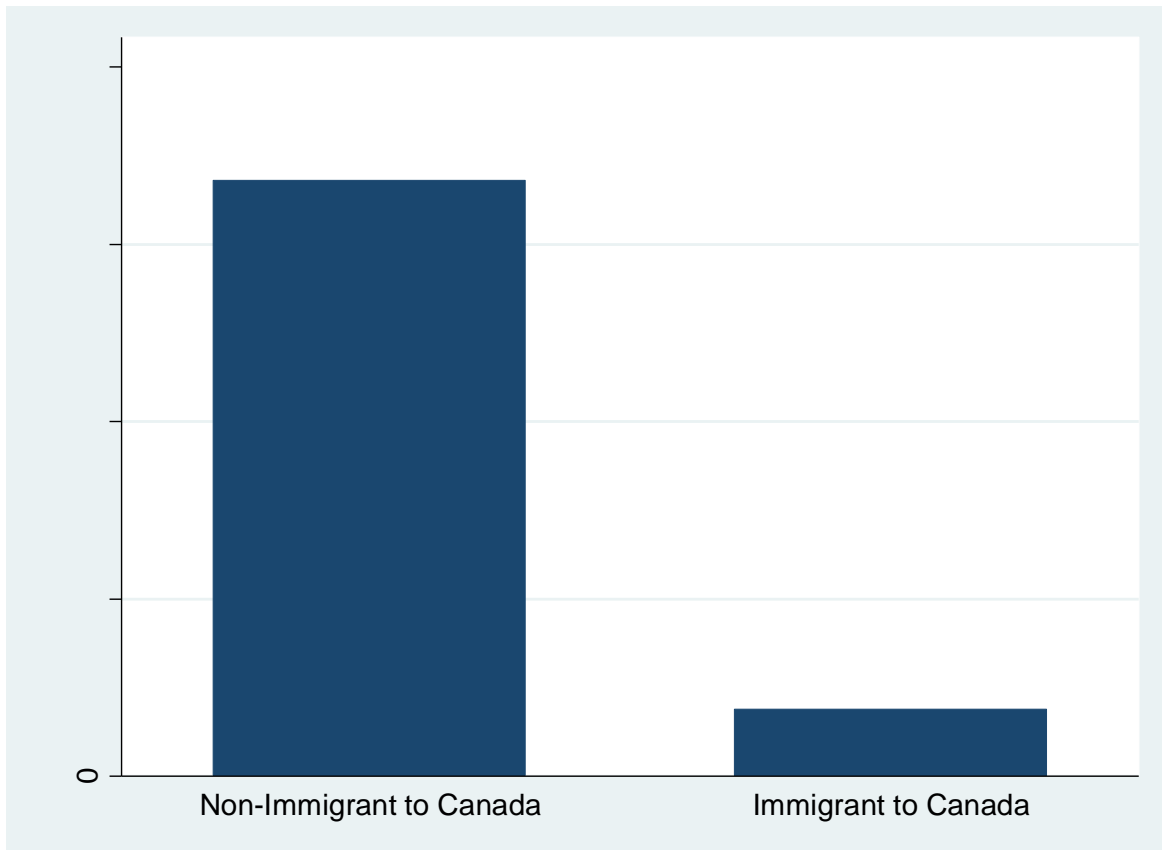


Figure 10. Immigration Status of Toronto Sikhs under 15.

Interestingly, Toronto Sikhs under 15 seem slightly more mobile than all Canadian Sikhs under 15. A comparison of data indicates that, in the calendar year before the 2011 NHS, a higher proportion of Toronto Sikhs under 15 had been intraprovincial, interprovincial, or external migrants (2011). These data indicate that Toronto is attracting young Sikh families.

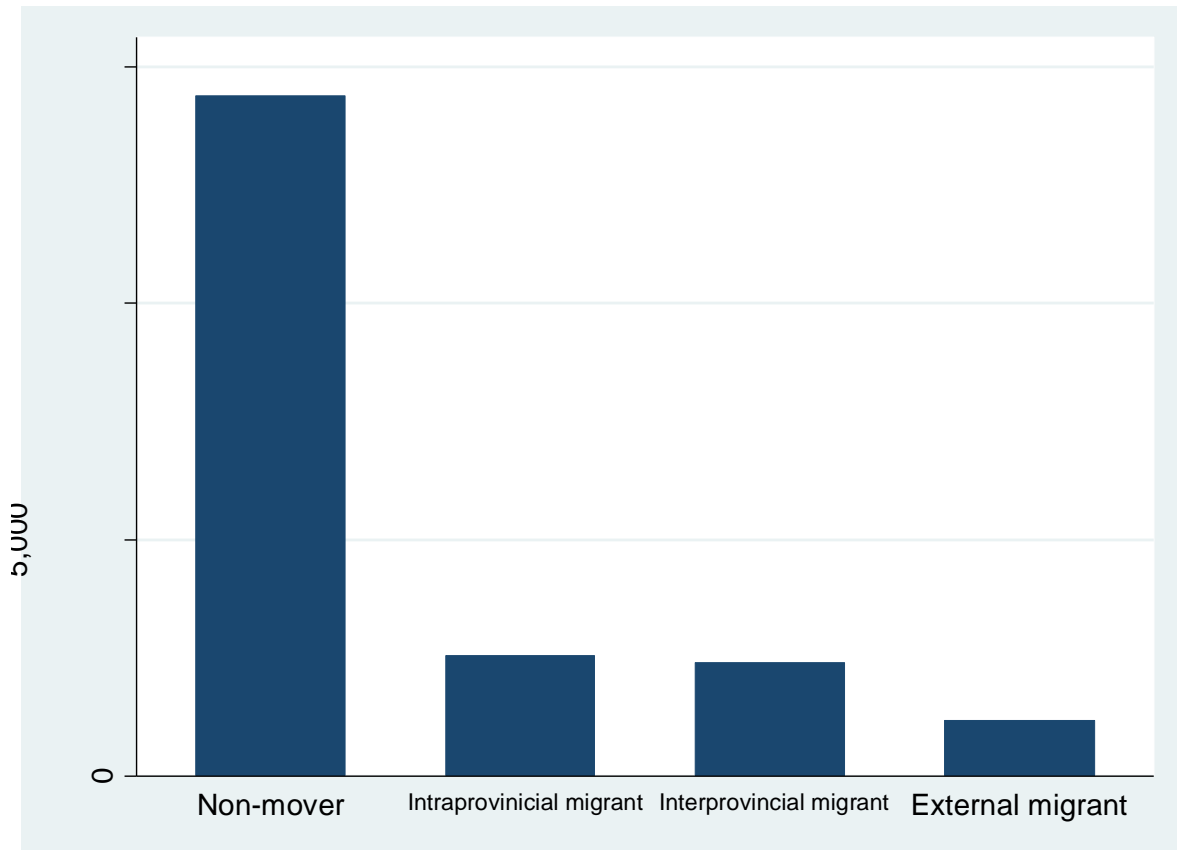


Figure 11. Mobility Status, Toronto Sikhs under 15.

Because the NHS provided separate data for Sikhs under 15, and Sikhs between 15 and 24, separately empirical analyses of these two groups were presented. The mobility data for all Canadian Sikhs between 15 to 24 demonstrate a different pattern than the mobility data for Canadian Sikhs under 15. It seems that more Canadian Sikhs between 15 to 24 than Canadian Sikhs under 15 moved in the year before the 2011 NHS.

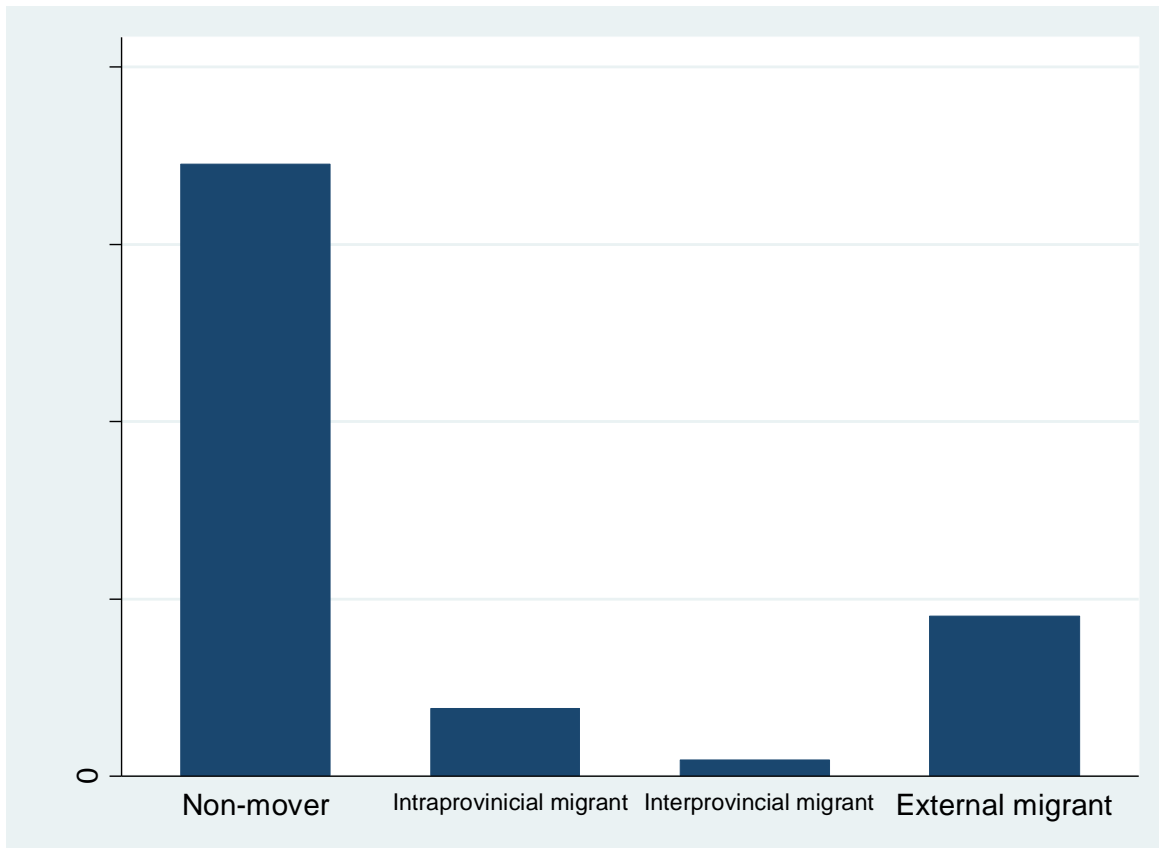


Figure 12. Mobility Status, Canadian Sikhs between 15-24.

There were some other interesting disparities between Canadian Sikhs under 15 and Canadian Sikhs between 15 and 24. Although roughly the same proportion of Canadian Sikhs under 15 and Canadian Sikhs between 15 and 24 speak a non-official language as their mother tongue, the proportion of Canadian Sikhs between 15 and 24 who speak English most frequently at home is much higher than the proportion of Canadian Sikhs under 15 who speak English most frequently at home .

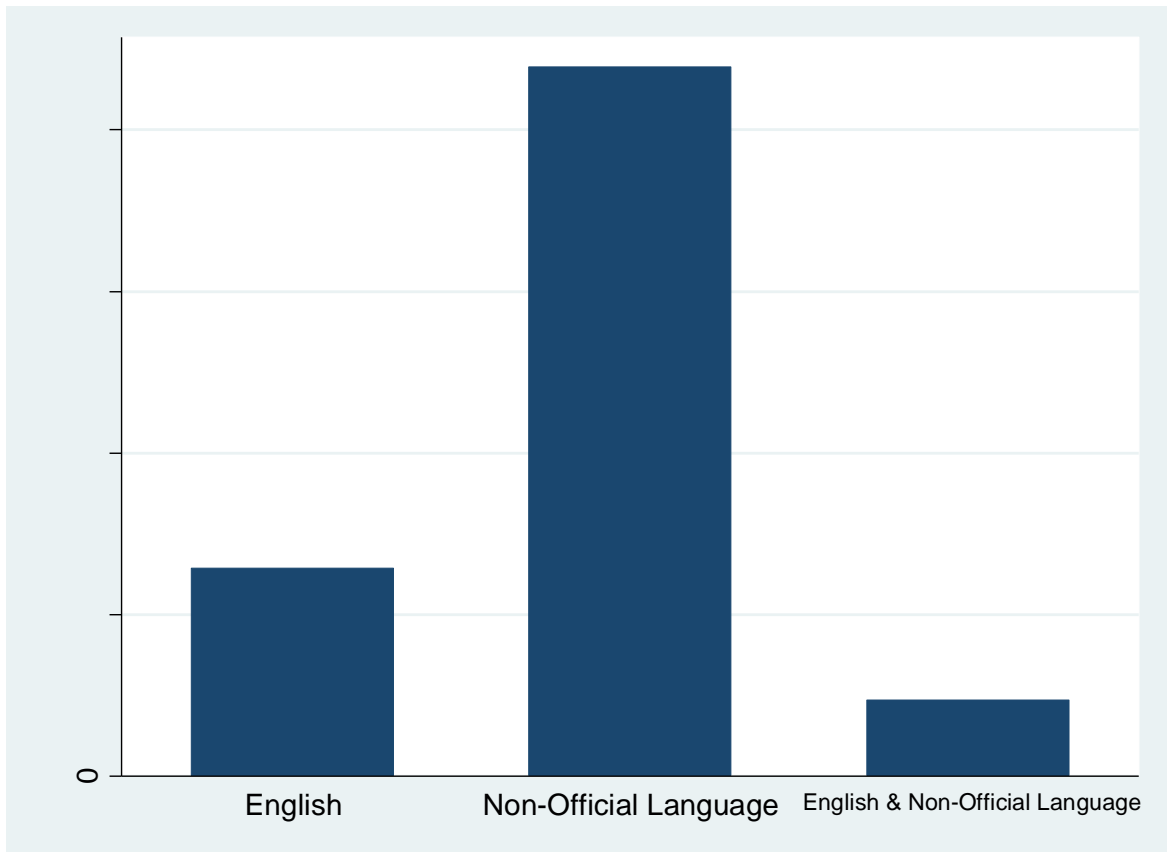


Figure 13. Common Mother Tongues, Canadian Sikhs between 15 and 24.

These data indicate that, while Punjabi remains the mother tongue of Canadian Sikhs aged 15 to 24 at about the same proportion as for Canadian Sikhs under 15, Canadian Sikhs who age into the 15-24 bracket begin to speak English at home more frequently than do Canadian Sikhs under 15, which could reflect acculturation into Canadian linguistic norms.

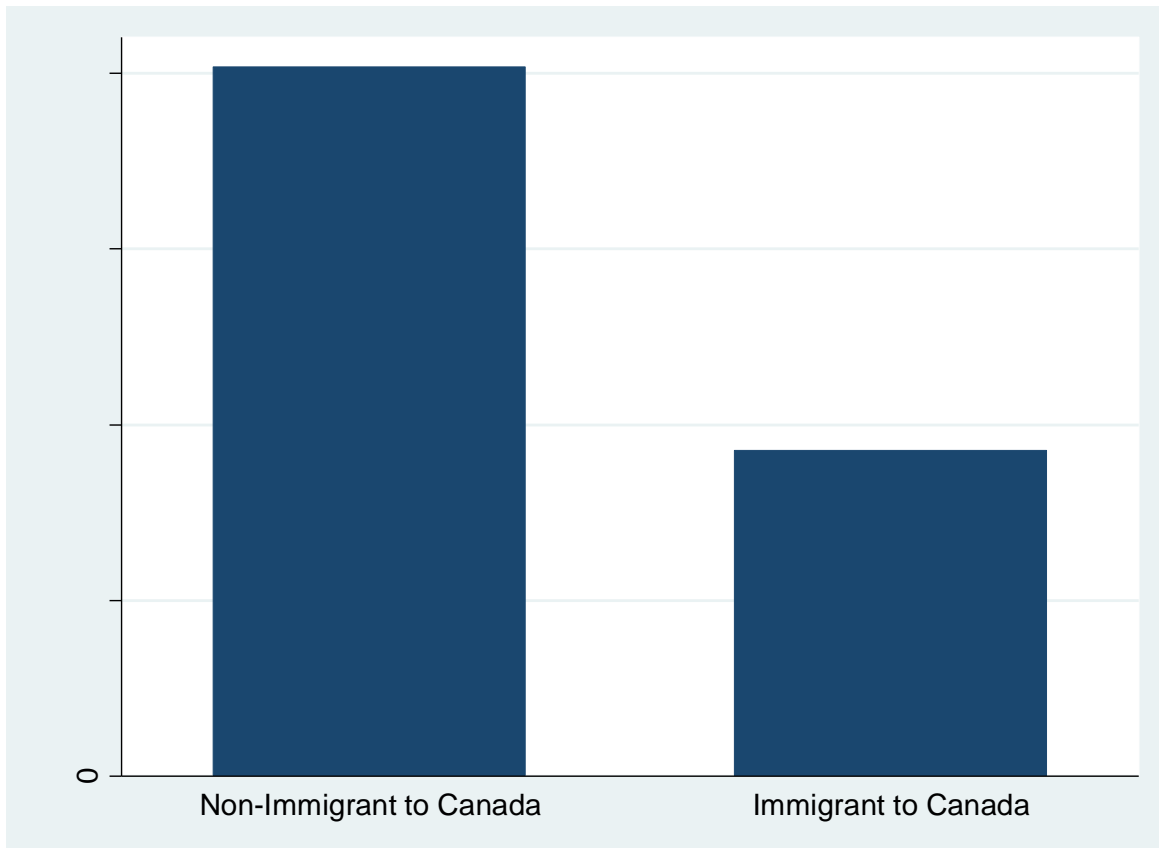


Figure 14. Immigration Status of Canadian Sikhs between 15-24.

Another interesting demographic comparison is between the mobility status of Toronto Sikhs under 15 and the mobility status of Toronto Sikhs between 15 and 24. Toronto Sikhs between 15 and 24 did not do much moving in the year before they were canvassed in the NHS, which could indicate that the teen / young adult Sikh population in Toronto is relatively better established than the youth / infant population.

Khalistan in Canada

Khalistan in Canada can be understood as membership in the overall movement, whether formal membership in a political group or informal affiliation with a concept,

related to the project of Khalistan. The history of Khalistan in Canada is inextricably bound to the bombing of Air India Flight 182. After the history of this event is told in more detail, the background of Khalistan in Canada can be better understood, and carried forward into an analysis of Khalistan as it has functioned in Canada in contemporary times.

On November 1, 1984, the Babbar Khalsa Sikh Society of Canada was incorporated in British Columbia. One of the goals listed on the Certificate of Incorporation for the Babbar Khalsa Sikh Society was the formation of an independent Sikh state. Interestingly, the incorporation of the Babbar Khalsa Sikh Society of Canada took place the very next day after Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguards for ordering Operation Blue Star. In this sense, there was a clear relationship between events in India and the formation of the Babbar Khalsa Sikh Society of Canada.

One of the members of the Babbar Khalsa Sikh Society of Canada was Inderjit Singh Reyat. Born in India in 1952, Reyat was a Sikh who immigrated to Canada at some point in the mid-1970s. A few years earlier, Dr. Jagjit Singh Chauhan left India and posted a full-page advertisement in the *New York Times* supporting the formation of Khalistan, marking the emergence of Khalistan as a political phenomenon known in the West. The extent of Reyat's involvement with Khalistan during the early 1970s is unknown; for that matter, neither scholars nor law enforcement authorities were particularly attuned to the political activities of Canadian Sikhs during this time.

After the investigation into the Air India Flight 182 began, Canadian authorities learned that Reyat had expressed interest in obtaining explosives at some point in 1984. Reyat expressed this interest to a mechanic who was a co-worker in the automotive store in which Reyat was employed at the time, explaining that he had some tree stumps on his property that he needed to destroy. Reyat was also described as having made numerous angry comments about Indira Gandhi.

In 1985, Reyat's militancy went beyond words and vague intentions. On May 8, 1985, Reyat entered a Radio Shack store in Duncan, British Columbia for the purpose of buying an auto clock that he expressed interest in attaching to a relay. Although Reyat never testified against any co-conspirators in the Air India Flight 182 trial, Canadian law enforcement authorities believe that, at some point in 1984, Reyat must have been approached by another Sikh, Talwinder Singh Parmar, in order to build a bomb that would be used in the Sikh cause. A Sikh priest, Talwinder Singh Parmar, had immigrated to Canada along with his family in 1970, and was later killed in the Punjab during insurrectionary activities against the Indian government in 1992. Talwinder Singh Parmar was one of the original signatories of the articles of incorporation for the Babbar Khalsa Sikh Society of Canada, and was a known supporter of the idea of Khalistan.

In May 1985, for reasons unknown, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) brought Parmar under surveillance. In early June, 1985, CSIS operatives followed Parmar and an unknown Indian male as they made their way from Parmar's house in Burnaby to Reyat's house in Duncan. Once the three men gathered at Reyat's residence, they went to the woods behind his workplace, AME. There, CSIS agents continued

remote surveillance and heard a loud bang emanate from the woods. Inadvertently, CSIS agents had overheard the test of the explosive that would shortly be used in the Air India Flight 182 bombing.

Reyat was only the face of a large conspiracy to bomb Air India Flight 182, a conspiracy which included many additional members. In fact, the conspiracy had also targeted Air India Flight 301, but the bomb aboard that plane went off after it had already landed in Tokyo, killing only two people instead of the nearly 200 that had been targeted. Canadian law enforcement authorities came to believe that the Flight 182 conspiracy had been financed by Ripudaman Singh Malik, a Sikh who had also helped to found the Khalsa Credit Union and the Khalsa School, Sikh institutions in British Columbia. Malik was also known for hosting Sikh religious gatherings in his house. At one of these gatherings, a man named Jagdev Singh Dhillon, according to later testimony, overheard a sentence about crashing planes.

The testimony of Dhillon, as well as that of an anonymous Sikh designated in the court record only as Mr. A., indicated that the Sikh community in British Columbia had been religiously and socially active since at least the beginning of the 1970s. There was a definite radicalisation that took place, however, after the events of Operation Blue Star, when the Indian Army overran the most sacred site of the Sikhs, the Golden Temple. At about this time, according to the testimony of Mr. A., Talwinder Singh Parmar began to discuss revenge attacks upon Indira Gandhi and the Indian government. These discussions took place at regular meetings at the houses of prominent local Sikhs, such as Malik.

Mr. A. testified that, after Operation Blue Star but before the assassination of Indira Gandhi, he was approached by Malik just outside the Ross Street Temple in Vancouver. According to Mr. A., Malik demanded that he load a suitcase with a time bomb on to an Air India airplane. Malik told Mr. A. that this plan had been hatched by Talwinder Singh Parmar. Mr. A. refused to be part of the conspiracy, however, and took his leave of Malik. Although Mr. A. was in possession of special information that could have helped prevent the tragedy of Air India Flight 182, he did not come forward and speak to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police until 2003, when Malik himself was brought to trial and the abortive attempt to involve Mr. A. entered the court record. While claiming to have been horrified of the idea of a bombing of innocents, Mr. A. nonetheless kept Malik's secret for nearly 20 years. In cross-examination, it emerged that Mr. A. had a mortgage from the Khalsa Credit Union, which was managed by Malik, and that he had attempted to sell his own house to Malik in 1998.

What emerges from this testimony and the rest of the court records pertaining to the Air India Flight 182 bombing is that Khalistan in Canada was not just a political idea shared by people such as Malik, Reyat, and Parmar, but a motive for terrorism against the Indian government. In addition, the concept of Khalistan cannot easily be separated from its larger social context. For example, although Malik was the financier and perhaps main plotter of the Air India Flight 182 bombing, he was also the founding member of a Sikh credit union and religious school that functioned as pillars of the Sikh community in British Columbia. The Babbar Khalsa Society of Canada had named Khalistan as one of its objectives, and ended up being a front for terrorism; however, this organisation was

also a social, commercial, and religious club for the many Sikhs who were establishing themselves in Canada during the 1970s and 1980s.

Looking back the Air India Flight 182 bombing, it is tempting to classify the idea of Khalistan as part and parcel of a form of Sikh terrorism. Certainly, this argument was the one made by the Indian government, and by many members of the Canadian government, ever since supporters of Khalistan aired the idea in public after 1985. However, in Canada, the idea of Khalistan cannot be conflated with Sikh terrorism, any more than the idea of an Islamic caliphate can be uniquely associated with Al Qaeda or a similar Muslim terrorist group. During the 1970s and 1980s, the Sikhs of Canada were clearly involved in trying to carve out a place for themselves in what was, and possibly remains, a hostile and alien society. Sikhs were already resented, if not hated, by Hindus and Muslims who had preceded them in immigrating to Canada. The long history of Sikh conflict with Muslims in the Subcontinent, and the demographic and cultural rivalry between nationalist Hindus and nationalist Sikhs (a rivalry whose flashpoint was the Punjab) followed Sikhs to Canada. Because of their dress and customs, the Sikhs were also a more visible minority community, one that could be easily targeted for overt and covert acts of racism by white Canadians. In this climate, Canadian Sikhs in the 1970s began to be more active in building temples, hosting private social meetings, and establishing institutions (such as banks and schools) for the benefit of the whole Sikh community. Khalistan was, if anything, part and parcel of these Sikhs attempts to build and negotiate a new living space far away from the Punjab. Of the alleged conspirators in the Air India Flight 182 bombing, very few returned to India or expressed the idea of

resettling in the Punjab; Talwinder Singh Parmar was one of the very few exceptions. Rather, as disclosed in the testimony heard by Canadian courts, the motivation behind the conspiracy appeared to be one of punishing the Indian government.

This testimony offers an interesting way to think about Khalistan. The Air India Flight 182 plotters were, for all of the cross-cultural difficulties they encountered, fairly rooted in Canadian life. They had jobs and houses in Canada. They had formed businesses and non-profit organisations in Canada. Once they immigrated, they did not go back. In this sense, Khalistan might have been a way to further agitate the Indian government, as well as to consolidate the sense of Sikh collective identity that was threatened by immigration to Canada. Perhaps those Canadian Sikhs who supported the idea of Khalistan did not intend to actually live in such a state, if by some miracle it had been created. As a shared idea, however, Khalistan was part of the glue that held the Sikh community in British Columbia together; it was an expression of shared collective sentiment no different from the commitment to building temples or businesses.

One form of empirical support for this claim about Khalistan in Canada is that none of the voluminous testimony related to the Air India Flight 182 bombing cites Khalistan as the actual inspiration for the act of terrorism. This state of affairs presents a counterpoint to the terrorism of other stateless groups, such as the Palestinians and Kurds, who have explicitly dedicated the commission of specific terroristic acts to the formation of their respective homelands. Khalistan figured so insubstantially in the plotting and commission of the Air India Flight 182 bombing that the Canadian court decisions

relating to this bombing inevitably discuss Khalistan in a background section or footnote explaining the buildup of Sikh militancy.

For these reasons, Khalistan in Canada can be described as an issue of identity and collectivism rather than as a pivot for terrorism, at least in the context of the 1970s and 1980s that constitute the backdrop of the Air India Flight 182 bombing. The idea of Khalistan in Canada has outlived the Air India incident and ought also to be discussed in terms of its contemporary resonance.

In 2003, coinciding with the trial of Malik, the Canadian federal government banned the Babbar Khalsa Society of Canada. However, the Babbar Khalsa Society of Canadian remained a registered non-profit organisation in British Columbia until 2004. The Babbar Khalsa Society of Canada thus endured for nearly 20 years after its role in the Air India bombing. During this time, the idea of Khalistan remained alive and well in Canada, both as a part of the militaristic and indeed terroristic orientation of Babbar Khalsa Society of Canada. Khalistan was also part of the underlying consciousness of Sikhs who were not supportive of the Air India bombing.

Khalistan has also been associated with the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF), which, like the Babbar Khalsa Society of Canada, has been outlawed and declared a terroristic organisation since 2003. Like the Babbar Khalsa Society of Canada, the ISYF was founded shortly after Operation Blue Star. Like the original Babbar Khalsa Society, the ISYF was founded in the United Kingdom in 1984; a branch opened in Canada soon after wards. There are many other Sikh extremist groups that include the formation of Khalistan as part of their demands. These groups include: The Khalistan

Zindabad Fore, the Dashmesh Regiment, the Khalistan Liberation Army, the Khalistan National Army, the Khalistan Liberation Organisation, the Shaheed Khalsa Force, the Khalistan Security Force, the Khalistan Guerrilla Force, the Bhindranwala Tigers Force of Khalistan, and the Khalistan Commando Force. Of these organisations, only the ISYF and Babbar Khalsa have been noted as having support and an operational presence in Canada. Indeed, in a well-publicised incident, former members of both the ISYF and Babbar Khalsa Society of Canada were among the organisers of an April 2007 Sikh Vaisakhi festival parade in Surrey, British Columbia, in which dead Flight 182 terrorists were depicted on floats.

Clearly, then, there remains Canadian Sikh support for both extremist organisations and the cause of the national homeland that they support; what is not clear is the way in which Canadian Sikh youth actually interact with various Khalistani movements. Canadian Sikh association with extremist organisations attracts journalistic coverage, but there does not appear to be popular or scholarly literature on how non-extremist as well as extremist Sikh youth think of, or participate in, the Khalistan movement, and why.

Conclusion

The term *Khalistan* is not neutral. It means, in a combination of Punjabi and Persian, ‘land of the pure,’ a designation that implies some form of Sikh supremacy, or at least exceptionalism, vis-à-vis the other peoples of India. Such sentiments are not unique to Sikh separatists. After all, the word *Pakistan* also means ‘land of the pure.’ There are clearly many South Asians who, like people worldwide, assume that their own sectarian

communities have the advantage of purity over others. On this count, the movement for Khalistan cannot be dismissed as a simple and unique expression of bigotry that could naturally lend itself to violence.

One salient difference between these two so-called 'lands of the pure' is that Pakistan has the prestige of a state while Khalistan does not. To support the cause of Pakistan is not coded as supporting the cause of terrorism, even though Pakistan has been implicated in being a state sponsor of terror in Kashmir, Afghanistan, and Pakistan's own Northwest Frontier Provinces. On the other hand, there are many people in Canada, including many prominent politicians, who do not treat Khalistan as a concept that deserves respect, but rather as a code word for terrorism. This kind of treatment is, of course, deeply unfair, because actual states (such as India and Pakistan) are responsible for more violence and terrorism than non-states. They are insulated from critique, however, because of their status as states. Khalistan suffers because, as an idea relocated to Canadian soil, it does not have many adherents. Among Khalistan's few adherents in Canada were those who carried out the largest mass murder in Canadian history. Khalistan cannot affiliate itself with the prestige of official nationalism, the practical street power of a mass movement, or the moral high ground. At the same time, as demonstrated in this literature review, Khalistan is far more than a rallying cry for Sikh extremists, whether in Canada or India. It has a dignified historical and sociological provenance of its own.

One of the rationales for providing an extended literature review of the Sikh role in the Punjab was to establish Khalistan in a historical context that is ignored if support

for Khalistan is conflated with support for terrorism. Khalistan is the vehicle for Sikh national identity and aspirations in South Asia, no less than Pakistan is the vehicle for Muslim national identity and aspirations in South Asia. In Canada, Khalistan has certainly been part of the psychosocial makeup of terrorists such as the 1980s-era members of the Babbar Khalsa Society of Canada. Khalistan is also a means for Sikhs to think about an independence that they actually possessed (between 1799 and 1849), and to express the same ethno-religious drive for autonomy that generated India and Pakistan. Understood in this way, Khalistan emerges as a fairly broad concept—one that can surely be used to understand terrorism and mental allegiance to violence, but one that can also be used as a more general means of examining Sikh identity and experience in Canada.

One of the most important contributions of this study is to connect Khalistan to the Sikh youth experience in a manner that transcends the recent association of Khalistan with terrorism and extremism. Even among Western scholars, there is a temptation to conflate Khalistan with extremist violence, because the history of the Sikhs is not well-known. Even some Sikh scholars have reached purblind conclusions about Sikh identity, with, for example, Oberoi (1987) arguing that the Punjab is only of recent importance to Sikhs. The extensive historical discussion earlier in the literature indicated that Sikhism, as a religion and culture, is inextricably bound to the Punjab. The Punjab was also the center of the kind of Hindu-Muslim syncretism from which Sikh-like movements such as Bhakti practice emerged. The Sikh Gurus were all born in the Punjab, wrote in Punjabi, and, over time, came to bring various parts of the Punjab under the spiritual and temporal control. In this sense, while the term Khalistan itself is quite new, the aspiration for a

Sikh zone of sovereignty is very old, and can by no means be associated solely with extremism, whether in Canada or globally. It is also not clear whether Khalistani movements in Canada, other than the underground Babbar Khalsa and ISYF, are extremist movements, or even whether the conceptual category of extremism is more helpful than, say, the category of identity when trying to explain what Khalistan means to Sikh youth.

In fact, the concept of identity has already been used in at least three papers on Sikh youth (Nijhawan, 2014; Nijhawan & Arora, 2013; J. N. Singh, 2013). These three papers have provided a foundation for understanding the motivations of young Canadian Sikhs who affiliate with Khalistani movements. First, these papers suggest that the idea of a Khalistani movement in the vein of Babbar Khalsa or ISYF has to be looked at anew. Young Canadian Sikhs are not necessarily as closely tied to formal movements and organisations as their parents were; for them, affiliation with Khalistan is often decoupled from participation in a given collective. Canadian Sikh youth's passion for Khalistan is often expressed in an improvised, informal manner that can be glimpsed in art forms such as rap and street art, not as part of conformity to the platform of a formal organisation. Second, the papers on young Canadian Sikh identity and Khalistan suggest that Khalistan is more of a utopian idea rather than a practical political project. Few, if any, Canadian Sikh youth have been observed to take up arms or undergo any other kind of practical commitment to Khalistan. Rather, Sikh youth utilise Khalistan as a means of building and negotiating diasporic identities.

Given these findings, it is time for researchers to move beyond utilising Khalistan as a means of examining armed Sikh extremism in Canada—which has not taken since the 1985 Air India bombing—and utilising Khalistan as part of a broader sociological framework for examining the identity of young Canadian Sikhs. Because Khalistan is close to so many issues of memory, trauma, belonging, citizenship, and diaspora, among other concepts, it can prove a useful prism for examining the identity of young Canadian Sikhs.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework and Approaches

The purposes of this chapter are as follows. First, there will be an overview of the theoretical framework of the study. Second, functional homeostasis will be explored, not only in light of key theoretical and empirical results, but also in the specific context of Canadian Sikhs. Third, symbolic interactionism will be discussed in the same manner as functional homeostasis.

Overview

The theoretical framework of this study emerged from an analysis of the Sikh experience, both in general and in reference to Sikh youth in Canada. One of the conclusions that emerged from the literature review is that the Sikh identity requires a high degree of homeostasis. Without homeostasis, Sikhism would suffer from a loss of differentiation for the Sikhs, which, in turn, would see them assimilated into some heterodox form of Hinduism (as in the Bhakti movement) or Islam (as, perhaps, a Sufi movement). Sikhism only became a personal and social identity in the wake of Guru Nanak's differentiation of Sikhism from Hinduism and Islam. Over time, each Sikh Guru understood that the continued survival of the Sikhs meant the retention of this differentiation. As discussed in the literature review, Sikhs came under enormous pressure, especially from the Muslim Mughal elites, to surrender their differentiation.

For this reason, the experience and identity of Sikhism cannot be understood without reference to theories of homeostasis, which will provide a proper context for asking how Sikhs remain Sikhs. In older times, the question of Sikh homeostasis could only be examined as part of the armed conflict of Sikhs with the Mughals and other

communities. In contemporary Canada, there is no such coercive pressure on Sikhs; rather, the maintenance of Sikh homeostasis is largely a matter of decisions made by Sikhs to remain rooted to their classic identity. Of course, these decisions do not take place in a vacuum; Sikhs in Canada are part of a diaspora and therefore subject to various cultural, economic, and political pressures to assimilate to or else to reject the majoritarian values of the host nation. While these pressures are surely not as great as the threats Sikhs have historically faced, they nonetheless form part of the background against which Sikhs in Canada work to define and retain their Sikh identities.

In Canada, the work of building and maintaining Sikh homeostasis takes place largely within Sikh communities. Sikhs are free to erect places of worship and cultural centers, to dress in accordance with custom, and even (in the wake of key Canadian court decisions) to carry their daggers in public places. In this sense, there are few objective constraints on the exercise of Sikh identity in Canada. When Sikhs seek to assert their identities in Canada, they engage in voluntary and civic acts such as building temples, organising charities, and giving language lessons. More conceptually, Sikhs also maintain their identities by communicating with each other. When Sikhs are able to draw upon and exercise a common vocabulary, both in terms of an actual lexical vocabulary and a historic vocabulary drawing upon events and issues of interest to their community, they undertake the tasks of recognising and strengthening each other as Sikhs. Canadian Sikh youth involvement with the Khalistan movement can in fact be approached as a form of identity-building and affirming communication whose ultimate purpose is the maintenance of Sikh homeostasis in the challenging conditions of diaspora.

Symbolic interactionism is based on the ideas of (a) creating and attaching meanings to things (people, places, ideas, events, &c.) using symbols; and (b) understanding social interactions with reference to the different ways in which different strata of society create and attach meanings to things. As a theoretical frame, symbolic interactionism is very broad and could conceivably be used to explore many aspects of the Sikh experience in Canada. Symbolic interactionism appears to be particularly promising, however, in terms of its ability to explore and explain the role of Khalistan in relationships between Sikhs and non-Sikhs. Khalistan can, in a sense, be understood as a shibboleth, a cultural reference that instantly distinguishes Sikhs from non-Sikhs. Unlike the Punjab or the Punjabi language, Khalistan is an idea and communal reference point that is incontrovertibly and essentially Sikh. While Sikhs share including common language and place of origin with Muslims and Hindus, Khalistan is a unique national Sikh project. In this sense, the pride that Sikh youth take in the idea of Khalistan can theoretically be approached as a means by which such youth distinguish themselves from other Canadian youth, particularly non-Sikh South Asian youth.

There is conceptual flexibility in applying homeostatic and symbolic interactionist theories to examining particular facets of the experiences of young Canadian Sikhs. Symbolic interactionism could, for example, be used to examine how homeostasis functions among young Sikhs, and theories of functional homeostasis could be used to explain the relationships between Sikhs and non-Sikhs. The choice of theories, and their selective application, is related to the prior and contemporary history of the Sikhs in Canada, as will emerge from the discussions to follow later in this chapter.

In this chapter, sociological theories are discussed in a fairly distinct manner. The chapter begins with an overview of functional homeostasis and symbolic interactionism that is focused on seminal works and interpretations. Afterwards, the theories of functional homeostasis and symbolic interactionism are applied more specifically to the Canadian Sikh context. Finally, the theories are synthesised and used to inspire the methodological directions discussed in Chapter 4 of the study.

Functional Homeostasis: An Overview

The theories of homeostasis discussed in this chapter are functionalist theories. Functionalism is one of the oldest, if not the oldest, theoretical frameworks in sociology. Functionalism, which has been traced to Durkheim, has been described as consisting of the following four features:

- (1) Functionalist theories stress that human behavior is governed by stable patterns of social relations, or social structures [...]. The social structures typically analyzed by functionalists are macrostructures.
- (2) Functionalist theories show how social structures maintain or undermine social stability. This is why functionalists are sometimes called *structural functionalists*; they analyze how the parts of society (structures) fit together and how each part contributes to the stability of the whole (its function).
- (3) Functionalist theories emphasize that social structures are based mainly on shared values. Thus, when Durkheim wrote about social solidarity, he sometimes meant the frequency and intensity of social interaction, but more often he thought of social solidarity as a kind of moral cement that

binds people together. (4) Functionalism suggests that reestablishing equilibrium can best solve most social problems. (Brym & Lie, 2012, p. 9)

Functionalist theory thus contains a wealth of claims and assumptions. To begin with, functionalism posits a relationship between the individual and the society in which the social collective is held to exert great power over the conditions of the individual. One empirical illustration of this idea is the way in which individuals in poorer neighbourhoods tend to experience poorer health than individuals in wealthier neighbourhoods, after controlling for other mitigating factors. In this sense, the stability of social relations and structures posited in functionalist theory does not imply solely a positive stability. Here, functionalist sociologists part ways from evolutionary biologists, who place an emphasis on social stability as a positive force. Schulkin (2011) offered an evolutionary biologist's perspective on the phenomenon of stability: "Given that we are social animals, our well-being is tightly linked to interactions with others. Prosocial behavior establishes and sustains human contact, contributing to well-being" (Schulkin, 2011, p. 1). However, as Ludke and Obermiller (2011) noted, "People living in low-income counties report more life stressors and related mental health problems" (Ludke & Obermiller, 2011, p. 13). Thus, social stability can apply to negative social situations; the fact of social stability does not in itself suggest a progression towards the maximisation of well-being.

Nonetheless, functionalism's emphasis on the stability of social relations and structures is already an invocation of homeostasis, even though the term *homeostasis* does not appear in the seminal works of functionalism. For example, in the 19th century,

Durkheim discovered that suicide, hitherto thought to be the expression of purely personal despair, had a social component: Durkheim's analysis revealed that suicide occurred with differing frequencies in different collectives (for example, Catholics versus Protestants, men versus women, and single versus married people) (Durkheim, 1951). The proportion of suicides appeared to revert to some mean depending on the collective to which the deceased belonged.

Durkheim's (1951) finding on suicide is one of many empirical examples of a predictable and measurable relationship between some aspect of social organisation and personal behaviour. The idea of homeostasis requires a particular sort of explanation, one centering on why, as in Schulkin's (2011) discussion, behaviour remains mainly prosocial. In this context, functionalism offers a compelling account of the relationship between the collective and the individual. Collectives, in functionalist theory, survive because of their ability to provide some form of stability to individuals. One of Durkheim's notable findings in this regard was that religious people were happier than non-religious people (Lundskow, 2008; Durkheim, 1951). This datum points to a rich interplay between the collective and the individual, which enter into an interdependent relationship. The individual offers allegiance to the collective because of the collective's ability to provide stability, and the collective in turn becomes increasingly adept at providing stability. In this manner, the individual and collective need each other to survive. To be sure, some collectives fail to provide stability, but they may either provide just enough stability to attract allegiance from individuals [as in Ludke & Obermiller's (2011) discussion of Appalachian societies in the United States] or else collapse entirely.

In either case, the impulse—both of the social and of the collective—is towards homeostasis; that is, a condition of ongoing stability. Theories of functionalism can be described as theories of homeostasis: Homeostasis is a specific theoretical formulation of stability, and functionalism centers on the collective and individual push for stability.

The emergence of homeostasis as a theme in sociology can be traced to the rising popularity of behavioural psychology in the 1940s and afterward. Consider the following summary of how behaviourists conceived of sociology in the early 1960s:

[Behavioral scientists] conceive of living organisms as ‘real’ systems but think of social systems as abstract or constructed systems consisting of conceptual relations between ‘real’ systems or the behaviors of ‘real’ systems. There is plainly implicit the reduction of social systems to forms of explanation such as the psychological and biological, which are thought to deal with ‘real’ systems. (Bolton, 1963, p. 3)

The idea of homeostasis entered sociological discourse and theory from the realm of biology, which in turn influenced the psychological understanding of homeostasis. In biology, homeostasis was theorized as being the property of cells, cellular structures, organs, and other collections of living matter that resisted change (van Ommen, Keijer, Heil, & Kaput, 2009). Homeostasis helped to explain factors as diverse as the body’s recovery from injury, the establishment of fixed metabolic rates, and, in psychology, the human drive to maintain the integrity of established thoughts and feelings. One of the earliest psychological discussions of homeostasis was provided by Fletcher, who noted that homeostasis “might be used to describe the already demonstrated tendency to

maintain status at the mental level of behavior, even in anticipation of the disturbing conditions” (Fletcher, 1942, p. 80).

Extrapolated to sociology, the concept of homeostasis served to explain the tendency of collectives to, as Fletcher (1942, p. 80) put it, “maintain status.” Without homeostasis, collectives would no longer be distinct; they would in fact become part of some other collective. It is interesting to observe that the very Mughal Emperors who were so hostile to the Sikh cause were themselves recent descendants of Shamanistic Turks and Mongols, who had converted to Islam only a few centuries before persecuting the Sikhs (Boyle, 1972). By the same token, the early generations of Sikhs were themselves Hindus and Muslims who had failed to conform to the homeostasis of their respective religious communities, turning to the new identity of Sikhism instead (Turbiani, 1992). Some theory of homeostasis is therefore needed to account for both the continuity and the extinction of distinct communal identities. Numerous theories of this kind have been advanced over the past several decades.

Before discussing theories of homeostasis, it is important to be able to examine some of the core assumptions made by such theories. One assumption, perhaps the most common and popular one in Western sociological traditions, is that the survival of a community is ultimately an indicator of how the community fulfills the needs, wants, aspirations, and weaknesses of its individual members. This assumption is grounded in the belief that individual assent to membership in a community is an action, one that is taken by the individual following some kind of cost-benefit calculation. As expressed by Bandura, this assumption can be expressed as follows:

Among the mechanisms of human agency, none is more focal or pervading than the belief of personal efficacy. This core belief is the foundation of human agency. Unless people believe that they can produce desired effects and forestall undesired ones by their actions, they have little incentive to act. The growing interdependence of human functioning is placing a premium on the exercise of collective agency through shared beliefs in the power to produce effects by collective action. (Bandura, 2000, p. 75)

As observed in the literature review, agency and assent are by no means the only way in which the continuity of a collective can be maintained. In the 16th century, for example, the Mughal push to Islamise Hindus and Sikhs [often through violence or the threat of violence (Bharadwaj, 2012)], and to punish Muslims who left the religion of Islam (B. D. Metcalf, 1985), were coercive means of establishing homeostasis within the Muslim community. In contemporary liberal-democratic settings such as Canada, Bandura's (2000) theory of voluntary affiliation has more predictive power. There are still some coercive actions (e.g. stigmatising) that communities in such societies can undertake to maintain the homeostasis of the group (Trammell & Morris, 2012).

Symbolic Interactionism: An Overview

The two great figures in the history of symbolic interactionism are Mead and Blumer. Later in this chapter, some of the Blumer's work is discussed with specific reference to the Canadian Sikh experience. In this section of the chapter, attention will be

paid to providing a general overview of Mead and Blumer's seminal works on symbolic interactionism.

The root idea of symbolic interactionism appears in Mead's (2010) *Essays in Social Psychology*, in which Mead noted that, "Only through imitation and opposition to others could one's own conduct and expression gain any meaning for one's self [...] the diameter of the self waxes and wanes with the field of social activity" (Mead, 2010, p. 10). Functionalism begins with a similar idea; that is, an acknowledgement of the overlap between the self and society. Symbolic interactionism posits a more complex series of interactions between the self and society, however. Whereas Durkheim (1951) focused on the relationship between large segments of society (for example, Catholics, men, or married people) and the individuals who fit into these segments, Mead's discussion of symbolic interactionism is sensitive to much smaller units of society and posits more rapid and complex feedback loops. For example, as Mead wrote,

During the whole process of interaction with others we are analyzing their oncoming acts by our instinctive responses to their changes of posture and other indications of developing social acts. We have seen that the ground for this lies in the fact that social conduct must be continually readjusted after it has already commenced, because the individuals to whose conduct our own answers, are themselves constantly varying their conduct just as our responses become evident. (Mead, 2010, p. 131)

Durkheim visualized a more simple and limited interaction between the collective and the individual. In Durkheim's approach, society is held to exist at the level of large groupings

of people; whereas, in Mead's conceptual approach, society can consist of one other person. Second, Durkheim posited a two-way interaction between society and the collective; the collective predisposes the individual to certain behaviours and the individual strengthens or weakens a collective with those behaviours. Mead, on the other hand, posited an endless cycle of influence between the individual and society. In Mead's account, every social encounter is characterised by a constant and multi-way process of adjustment of one's behaviours in response to other's behaviours. If these differences were the only differences between functionalism and symbolic interactionism, then symbolic interactionism might be described as merely a more complex or nuanced variant of functionalism. What makes symbolic interactionism unique is its focus on the symbol as the pivot of interactions. Especially in Blumer's work, meaning came to be placed at the center of symbolic interactionism.

According to Blumer:

Symbolic interactionism rests in the last analysis on three simple premises.

The first premise is that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings they have for them [...] The second premise is that the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows. The third premise is that these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters. (Blumer, 1969, p. 2)

This definition of symbolic interactionism is wide-ranging and situates the theory in proximity to other important explanations of human behaviour. The second premise of

symbolic interactionism is one that is in deep agreement with classic functionalism.

Although Durkheim (1951) did not use ‘meaning’ as explicitly as did Mead and Blumer, it is nonetheless clear from Durkheim’s work that he believed people to arrive at beliefs and behaviours at least partly because of social influence. What symbolic interactionism contributed to the second premise was an expansion of the idea of social interaction. In Mead’s (2010) work, this was conceptualised on a smaller scale (that is, involving not merely large segments of society, but one-on-one and other small-group social interactions).

In this sense, symbolic interactionism is influenced by, and relatable to, functionalism. However, symbolic interactionism is in profound tension with behaviourism and more closely aligned with both cognitivism and rationalism, especially in terms of Blumer’s (1969) first and third premises. Consider Blumer’s (1969) first premise, “That human beings act toward things on the basis of meaning they have for them” (p. 2). This premise assumes rationality, *viz.*, the ability of individuals to act consciously on the basis of some want-satisfying motivation. Mead (2010) assumed the possibility, and indeed the primacy, of this kind of rationalism when he wrote, “We must define individual control over experience—this power of adaptation, connoting choice, in a formula of the movement toward a recognized object leading to contact-control. It is symbolism that renders this possible [...]” (Mead, 2010, p. 50). Mead’s idea is that social interactions (as opposed to basic, involuntary physiological processes and the like) are governed by individuals’ desires for this so-called contact-control with an external object. To be sure, Mead admits the possibility that the nature or locus of the external object can

change during an interaction, but he never abandons the principle that such an object exists and serves as a beacon for individuals engaging in social interaction.

If objects exist and are actively sought out by individuals, then individuals possess a special kind of agency, at least in Mead's (2010) and Blumer's (1969) accounts of symbolic interactionism. Individuals decide to move towards, or away from, things on the basis of (a) social inputs that have helped to define what things mean and (b) individual interpretative acts that have further refined what things mean. What is absent from this account is the possibility that individuals assign meanings to things reflexively, in a manner that can be explained by behaviouristic concepts such as operant conditioning. If the third premise of symbolic interactionism as defined by Blumer did not exist, then it could plausibly be argued that symbolic interactionism is closer to behaviourism, with the social institutions referenced in the second premise providing the stimuli for individual actions. Blumer and Mead's insistence that individuals can generate and interpret meanings for themselves cuts against behaviouristic theory, however.

Mead was aware that he presented no substantial account of how contact-control is achieved in social interactionism, noting that, "There is a persistent tendency among present-day psychologists to use consciousness as the older rationalistic psychology used the soul" (Mead, 2010, p. 19). Mead does not want to embrace either the old idea of the soul or the new idea of consciousness. Blumer (1969) also evinces a reluctance to posit that reflexes and other purely physiological phenomena could be responsible for the kind of human decision-making that takes place in complex social interactions. This weakness in symbolic interactionism in Mead and Blumer's accounts of the theory is not

necessarily a debilitating limitation. Symbolic interactionism is not as invested in a definition of exactly how humans behave; rather, it is a discussion of what happens when humans behave with each other in a certain way. Symbolic interactionism suggests that it is the tussle or consensus over meaning that defines the nature of social interactions, especially interactions that take place between highly differentiated communities. As will become apparent later in this chapter, this core theoretical insight is highly applicable to understanding how Khalistan functions in relations between (a) Sikhs and non-Sikh Canadians and (b) loyalist and independence-minded Sikhs.

Functional Homeostasis in the Canadian Sikh Context

Given the assumption of voluntary affiliation, it is worth examining the kinds of forces that preserve homeostasis in communities such as those of the Sikhs. One explanation of homeostasis is that of inertia; communities, once formed, tend to maintain themselves unless there is some more powerful force pushing in the opposite direction. The formation of communities is itself often an arbitrary matter. Consider the famous sociological experiment conducted in Robbers Cave, Oklahoma (Sherif, 1961).

Robbers Cave State Park is an area in Southeastern Oklahoma where Sherif (1961) pitched a three-week camp for 22 boys from the fifth grade. The boys were divided into two teams of 11. The two teams were drawn from a homogeneous sample; in other words, the boys were not divided according to race, socioeconomic status, or any other external factor. The division was random, and the starting sample hailed from the same school and socioeconomic circles. Indeed, many of the boys were friends.

Sherif (1961) isolated the two teams in the park for a number of days. Each team was given a series of tasks, most prominently that of playing competitive tug of war games. The tug of war was keyed towards certain rewards; for example, the winning team might get a certain kind of special food, or some other privilege, while the losing team would get nothing. It is important to emphasise, however, that both teams were well looked-after, regardless of whether or not they won these challenges or not.

Sherif (1961) observed that, after only a few days, the two teams had developed an intense antipathy towards each other that manifested itself in, among other behaviours, name calling and stereotyping. In terms of sociology, each group had come to be an in-group and to see the other group as out-group. Cohesion among the in-group was exaggerated, while anger and hostility towards the out-group was also exaggerated (given that such hostility so quickly trumped the existing relationships between the boys, and also had very little to do with the material differences of their brief camping expedition at Robbers Cave).

Sherif's (1961) published field notes do not extend to descriptions of the cursing and the stereotypes that the boys employed with regard to each other. It is not hard to imagine, however, that in cases of marked intra-sample racial differences, the racial factor would rapidly come to the fore in any expression of hostility towards the out-group. This conclusion was reached in other sociological research. For example, Brewer's work left no doubt that the exaggeration of physical differences was one of the consequences of the creation of in-group and out-group differences (Brewer, 1979).

The Robbers Cave results are quite applicable to the experience of the Sikhs, both in the Punjab and later in Canada, in terms of homeostasis. The earliest Sikhs were indistinguishable from members of the Bhakti movement. They were also genetically, linguistically, and culturally indistinguishable from the other inhabitants of the Punjab. The Sikhs' insistence on forming an in-group that was distinct from other heterodox movement created tension with other in-groups (in particular, the Muslims) whose identity was thereby threatened (Alam, 2009; Dorn & Gucciardi, 2011; Farooqi, 2004). Thus, the homeostasis of the Sikhs has been dependent not only on the gradual emergence of a distinct collective identity, but also on the immediate and visceral emergence of a distinct identity group in an already contested part of the Indian Subcontinent (Schimmel, 2004). Once firmly established by the organisational and theological actions taken by the first two Gurus, Sikh identity became, like the homeostasis observed in the Robbers Cave experiment, self-sustaining. Theoretically, then, it can be concluded that at least some cases of communal homeostasis can be ascribed to the arbitrary tension that takes place between randomly emerging collectives. Before the Sikhs, there were many heterodox Indians in the Bhakti movement who held almost exactly the same views; however, they were not organised into a coherent in-group by their leaders. Kabir, for example, was a poet and mystic, rather than a politician-cum-organiser like the Sikh Gurus (Dwyer, 1981; Gaeffke, 1998; Grierson, 1911). The fact of Sikh homeostasis can therefore be thought of more as a testament to the passion with which Sikhs formed a distinct in-group, rather than to truly basic theological or cultural differences between Sikhs and the other peoples of the Punjab.

If Bandura's (2000) theory and Sherif's (1961) empirical results are taken together, it can be concluded that communities enter homeostasis when they are pitted against each other in a manner that generates some form of conflict, in which neither side is capable of, or willing to, assimilate the other. Sherif's experiment is more applicable to the history of the Sikhs in times of conflict in the early modern Punjab. Because the competition between Sikhs and non-Sikhs is more subtle than the kind of competition in Sherif's experiment, it makes more sense to think of Sikh homeostasis in Canada through the frameworks of diaspora and identity politics.

J. N. Singh's (2013) article on Khalistani rap performed by young Sikhs in the U.K. provides a helpful point of entry into understanding the relationship between diaspora and homeostasis in Sikh culture. Jaspal Singh conceptualized Khalistan as it appeared in the rap songs of London-based Sikhs not so much as a serious political project, but rather as part of "the negotiation of culture in diasporic settings" (p. 339). As a diaspora people, Sikhs have immigrated to many countries; notably the U.K., Canada, and the United States. In these new settings, it is harder for Sikhs to foster ties between themselves—ties that are indispensable for the homeostatic survival of Sikhism. In this context, it is interesting to note that one of the Khalistani rap lyrics noted in Jaspal Singh's article is, "How many of us remember 1984?" (p. 339). The rap song about Khalistan explicitly addresses other Sikhs, indicating that the role of Khalistan is to bind Sikhs together in some fashion, contributing to their homeostasis.

For Sikhs in Canada, homeostasis is a fundamentally important concept given (a) the highly endogenous and homeostatic nature of Sikhism itself and (b) the anti-

homeostatic pressures of diasporic experience. As discussed in the literature, Sikhism places an extraordinary emphasis on conformity, including not only conformity of belief but also conformity of appearance and even naming. At the same time, Sikh immigration outside the Punjab has courted conditions in which many core characteristics of Sikh identity are being lost. Consider Scott's discussion of the condition of second- and third-generation Sikhs in the greater Toronto area:

Sikh parents realize that worship in the *gurdwara* is conducted in Punjabi, which scarcely responds to the needs of children born in Canada. At school, these children are being trained to think critically and rationally, and they are therefore questioning the meaning of traditional rituals and practices. Traditional Sikh *granthis* and *gyanis* in the Greater Toronto Area's *gurdwaras* are unable to answer these queries. In addition, second- and third-generation Sikhs are steadily being assimilated into the ways of wider Canadian society and culture. (Scott, 2012, p. 101)

One of the bases of Canadian federalism is the recognition of the connection between language and community survival (LaSelva, 2006, p. 106). As LeSelva has argued, Canada has taken extraordinary steps to ensure the linguistic continuity of both English and French. Embedded within its policies, Canada has institutionalised Christianity and other aspects of the Anglo-French cultural heritage. In Canada, there is no overt blockage of the Sikh right to community continuity, but the default environment of the country is one that erodes Sikh homeostasis by de-centering both the teaching of Punjabi and the teachings of Sikhism from Sikh life. As O'Connell has argued,

Nearly every school-age Sikh child in Anglophone Canada attends public school. For most, this means no formal instruction in Punjabi language and culture nor in Sikh religion during school hours, though in localities with concentrated Sikh population there may be Heritage Language options. The Sikh child may be exposed to some version of Christian-Jewish religiomoral outlook shared by his or her teachers or, more likely, to a milieu wherein all religiocultural traditions are formally respected but marginalized from a ‘neutral’ secular humanist perspective [...] There is no legal bar to operating private schools on ethnic or religious grounds, provided the schools meet government guidelines (at least one Khalsa school operates in B.C.), but these are costly. (O’Connell, 2012, p. 203)

Elsewhere, O’Connell (2012) argued that older Sikhs who arrived in Canada with an existing knowledge of Punjabi and grounding in the Sikh tradition had an easier time maintaining their identity as Sikhs. For that matter, many young Canadian Sikhs have also obtained or maintained their knowledge of Punjabi thanks to interactions in the home, Khalsa schools, or other settings. O’Connell argues that the linguistic continuity of the Sikh community—one of the most important pillars on which Sikh identity itself rests—is seriously compromised by the Anglophone bias of Canadian education and public institutions, which exert a steady assimilative pressure on Canadian-born Sikhs and their children. This assimilative pressure, in turn, compromises the homeostasis of the Sikh community in Canada.

The environment in which Sikhs mature in Canada, and the manner in which this environment threatens homeostasis, can be understood through the bioecological theory of development. Bronfenbrenner and Ceci (1994) argued that environment is the great mediator between the biological inheritance of every human and the ultimate phenotypical expression of this inheritance. This theory rests on the two basic biological definitions of the genotype and phenotype. Consider the following definitions of *genotype* and *phenotype* as provided by the Oxford English Dictionary (2014a, 2014b):

Genotype: The genetic constitution of an organism; all of the genes present in an organism or species (para. 1).

Phenotype: The sum total of the observable characteristics of an individual, regarded as the consequence of the interaction of the individual's genotype with the environment [...] (para. 1).

For a given community, homeostasis occurs when the environment in which members of the community occur is homogenous enough to lead to the development of similar phenotypes. In this context, Bronfenbrenner and Ceci noted the importance of “the nature of the environments through which the organism passes on its life journey” (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994, p. 580). Membership in Sikhism or any specific religious or cultural tradition is not based in the genotype; in other words, there is no genetic basis for whether a child grows up Sikh or otherwise. Rather, Sikhism is a phenotype. Thus, according to the bioecological model of Bronfenbrenner and Ceci, the continuity of religious traditions such as Sikhism depends entirely on the characteristics of the environment, not on the genetic construction of its adherents.

Understood from this perspective, the public environment of Canada is optimised for maintaining the homeostasis of English- or French-speaking communities rooted in Christian and European traditions (Turlej, 2001). To be sure, other communities exist and are supported in Canada. As O'Connell (2012) has argued, however, these communities face a more difficult task in navigating the Canadian environment. In sociological terms, then, the homeostasis of Sikhs and other Canadian communities outside the Anglo-French community is much harder to achieve, because Canadian institutions are not optimised to facilitate the homeostasis of such communities.

Given these theoretical contexts, the conceptual and practical roles of Khalistan in maintaining homeostasis among Canadian Sikhs become clearer. As Shani has argued, "The existence of a territorially defined homeland is central to the imagination of Sikh diaspora nationalism" (Shani, 2008a, p. 83). Such a homeland is precisely the counterpoint of what Shani called, "The experience of forced dispersal" that is at the heart of the Sikh diaspora. A homeland is, as Shani argued, a place of coming together that is most valuable to those who have been driven out. While it is surely possible to conceptualise the Sikh experience of immigration to Canada as voluntary economic migration, it is also the case that Sikhs have been continuously discriminated against under three states: The Mughal Empire, the British Empire, and India. The Sikh ability to live unfettered in the Punjab is therefore more problematic than scholars such as Oberoi (1987) have argued. Rather, as Nayar (2004) has argued, Sikhs have come under continual economic, political, culture, and demographic pressures in the Punjab; pressures that have been largely responsible for the Sikh diaspora. Under these

conditions, and drawing upon the principles of homeostatic theory, the idea and project of Khalistan can be understood as a means of binding together the diaspora; a centripetal force serving to counteract the centrifugal forces of assimilation.

Empirically testing the hypothesis of Khalistan's association with Sikh homeostasis in Canada can be difficult. To begin with, the presence of Khalistan in social media can be hard to investigate. Some Facebook groups, such as Sikh Homeland Khalistan, are closed, preventing researchers from conducting formal analyses of their member bases. Other Facebook groups, such as Dal Khalsa U.K., are not based in Canada, but are likely to have Canadian members. Additionally, there are many Khalistani Facebook groups with a small number of members. Some groups use naming conventions that make detection of their Khalistani orientation difficult. On the whole, though, it can be concluded that Canadian-based Khalistani movements and activists do not have much traction on Facebook. By number of members, the largest pro-Khalistan Facebook group appears to be that of Dal Khalsa U.K. Achieving a better understanding of the role of Khalistan in maintaining Sikh homeostasis in Canada thus requires the collection of primary data from Sikhs.

Symbolic Interactionism in the Canadian Sikh Context

Blumer (1986) synopsised symbolic interactionism in the following way: "Humans beings interpret each other's actions as the means of acting toward one another" (p. 78). Considered closely, symbolic interactionism can present an especially useful framework for understanding the relationships across communities.

The term 'symbolic interaction' refers, of course, to the peculiar and distinctive character of interaction as it takes place between human beings.

The peculiarity consists in the fact that human beings interpret or 'define' each other's actions instead of merely reacting to each other's actions.

Their 'response is not made directly to the actions of one another but instead is based on the meaning which they attach to such actions.

(Blumer, 1986, pp. 78-79)

The theory of symbolic interactionism was designed to model and explain interaction between any two people. In light of the passage above, however, it seems that symbolic interactionism is particularly useful in explaining cross-cultural interaction difficulties. An obvious illustration of this dynamic with reference to Canadian Sikhism is the case of Khalistan itself. As discussed in the literature review, the term *Khalistan* only took on a meaning for non-Sikh Canadians in light of the 1985 Air India bombing. Before then, *Khalistan* was a term whose meaning was almost entirely unknown outside Sikh circles. In light of the events of 1985 and their aftermath, Khalistan functions as something of a shibboleth. Among Sikhs, Khalistan evokes a series of meanings related to Sikh autonomy, Sikh oppression, and Sikh aspiration, tinged with radicalism. Among non-Sikhs, Khalistan evokes some manifestation of, or reference to, terrorism.

Of course, terms are polysemic; Khalistan can carry innumerable meanings for innumerable people. Within the theoretical framework of symbolic interaction, however, what matters is how incommensurate interpretations colour the relationships between people (Blumer, 1986). This point can be illustrated by considering the media response to

the Vaisakhi Day parade conducted in 2007 in Surrey, B.C. At this event, numerous floats bore the images and names of individuals associated with the Babbar Khalsa; Khalistan was a major theme in the parade. Here is an excerpt of a description of the event written by a white Canadian journalist:

Some of the Sikh “martyrs” pictured on the floats belonged to Babbar Khalsa, a group dedicated to establishing the independent country of Khalistan in the Indian state of Punjab—and considered a terrorist organization by Canada, the U.S., the European Union and India. (Morley, 2007, p. 5).

The structure of Morley’s sentence is an invitation to conflate *Khalistan* with *terrorism*. Indeed, these two terms appear so close to each other that it is easy enough for a reader to believe that Morley is referring to the Babbar Khalsa, and not Khalistan itself, as a terrorist organization. To be sure, the Babbar Khalsa promoted the cause of Khalistan, but so have large numbers of Sikhs through history (Dorn & Gucciardi, 2011; Fair, 2005; Falcone, 2006; T. R. Metcalf, 2007; Shani, 2000; Sunit, 2005; Van Dyke, 2009). Nonetheless, to a non-Sikh Canadian acquainted with the Air India bombing, the meaning of ‘Khalistan’ is irredeemably associated with terrorism. Meanwhile, a Sikh approaching Khalistan does so with an historic awareness of Sikh oppression, the Sikh desire for a homeland, and other essentially positive aspects of Sikh history. For this reason, Khalistan is an important pivot in symbolic interactionist explorations of Sikh-Canadian relations.

In terms of the 2007 Vaisakhi Day parade, Khalistan served as the crux of both a homeostatic and a symbolic interactionist account of Sikh identity. The appearance of Khalistani imagery and references on floats and other paraphernalia associated with the parade was, at one level, a signal from Sikhs to Sikhs; an exhortation to remain committed to the core values of the community. In this sense, the role of Khalistan in the Vaisakhi Day parade was analogous to the way in which Sikh rappers invoke Khalistan in music intended for other Sikhs (Jaspal Singh, 2013).^t The Vaisakhi Day parade in Surrey was also well-attended by non-Sikhs, however, including by prominent local and regional non-Sikh Canadian politicians eager to curry favour with what is an increasingly powerful voting bloc. The use of Khalistani symbols in such a context can be considered an act of willful defiance and self-assertion, enacted by a minority community eager to claim a larger stake in Canadian life. Some symbolic interactionists believe that some actions are taken not due to a group's desire to be understood and liked, but rather to be misunderstood and disliked (Kronick & Thomas, 2008). Such a dynamic can occur in the framework of 'oppositional culture', which occurs when minorities and other vulnerable populations "draw on their own cultural resources to resist oppression under internal colonialism" (Martinez, 1997, p. 265). Sometimes, such expressions of oppositional culture are internally facing, as when members of a threatened group exhort each other to stand firm in their collective identity (Jaspal Singh, 2013). At other times, as in Martinez's example, expressions of oppositional culture also face the external culture that is being resisted. In such cases, oppositional culture often takes on provocative forms of

resistance, such as the utilization of the images of terrorists in the case of the Surrey Vaisakhi Day parade.

Wright-Neville (2004) made an interesting argument about the relationship between Muslims and Osama bin Laden that is highly applicable to considerations of oppositional culture among the Sikh youth who promoted terrorist-infused ideas and images of Khalistan in the 2007 Vaisakhi Day parade. Wright-Neville argued that the widespread Muslim support for Osama Bin Laden detected in the wake of the 9/11 attacks on the United States was more of a reflection of “relative degrees of social and political alienation” (Wright-Neville, 2004, p. 27) than of genuine enthusiasm for Bin Laden's teachings, or actual desire to join Al Qaeda. In particular, Muslims who felt marginalized by U.S. policy in Muslim nations reported support for Bin Laden to Western pollsters as a means of communicating their alienation (Wright-Neville, 2004). In this kind of interaction, one group chooses to promote forms of symbolic meaning that deliberately threaten another group, either in retaliation for real or perceived slights, protection of identity, or some combination of both (Martinez, 1997). The same dynamic might have been responsible for the mobilisation of Khalistan-related imagery at the 2007 Vaisakhi Day parade.

If symbolic interactionism is taken as a framework for understanding the relationships between Sikh and non-Sikh Canadians, then the issue of Khalistan is a recent development. A review of the literature indicates that, for decades, both the government of Canada and the Anglo-French Canadian majority undertook a great many acts intended to send negative messages to the immigrant Sikh community in Canada. For

example, in the early 20th century, Sikhs thought of the decision to move to Canada as part of their rights as subjects of the British Empire. Non-Sikh Canadians took a more racist view, however, relegating Sikhs to the status of second-class citizens.

East Indian immigrants contested the racial discrimination they experienced in Canada. In 1909 the congregation, guided by Sant Teja Singh, at the Vancouver *gurdwara* rejected a government proposal for East Indians to immigrate to British Honduras; they saw this proposal as simply a scheme to expel East Indians from Canada. The Khalsa Diwan Society also protested against the Canadian immigration requirement of ‘continuous journey.’ The ‘continuous journey’ rule required every ship to arrive in Canada directly from its home port; this made it impossible for an Indian ship to dock in Canada, since a ship leaving distant India had to stop at a foreign port en route for refueling. In effect, this rule meant that no immigrants could conceivably come from India. This angered and dismayed many East Indians; even though they were from a colony under the British Crown, they were forbidden to migrate to another part of the empire—Canada. (K.E. Nayar, 2004, p. 17)

This early encounter between Canadians and Sikhs was marked by an incommensurable difference in the meaning of fairness, which the Sikhs understood to be a procedural routine associated with the British Empire, while the Canadians understood through a lens of racial logic. In symbolic interactionism, what took place between these two communities early in the 20th century was a clash in interpretations. Sikhs saw

themselves as members of the British Empire, entitled to the rights and protections of that empire, while white Canadians saw them as *untermenschen* to be kept out of Canada (Nayar, 2004).

Surrey Sikh youth's deployment of aggressive Khalistani and terrorist symbols at the 2007 Vaisakhi Day parade ought to be understood against the larger backdrop of relationships between Sikhs and non-Sikh Canadians. For decades, Canadians brandished racist laws and slogans at Sikhs, sending them a clear message that they were not welcome (Nayar, 2004). The events at the 2007 Vaisakhi Day parade in Surrey could reflect some of that sentiment going in the opposite direction; that is, as a message from dissatisfied Sikh youth to a non-accommodating or otherwise threatening majority culture.

Such an interpretation is in line with past descriptions of encounters between Sikhs and non-Sikh Canadians. As Mahmood wrote,

While the strategy of East Asian immigrants in negotiating Canadian society's prejudices and discrimination has been to quietly circumvent them, the tactic favoured by the Sikhs has been more confrontational. The relative isolation of the Sikh community created by its lack of interaction with others (including other Asian immigrant populations), combined with this confrontational style of response to societal roadblocks, helped to create an image of the Sikh Canadians as a chauvinistic group that would not easily fit in. (Mahmood, 2009, p. 58)

Sikh immigrants struggled with majoritarian Canadian society over issues such as the hypocrisy or illegality of Canadian immigration decisions, and issues related to Sikh belonging in Canada. At the same time, Sikhs struggled with other Sikhs over demarcations and definitions of identity. Khalistan was an important point of contention in what were essentially interpretative struggles. Majoritarian Canada long attempted to marginalise Sikhs through systematic racism and unfair treatment; a response that engendered the rise of what Martinez (1997) has called oppositional culture in Sikh youth. Sikh youth who have internalised the real or perceived second-class treatment received by themselves, their parents or grandparents in Canada have an easy recourse to the trope of Khalistan as a way of shocking, confronting, and figuratively hitting back at majoritarian Canada. Particularly after the 1984 attack on the Golden Temple, Khalistan has served as a key point of reference for differentiating between two kinds of Sikh communities within Canada: Indian loyalists and Khalistani supporters. Thus, at the same time that Sikhs and non-Sikhs have clashed over meanings, Sikh communities have also clashed with each other. In this sense, Khalistan has served as a means for all parties to define themselves and relate to each other.

A new wave of migrants during the 1980s and 1990s came to Canada as refugees from the conflict that broke out in India between the Indian government and Sikh separatists, the latter agitating for a sovereign state of Khalistan; this erupted into a civil war in Punjab. The asylum seekers brought with them the fraught political circumstances of India itself. Deep rifts immediately developed between Khalistani and Indian loyalists in

virtually every community where Sikhs resided, and the gurdwaras became the arenas in which political battles were waged. From the viewpoint of many of the Sikhs loyal to India, the Khalistani separatists were nothing more than terrorists. From the viewpoint of many of the newly committed Khalistani activists, Sikhs remaining loyal to India could not be considered Sikhs at all. (Mahmood, 2009, p. 58)

In this context, Khalistan is more easily understood as a pivot for symbolic interactionism between (a) Sikhs and non-Sikhs and (b) loyalist versus independence-minded Sikhs. Theoretically, the role of Khalistan in both of these kinds of interactions can be understood via Anderson's (2001) work on imagined communities. As Anderson argued, members of national communities personally know only a small number of people within the community. Yet, despite those limited circles of personal acquaintance with others in their communities, they continue to refer to themselves as members of the larger community. According to Anderson, this kind of identification is possible because individuals generate mental schemas of what it is to be Canadian, Sikh, &c. These schemas have positive content, in that they specify what it is to belong to a community, but they also have negative content, in that they specify what it is not to belong to a community. In turn, these schemas allow people to claim or reject membership in national or ethnic groupings.

In the interaction between Sikh and non-Sikh Canadians, one of the roles of Khalistan appears to be to generate an immediate, identity-reinforcing boundary between communities. For Morley (2007), for example, Khalistan is tantamount to terrorism,

whereas, for the Sikhs using Khalistani symbols and references, Khalistan means independence, dignity, and power. The theory of symbolic interactionism indicates that clashes of meaning are important. It is from such clashes that identity differences are formed and negotiated, leading to conflict or various stages of coexistence, whether between individuals or between collectives (Blumer, 1986). Communities clashing over meaning achieve an important function: They reinforce their identities in a visceral, effective manner. Thus, for some of the participants in the Surrey Vaisakhi Day parade, Khalistan was a means of simultaneously rejecting Canadian majoritarian values and embracing a particular kind of Sikh identity. For the scandalised onlookers, references to Khalistan tainted Sikh parade goers with terrorism, and distinguished majoritarian Canadian culture from Sikhism. Thus, in the Vaisakhi Day parade events of 2007, Khalistan served as a wall of division; the point of interpretative contention between two communities that have been at odds with each other for a long time. The theory of symbolic interactionism suggests that such clashes over meaning result in differentiation, which, in turn, is also required for the homeostasis of distinct communities. Thus, majoritarian Canadian shock and horror at Khalistani imagery and Sikh pride in the symbols of Khalistan both orders the way in which these two communities interact, and also serves to guarantee the integrity of each community's identity. Or, to use Anderson's (2011) terminology: Khalistan is a convenient way for independence-minded Sikhs and non-Sikh Canadians to assign themselves to different imagined communities. For that matter, as noted by Mahmood (2009), Khalistan is also an intra-group shibboleth that (a) allows

Canadian Sikhs to sort themselves into distinct groupings and (b) orders the interactions between these groups.

Conclusion

Sikh youth's participation in Khalistani movements is a form of complex behaviour. The behaviour is complex for a number of reasons. First, participation in itself a complex phenomenon: For some Sikhs, participation in Khalistan movements is a matter of direct political activism, whereas other Sikhs affiliate with Khalistan in a more transitory and ephemeral way, such as through mental affiliation (Jasjit Singh, 2014b; Jaspal Singh, 2013). Second, understanding the nature of participation requires making several theoretical assumptions about what behaviour is, how it can be measured, and what it means. In this study, the theoretical frames of homeostasis and symbolic interactionism will be applied to data collection and data analysis procedures.

The theories discussed in this chapter all have a high level of applicability to the methodology of the current study. Starting with the main purpose of the study, which was to examine factors motivating Sikh youth in GTA to become involved with Khalistani movements, there are several general questions that could be asked: (1) What are the behavioural antecedents, or, in other terminology, the stimuli, that colour Sikh youth's decisions to participate or not participate in Khalistani movements? (2) How does Sikh youth's participation or non-participation in Khalistani movements emerge from homeostatic or non-homeostatic forces affecting the Sikh community? (3) How does Sikh youth's participation or non-participation in Khalistani movements emerge from the

relationship between (a) loyalist and independence-minded Sikh sub-communities and (b) Sikhs and non-Sikh Canadians who lack sensitivity towards the Sikh identity or Sikh causes? (4) How does the clash of meaning vis-à-vis the majoritarian Canadian community colour young Sikhs' involvement in Khalistani movements? (5) How does shared meaning within the Sikh community colour young Sikhs' involvement in Khalistani movements? These questions are a means of sorting potential factors motivating Sikh youths in GTA to join Khalistani movements into functional homeostatic and symbolic interactionist categories. Homeostatic theories address the way in which individual decisions disturb or maintain the status quo of communities, while symbolic interactionist theories address the way in which individual decisions send messages across and within community lines, laying the groundwork for various forms of conflict and cooperation. In this way, each of the theories discussed in this chapter is applicable to the study in a specific manner to be explored further in the next chapter of the study. Chapter 4 contains a thorough discussion of how the theoretical frameworks discussed in Chapter 3 will inform the selection of a specific form of study design.

Chapter 4: Methodology

The purpose of this section of the dissertation is to describe and defend each of the components of study design.

Overview and Justification of Methodological Choices

According to McNabb (2010), there are three basic approaches to conducting research, namely the quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods (blended quantitative and qualitative).

Table 2

Differences between Quantitative and Qualitative Research

Philosophical Foundations	Qualitative Research Designs	Quantitative Research Designs
Ontology (perceptions of reality)	Researchers assume that multiple, subjectively derived realities can coexist.	Researchers assume that a single, objective world exists.
Epistemology (roles for the researcher)	Researchers commonly assume that they must interact with their studied phenomena.	Researchers assume that they are independent from the variables under study.
Axiology (researchers' values)	Researchers overtly act in a value-laden and biased fashion.	Researchers overtly act in a value-free and unbiased manner.
Rhetoric (language styles)	Researchers often use personalized, informal, and context-laden language.	Researchers most often use impersonal, formal, and rule-based text.
Procedures (as employed in research)	Researchers tend to apply induction, multivariate, and multiprocess interactions, following context-laden methods.	Researchers tend to apply deduction, limited cause-and-effect relationships, with context-free methods.

Note: Adapted table (McNabb, 2010, p. 225)

Thus, the first choice faced by researchers is whether to use quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods approach to their study. In the social sciences, as McNabb (2010) has argued, the same problem can often be approached from all three perspectives, requiring researchers to identify and utilise the research method that is best suited to their topic of study. McNabb recommended that the most appropriate form of research could be identified by starting with the problem and purpose of a study and working to determine how best the problem could be resolved and the purpose achieved (2010).

In the context of this dissertation, the identified problem was as follows: The Sikh community in diaspora, and particularly in Canada, has been infrequently studied as an imagined community. This has led to gaps in the sociological knowledge of Canadian Sikhism as a both a community and an identity structure. The purpose was to construct a sociology of Canadian Sikh youth based on their reactions to both the concept and the practical project of Khalistan. In achieving this purpose, understanding what mobilizes, or fails to mobilize, GTA-area Sikh youth vis-à-vis the Khalistan movement was conceptualised as a means of interrogating Sikh youth identity itself, in a more dynamic and culturally compelling manner than has hitherto been attempted. Because there are large numbers of young Sikhs in GTA, and because the sampling carried out for this study was convenience sampling rather than simple random sampling, it should be acknowledged that the findings might not represent the views or practices of all Canadian Sikh youth, or even GTA Sikh youth. Statistical generalizability would only be possible with the use of an a priori sample size calculation, which in this study would have required a sample several times larger than the one obtained. Qualitative results, on the

other hand, are even less likely to be generalizable. These limitations ought to be established at the outset of the discussion of the methodology.

One of the characteristics of quantitative research is the mathematical study of the impact of at least one variable on at least one other variable (McNabb, 2010). The affected variable is known as the dependent variable and the impelling variable (the variable whose change determines the state of the dependent variable) is known as the independent variable (McNabb, 2010). In this study, the dependent variable is affiliation with the Khalistan movement. One of the problems involved with trying to model this variable mathematically is that affiliation is a fuzzy concept that is resistant to objective definition. Affiliation could be taken as a binary variable; that is, a variable admitting only two expressions: Affiliation or non-affiliation. The problem with this approach is that there are degrees of Sikh youth affiliation with Khalistan, with some youth more tangibly committed than others (Jaspal Singh, 2013). Thus, in a quantitative study, affiliation would have to be measured in some other way, perhaps as a categorical or continuous variable. There is good reason to believe, however, that the degree of affiliation within an imagined community is resistant to measurement. There are numerous measures of ethnic identity, for example the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (Phinney & Ong, 2007). For the purposes of understanding the degree of an individual's attachment to a particular topic of ethnic, cultural, or religious significance, the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure is inadequate. The six items on the measure (Phinney & Ong, 2007, p. 276) are as follows:

1. I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.
2. I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.
3. I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me.
4. I have often done things that will help me understand my ethnic background better.
5. I have often talked to other people in order to learn more about my ethnic group.
6. I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.

While they may form the basis of a quantitative measurement of ethnic identity, these questions, and questions that appear in other extent identity scales, are inadequate to the task of quantifying young Sikhs' degree of affiliation to Khalistan. To be sure, the term *ethnic group* could be replaced with *Khalistan*, but at the expense of losing a great deal of explanatory power. Notice that, in Pinney and Ong's (2007) Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure, a single identity measurement is generated from concepts that are incommensurate with each other. Question 1, for example, measures research time commitment, while question 6 measures affective attachment. The combination of such disparate markers of ethnic identity means a loss of the ability to understand nuanced distinctions between individual research subjects' ethnic identities. In the case of Khalistan, for example, some young Sikhs signal affiliation by passively listening to rap music (Singh, 2013) while others go much further in community activism (Mahmood, 2009). Collapsing multiple identity or affiliation measures into a single score results in the inability to distinguish between kinds of affiliation and their distinct roles in

behaviour, emotion, and cognition. In addition, a quantitative approach to affiliation measurement also omits the ability to identify distinctions within specific measures. Take the concept of historical research into some aspect of ethnicity, which is the first question in the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure. Historical research into ethnicity can be conducted for any motivation ranging from interest to the exercise of racist thinking. Because so many of these kinds of nuances are possible in the study of individual affiliation and ethno-cultural identity, the use of a quantitative scale such as the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure is bound to limit the quality of studies. When attempting to answer epidemiological questions, such as the identification of group-level differences in attitudes, there is a use for the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure and similar scales. Any attempt to understand the affiliation and identity dynamics of a specific group is more likely to benefit from qualitative methods, however. Only qualitative methods can, in McNabb's (2010) phrase, identify and analyse the "multiple, subjectively derived realities" (p. 225) of Sikh youth's kind and degree of affiliation with Khalistan.

Of course, Sikh youth's kind and degree of affiliation with Khalistan is the dependent variable of the study. The independent variables of the study consist of those factors that motivate Sikh youth in GTA to affiliate with Khalistan in some way. These factors are just as resistant to quantification as the dependent variable of the study. The theoretical literature suggests that motivations to behave in a particular way (assuming that not only actual political behaviours but also feelings and cognition about Khalistan count as behaviours) are extraordinarily complex, as discussed in Chapter 3.

Overview and Justification of Qualitative Design

There are numerous kinds of qualitative research, with the most well-recognised (Creswell, 2009) forms of qualitative research being as follows:

- Oral history
- Grounded theory
- Phenomenology
- Case study
- Ethnography
- Historical

In this section, each of these kinds of qualitative research will be described and evaluated in terms of its fitness for the current study.

Oral history is based on gathering narrative data directly from study participants. As a methodology, oral history is fairly open-ended and, at least in comparison to other forms of qualitative research, non-analytical (Creswell, 2009). Researchers working with oral history designs seek to transmit and archive data from participants, not to use those data to answer specific questions, or as part of a larger analytical purpose (Creswell, 2009). Because the current study has a theoretical and empirical focus devoted to identifying and analysing factors motivating young Canadian Sikhs to become motivated to join Khalistani movements, the implicitly analytical and specific structure of the study is unsuited to oral history.

Grounded theory is a form of qualitative research whose purpose is to work backwards; that is, from data to theory (Creswell, 2009). Such an approach is most useful

when there are abundant data, but few or no theories to organise the data. In the current study, numerous theoretical approaches have already been identified and discussed. Behaviour in general, and affiliation behaviour in particular, has been extremely well-theorised by psychologists, sociologists, and other scholars. For this reason, grounded theory is not an appropriate qualitative design for the current study.

Phenomenology has been described in several ways. Klenke defined phenomenology as, “Essentially the study of lived experiences [...] it emphasizes the world as lived by a person, not the world or reality as something separate from a person” (Klenke, 2008, p. 223). There are several individual focuses within phenomenology. In one version of phenomenology, researchers are more interested in what experiences have to reveal about individuals. In another version, researchers are more interested in what individuals have to reveal about the nature of experiences (Moustakas, 1994). The latter approach, also known as descriptive phenomenology, could have been a promising form of study design for the current study, given that affiliation with Khalistan can be considered a phenomenal experience, and that young Sikhs from GTA could have been approached as descriptors of this experience. However, upon closer analysis, the advantages of a descriptive phenomenological approach could be achieved in a case study format, without incurring the main disadvantage of the descriptive phenomenological approach: Its lack of alignment with the purpose of the study.

According to Englander (2012), in descriptive phenomenology, “The researcher aims at the discovery of the meaning of a particular phenomenon” (Englander, 2012, pp. 16-17). Englander was careful to note that, “The phenomenon is the object of

investigation, not the person, although obviously, a person is required to describe the phenomenon” (Englander, 2012, p. 25). Affiliation with Khalistan does appear to be an experiential variable on which light could be shed by young Sikh participants. The purpose of the study, however, was to examine factors motivating young Sikhs to become involved in Khalistani movements and to use this analysis to construct a new sociology of Sikh youth in GTA. While the nature of the study surely involved a description and discussion of the meaning of the phenomenon of Khalistan, and while participants’ narratives also contributed interpretative understandings of both Khalistan as a general concept and affiliation with Khalistan as a specific behaviour, the main focus of the study was nonetheless on the factors impelling involvement with Khalistan.

Of course, it could plausibly be argued that factors motivating involvement with Khalistani movements could be conceived of as phenomena. While such an argument might be superficially convincing, the problem with accepting it is that, as in MacIntyre et al.’s (1998) and Foxall’s (1997, 2010, 2011) models of behaviour, the factors that motivate people to behave in a certain way are too dynamic and distinct from each other to be considered part of a single phenomenon. The end product of a behavioural decision more easily lends itself to descriptive phenomenological investigation than the actual infrastructure of a behavioural decision, which is where the focus of the study lies. Nonetheless, the general idea of investigating a phenomenon through participants’ narratives is applicable to this study, as will be described later in the chapter.

Ethnographic studies are based on the observation of humans in their natural environments (Creswell, 2009). Ethnography is the least invasive of any of the qualitative

methods in that the observer attempts to interfere as little as possible with those who are being observed (Creswell, 2009). This method is used most frequently by anthropologists attempting to collect data on specific populations. Given that the focus of this study was on factors motivating young Sikhs in GTA to become involved in Khalistani movements, a very specific focus requiring participants to respond actively to research questions, the study was incompatible with the standard characteristics and aims of ethnography. However, ethnographic observation can be conducted in studies that are not primarily ethnographic in nature (Creswell, 2009). Given the researcher's identity as a participant in Sikh culture, the study presented an opportunity to triangulate or supplement participant-contributed data with ethnographic observations emerging from the interview and focus group setting. However, in the completed data analysis, ethnographic observation played a relatively modest part, and therefore has not been discussed at length in Chapter 4. The presentation of findings will include some brief notes about how and why ethnography was utilised in data analysis.

Historical studies are based on a review of historic data, relying heavily on the purposes of presenting, analysing, and synthesising such data in order to reach conclusions about the past (Creswell, 2009). History was an important part of Chapter 2 of this study; without such a presentation of Sikh history, it would have been impossible to understand what Khalistan is, what role it plays in Sikh lives, and what any outline of Sikh historical sociology might look like. History was not a methodological part of the study, however. The focus of the study was not on historical materials or reaching

conclusions about the past, but rather on the present conditions of young Sikhs in GTA who might or might not be involved with Khalistani movements.

The last remaining form of qualitative design, and the one chosen for this study, is the case study. A case study “investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2009, p. 18). Yin’s classic definition of the case study invokes phenomena, which places this design conceptually close to phenomenology. One major distinction between the case study and the phenomenological study, however, is that, as Yin observed, the case study is appropriate for situations in which the phenomenon under study is indistinguishable from its context. It was observed earlier in the chapter that Sikh youth’s decision to join or not join Khalistani movements is highly context-dependent; the phenomenon of affiliation with Khalistani movements cannot be understood separately from the personal behavioural infrastructures, processes, and trajectories of Sikh youth themselves.

In this sense, the application of the case study method to the current study can be understood as a means of combining the strengths of various qualitative approaches in a single approach. Taking a purely descriptive phenomenological approach to the study would result in some illumination of the phenomenon of Khalistani affiliation, but not in an illumination of the accompanying contexts of behavioural motivations to affiliate or not affiliate. Collecting an oral history could result in a gathering of behavioural motivations, but would lack the analytical infrastructure to apply participants’ narrative data to an exploration of affiliation and identity phenomena. Therefore, the case study

approach was chosen as a means of combining the strengths of descriptive phenomenology and oral history without incurring the drawbacks of either.

Restatement of Research Questions

Two research questions were posed in Chapter 1:

Research Question 1: How does the Khalistan movement serve to order and manage intra-Sikh relationships, primarily those involving young people, in the Greater Toronto Area, Ontario?

Research Question 2: How does the Khalistan movement manage the Sikh identity vis-à-vis the non-Sikh realities of India and Canada?

Both of these research questions were designed to examine and explore the views of a substantial cross-section of the young Sikh community in GTA as a means of understanding the role played by engagement with Khalistani ideas and movements as part of identity formation and social interaction understood from a Sikh perspective. The results of the analysis were not intended to arrive at general conclusions about the young Sikh community in Canada, and were also limited by the convenience sampling approach used in the study.

The discussion of theory in Chapter 3 resulted in the specification of numerous additional points, which allows me now to formulate several further empirical research questions based on specific concepts. These empirical questions, like the general research questions, were designed as ways of exploring and understanding the identity formation and social interaction experiences of young Sikhs in GTA, using engagement with

Khaistan as a touchpoint. The questions were not designed to build knowledge about the young Sikh community as a whole.

Empirical Question 1: What are the behavioural antecedents, or, in other terminology, the stimuli that colour Sikh youth's decisions to participate or not in Khalistani movements?

Empirical Question 2: How does Sikh youth's participation or non-participation in Khalistani movements emerge from homeostatic or non-homeostatic forces affecting the Sikh community?

Empirical Question 3: How does Sikh youth's participation or non-participation in Khalistani movements emerge from the behavioural setting of the relationship between (a) loyalist and independence-minded Sikh sub-communities and (b) Sikhs and non-Sikh Canadians who lack sensitivity towards the Sikh identity or Sikh causes?

Empirical Question 4: How does the clash of meaning vis-à-vis the majoritarian Canadian community colour young Sikhs' involvement in Khalistani movements?

Empirical Question 5: How does shared meaning within the Sikh community colour young Sikhs' involvement in Khalistani movements?

The research questions and empirical questions can be merged in the manner demonstrated in Table 3. The purpose of this synthesis is to ensure that the research questions are approached in a manner that does justice to the potential roles of behaviourism, functionalist homeostasis, and symbolic interactionism as explanatory frames. Ensuring that these theoretical frames are represented not only aligns the findings of the study with the conceptual roots of the study but also, as will become apparent in

the next section of the chapter, provides a means of specifying the appropriate case study method.

Table 3

Synthesis of Research Questions and Theoretical Questions

Research Question	Theoretical Question
How does the Khalistan movement serve to order and manage intra-Sikh relationships, primarily those involving young people, in the Greater Toronto Area, Ontario?	What antecedents arising within Sikh household or other Sikh settings provide the stimuli that colour Sikh youth's decisions to participate or not participate in Khalistani movements?
	How does Sikh youth's participation or non-participation in Khalistani movements emerge from homeostatic or non-homeostatic forces affecting the Sikh community?
	How does Sikh youth's participation or non-participation in Khalistani movements emerge from the relationship between loyalist and independence-minded Sikh sub-communities?
How does the Khalistan movement manage the Sikh identity vis-à-vis the non-Sikh realities of India and Canada?	How does shared meaning within the Sikh community colour young Sikhs' involvement in Khalistani movements?
	How does Sikh youth's participation or non-participation in Khalistani movements emerge from the behavioural setting of the relationship between Sikhs and non-Sikh Canadians who lack sensitivity towards the Sikh identity or Sikh causes?
	How does the clash of meaning vis-à-vis the majoritarian Canadian community colour young Sikhs' involvement in Khalistani movements?

Specification of Case Study Model

There are numerous ways in which case studies can be constructed. Perhaps the first question of importance facing case study researchers is to specify who or what is the subject of the case study. As Englander (2012) has argued, it is easy to confuse people and phenomena as objects of the study; there is a major difference between studying participants' experiences and approaching participants to obtain insight into experiences. In this case study, participants are not the objects of the study; their role is it to provide insight into the underlying factors motivating or rejecting involvement in Khalistani movements. This distinction is important not only because of formal methodological reasons but also because, once the subject of the study has been specified, case study researchers can make important decisions about how to collect, code, and analyse their data (Yin, 2009).

Another step in the specification of case study models is to choose between a single case and multiple cases (Yin, 2009). In this study, multiple cases were appropriate, but the specification of such cases raises some questions. One possible approach was to specify the following two cases, both of which emerged from the experiences and narratives of the sample, not of young Canadian Sikhs as a whole: (a) Factors that motivate Sikh youth in GTA to become involved in Khalistani movements and (b) factors that do not motivate Sikh youth in GTA to become involved in Khalistani movements. There were two problems with this particular specification of cases. First, as articulated, these two cases do not directly address the two research questions of the study. In other words, sorting data into motivating and non-motivating factors could, at best, be an

intermediate step in answering the research questions of the study; this approach would not necessarily be methodologically invalid, but it would not be parsimonious. Second, sorting data into motivating and non-motivating factors presents the risk of generating bare lists of factors that cannot be placed into an appropriate explanatory structure. One of the goals of good qualitative studies is to provide rich explanations (Creswell, 2009), and there is a methodological danger that simply listing factors would lack sufficient explanatory strength, as such factors do not in themselves explain why young Canadian Sikhs take particular actions or think in particular ways.

Another approach to the specification of multiple cases, an approach that had the advantage of alignment, was simply to examine the research questions and derive appropriate cases from them, as in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Derivation of Cases from Research Questions

Research Question	Case Specification
How does the Khalistan movement serve to order and manage intra-Sikh relationships, primarily those involving young people, in the Greater Toronto Area, Ontario?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participation in Khalistani movements as a pivot for the ordering and management of intra-Sikh relationships. 2. Participation in Khalistani movements as a pivot for the ordering and management of intra-Sikh identity issues involving loyalists versus separatists.
How does the Khalistan movement manage the Sikh identity vis-à-vis the non-Sikh realities of India and Canada?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Participation in Khalistani movements as a pivot for the ordering and management of Sikh / non-Sikh identity interactions.

On closer consideration, there were three cases, not two, arising from the research questions. The first research question was delimited to the issue of intra-Sikh relationships, which can be held to constitute a unique case. However, the second research question evoked India as well as Canada. As discussed in the literature review, Khalistan plays a role in ordering intra-Sikh identity issues as well as relations between Sikhs and non-Sikhs; therefore, it seemed acceptable to divide the second research question into two distinct cases.

It should be noted that, based on Yin's (2009) definition, a case is "not a person." A case is a conceptual or explanatory category, evidence for which is contributed by participants. Ultimately, the goal of case specification in multiple case studies is to create a logical structure into which the maximum amount of information can be sorted in a parsimonious but comprehensive manner (Yin, 2009), and that is compatible with the researcher's overall theoretical inspirations and empirical conditions. The decision to derive cases from the research questions appeared to be an appropriate way of achieving this goal. Additional decisions were required in specifying the case study model, however.

Within the multiple case study framework, there are two more specific approaches: The embedded approach and the holistic approach (Yin, 2009). In the embedded approach, there are main units of analysis, but there are also subordinate cases of analysis associated with the main units. A holistic approach can be difficult to achieve when there is more than one case, especially in research designs that include multiple informants and complex, possibly controversial topics (Yin, 2009). Given the

identification of three main cases and the underlying complexity and controversy of the research topic, it was decided to adopt the embedded rather than the holistic approach for this study. The embedded approach allowed for the data to be broken up into smaller conceptual pieces, thus addressing each research question and empirical question directly. A holistic approach would not have been as well-suited to generate specific answers and explanations.

The main methodological question that remained was whether to try to specify the embedded cases in advance, or to allow them to emerge from data collection.

There are arguments in favour of, as well as against, specifying embedded cases in advance. One argument against specifying embedded cases is that embedded cases could emerge organically from the data analysis; if so, then the specification of embedded cases in advance might create researcher bias in the search for the specified embedded cases and the neglect of novel embedded cases emerging from the data (Yin, 2009). However, bias can be mitigated if the embedded cases are aligned with research questions or other predetermined means of analysing the data. The argument in favour of using embedded cases is that embedding can ensure that key theoretical perspectives and focused research goals inform the structuring of both data collection and data analysis (Yin, 2009). To obtain this advantage, the use of embedding must be rendered more abstract. An example of a concrete embedded case is religion. If young Sikhs in the GTA gave religion as a reason for joining or not joining Khalistani movements, then religion could be an appropriate embedded case in terms of providing an added layer of

explanatory power to the main two cases. However, as discussed earlier, pre-specifying these kinds of embedded cases can create bias.

One approach to specifying embedded cases that evaded bias but that achieved the other methodological goals of the study was to draw inspiration from the theoretical questions. The tables below present thirty embedded cases: Fourteen associated with the first case, ten with the second case, and six with the third case of the study. The specified embedded cases are value-neutral and empty of content; as designed, they can accommodate any specific theme, explanation, or datum. The openness of the embedded cases as well as their alignment with both the theoretical bases and research questions represent a methodological strength of the study.

Table 5

Specification and Alignment of Research Questions, Cases, and Embedded Cases: Case 1

Research Question	Case 1	Embedded Cases
How does the Khalistan movement serve to order and manage intra-Sikh relationships, primarily those involving young people, in the Greater Toronto Area, Ontario?	Participation in Khalistani movements as a pivot for the ordering and management of intra-Sikh relationships.	<p>1 Antecedents arising within Sikh households that colour Sikh youth's decisions to participate in Khalistani movements.</p> <p>2 Antecedents arising in other Sikh settings that colour Sikh youth's decisions to participate in Khalistani movements.</p> <p>3 Antecedents arising in non-Sikh settings that colour Sikh youth's decisions to participate in Khalistani movements.</p> <p>4 Antecedents arising within Sikh households that colour Sikh youth's decisions to not participate in Khalistani movements.</p> <p>5 Antecedents arising in other Sikh settings that colour Sikh youth's decisions to not participate in Khalistani movements.</p> <p>6 Antecedents arising in non-Sikh settings that colour Sikh youth's decisions to not participate in Khalistani movements.</p> <p>7 Homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour Sikh youth's participation in Khalistani movements.</p>

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- 8 Homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour Sikh youth's non-participation in Khalistani movements.
 - 9 Non-homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour Sikh youth's participation in Khalistani movements.
 - 10 Non-homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour Sikh youth's non-participation in Khalistani movements.
 - 11 Loyalist versus separatist themes as inspiration for participation in Khalistani movements.
 - 12 Loyalist versus separatist themes as inspiration for non-participation in Khalistani movements.
 - 13 Shared meaning within the Sikh community as inspiration for participation in Khalistani movements.
 - 14 Shared meaning within the Sikh community as inspiration for non-participation in Khalistani movements.
-

Table 6

Specification and Alignment of Research Questions, Cases, and Embedded Cases: Case 2

Research Question	Case 2	Embedded Cases
How does the Khalistan movement manage the Sikh identity vis-à-vis the non-Sikh realities of India and Canada?	Participation in Khalistani movements as a pivot for the ordering and management of intra-Sikh identity issues involving loyalists versus separatists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Antecedents arising within Sikh households that colour Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitudes to Indian loyalists. 2 Antecedents arising in other Sikh settings that colour Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitudes to Indian loyalists. 3 Antecedents arising in non-Sikh settings that colour Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitudes to Indian loyalists. 4 Antecedents arising within Sikh households that colour non-Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitudes to separatists. 5 Antecedents arising in other Sikh settings that colour non-Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitudes to separatists. 6 Antecedents arising in non-Sikh settings that colour non-Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitudes to separatists.

7 Homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitude to Indian loyalists.

8 Non-homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitude to Indian loyalists.

9 Homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour non-Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitude to separatists.

10 Non-homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour non-Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitude to separatists.

Table 7

Specification and Alignment of Research Questions, Cases, and Embedded Cases: Case 3

Research Question	Case 3	Embedded Cases
How does the Khalistan movement manage the Sikh identity vis-à-vis the non-Sikh realities of India and Canada?	Participation in Khalistani movements as a pivot for the ordering and management of Sikh-non-Sikh identity interactions.	<p>1 Antecedents arising within Sikh households that colour Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitudes to non-Sikh Canadians.</p> <p>2 Antecedents arising in other Sikh settings that colour Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitudes to non-Sikh Canadians.</p> <p>3 Antecedents arising in non-Sikh settings that colour Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitudes to non-Sikh Canadians.</p> <p>4 Homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitude to non-Sikh Canadians.</p> <p>5 Non-homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitude to non-Sikh Canadians</p> <p>6 Interpretative differences between Khalistan-involved Sikh youths and non-Sikh Canadians, as disclosed by Sikh youths.</p>

In summary, then, a case study approach with three main cases, and a total of 30 embedded cases distributed among the three main cases, was chosen for the study. This approach was judged to best align the methodological strengths of the case study method with the purposes of the study, while also obtaining theoretical alignment. More details about the execution of the case study will be provided later in Chapter 4. Raw data for the embedded cases is provided in Appendix A. The means by which cases and case analyses were derived from raw data is explained and justified later in this chapter.

Population, Setting, and Sample

The population for this study consisted of Sikh youth in Canada. The setting for the study was the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), while the specific physical setting for the study was the North York Sikh Temple. The sample for the study consisted of Sikh youth from GTA, with youth delimited to Sikhs between 18 and 24. Given the higher vulnerability of minor (under 18) populations (Creswell, 2009), and the ethical difficulties that could arise from asking minors about what remains a culturally and politically sensitive topic, it was decided to delimit the study to Sikh youth who were not minors, but who were still young enough to be considered ‘youth’. Working with a slightly older population of youth was not necessarily a limitation in terms of being able to obtain insight into Sikh minors’ associations with Khalistani movements; it was possible to ask participants about the nature of their views and behaviours when they were minors.

In terms of sample size, Creswell (2009) stated that there is a radical difference between quantitative and qualitative studies, in that quantitative studies require a number

of participants large enough to confer statistical generalizability, while qualitative studies are not under this obligation. Creswell recommended that the sample size for qualitative studies be large enough to confer data saturation. Data saturation takes place when qualitative study participants begin to repeat themes or data that have already been contributed by other participants (Creswell, 2009). According to Creswell, a sample of 16-20 people is usually large enough to result in data saturation in qualitative studies. There is no harm in gathering larger samples for qualitative research, however; the main constraint in this regard can be the amount of time and other resources available to the researcher (Creswell, 2009).

Creswell's (2009) generic sample size recommendation for qualitative research might not apply to specific case study designs, because, as Yin (2009) has argued, a case study's sample size can depend on the number of main and embedded cases. A case study with a large number of main and embedded cases can require a larger sample size (Yin, 2009). Given the large number of embedded cases in this study (see Tables 7, 8, and 9 above), the sample sought for this study was considerably larger than the sample of 16-20 recommended by Creswell. Another consideration in aiming for a larger sample was that, given the sensitive nature of the topic, many Sikh youth might decide not to disclose their involvement in a Khalistani movement. Given that the study is reliant on the participation of young Sikhs from GTA who are in fact involved in a Khalistani movement, a larger sample size would aid the study by raising the chances that Khalistani-active youth would be recruited. Moustakas (1994) has also pointed out that, whenever a sufficient large number of participants are asked about their experiences, there are some respondents who

do not provide rich data. This problem can be exacerbated when the topic of a study is controversial. Accordingly, a sample of 48 was sought for the study; a number that was arrived at by multiplying Creswell's recommended sample size for qualitative research with the number of main cases in the study.

There are numerous forms of sampling. According to Creswell (2009), purposive sampling takes place when there is a highly specific population targeted by the researcher; in such situations, the researcher is more active in trying to identify and recruit specific participants. Given the narrow focus of this study on the experience of young Sikhs' involvement with Khalistani movements, a purposive sampling approach was adopted. Convenience sampling, or sampling in a manner that allows the researcher to quickly and easily recruit subjects on the basis of proximity and other factors (Creswell, 2009), was also adopted as a sampling strategy. Given the researcher's location in GTA, and entrée to the Sikh community in GTA, sampling was conducted in a manner that leveraged the researcher's proximity (both geographical and cultural) to the targeted population.

Originally, snowball sampling was considered as a sampling method for the study, but this approach proved to have an important limitation. Given that the topic of the study involves an analysis of factors that lead Sikh youth in GTA to become involved in Khalistani movements, it was necessary to obtain data and insight from at least some youths who are not involved in such movements. As Yin (2009) has argued, case studies can be enriched, not weakened, by the inclusion of discrepant cases, in a manner that will be discussed later in this chapter. Snowball sampling was deemed to lead too easily to

bias, in that Sikh youth recruited for the study in the temple would be more likely to refer similarly inclined friends, limiting the quality of data that could be gathered from a sample of Sikh youth with a broad rather than narrow set of perspectives on Khalistan. There are methodological precedents for this kind of approach. For example, Zine's work on Muslim Canadians' educational experience was delimited to understanding the experiences of "Muslim youth [...] who are committed to maintaining an Islamic lifestyle" (Zine, 2001, p. 399). Zine argued that such a goal could be achieved by building a sample in which levels of religiosity were mixed. Yin, too, suggested that richer knowledge of a case can be built by expanding rather than narrowing the desired perspective (2009). While the focus of the current study remained on understanding the experiences of young Sikhs in the GTA who were involved in Khalistani movements, a consideration of Zine's approach, Yin's discussion of discrepant data, and other factors led to the decision to expand the perspectives present in the sample, which in turn rendered snowball sampling less useful.

Recruitment of Participants

Recruitment of participants was conducted online. Given the extremely high Internet usage rates among Sikh youth in the Canadian and U.K. diaspora (Jasjit Singh, 2014b), online recruitment was deemed to be an effective and convenient way to assemble a sample for the study. A recruitment message was disseminated to six GTA-based Facebook groups, namely:

- The Canadian Sikh Association
- Sikh Students Association

- Sikh Youth Federation
- The Sikh Activist Network
- Toronto Sikh Retreat
- Sikhs for Justice

The recruitment message drew Facebook replies from a total of 57 Sikhs in GTA who met the inclusion criteria of the study. Not all of these participants were able or willing to meet for a face-to-face interview, however. Ultimately, 48 participants took part in the study, and a focus group consisting of nine young Sikhs was assembled. An informed consent form was collected from each participant.

Data Collection Procedures

Sequentially, the procedures of the study leading up to and including data collection were as follows:

- A recruitment message was sent to six Sikh-oriented Facebook groups based in GTA.
- Potential participants who responded positively were given a place and time for a one-on-one interview and, if they were interested, a follow-up focus group interview.
- An informed consent form was extended to, and received back from, every potential participant who arrived for an interview at the North York Sikh Temple.
- A 30-minute interview was conducted with each participant. Interviews took place over the course of 19 different days, aligning with the availability of participants and of the interview space.

- Interviews were audiotaped or not audiotaped based on the stated preferences of the interviewee. None of the 48 participants declined audiotaping when they were asked their preferences.
- A one-hour focus group session was conducted with nine participants. The session was audiotaped.
- All audiotapes were manually transcribed into Microsoft Word by the researcher.
- Transcribed audiotapes were placed in a locked cabinet by the researcher.
- The transcriptions were used to present the findings of the study.

Data Analysis

There are numerous means of conducting data analyses in qualitative studies. In the case study, data analysis can be facilitated by specifying main cases and embedded cases (Yin, 2009). When there are main cases and embedded cases, data analysis can be conducted in three stages. First, data are sorted into their respective containers in the embedded cases (and, by extension, the main cases). Second, the data are examined closely for evidence of themes. Third, the themes are synthesized to reach an overall conclusion, which typically answers the research questions of the study, making note of any other novel explanatory factors or issues of interest. This approach was pioneered by phenomenologists (Moustakas, 1994), but is now widely used as a general approach to data analysis by scholars from across the qualitative continuum.

The first challenge encountered in data analysis was to sort the data into the 30 embedded cases. This procedure was simplified by applying the vocabulary of behaviourism, functional homeostasis, and symbolic interactionism to the data. For

example, among behaviourists, antecedents are external stimuli (Foxall, 1999) that can be identified by looking for words that name places, situations, responses, and environments. The presence of homeostatic themes is indicated by the use of words and concepts such as 'stability' and 'change'. Finally, symbolic interactionism involves words and concepts related to meaning and interpretation. This conceptual guide allowed the participants' data to be sorted into the appropriate embedded case.

The second challenge encountered in data analysis was to identify themes. This challenge was simplified by designating a large number of embedded cases. Because of the relatively small amount of data in each embedded case, it became easier to identify recurring themes. In this context, a theme was identified as an idea, concept, or explanatory factor that undergirded more than one comment in the data set associated with each embedded case.

The third and final challenge encountered in data analysis was to generate synthesis and overall understanding from the themes. This challenge was addressed by using the simple conceptual categories of motivation and the absence of motivation. Once the themes were identified, it was relatively easy to determine what role they played in young GTA Sikhs' motivations to either participate or not participate in Khalistani movements.

Finally, separate attention was paid to discrepant data. While the main purpose of data analysis was to generate explanations and knowledge related to the research topic of the study, there were some discrepant data, themes, and explanations that shed light on young Sikhs' engagement with Khalistan in an unanticipated manner. Apathy, for

example, was a synthetic finding that was not anticipated in the research method or discussed in the literature review.

Ethical Protections

Research ethics can be threatened by several distinct deficiencies in research including (a) research fraud (Scheffer, 1999; Tischler, 1999); (b) irresponsible or pseudo-scientific applications of research findings to human subjects research (Hudson, 2000); and (c) gross ethical violations based on contempt for the welfare of human subjects (Jones, 1993; Wilkerson, 1996). These deficiencies can be related to both ethical lapses in research and to the unethical application of research concepts to real-world settings.

According to Scheffer (1999), a particularly important instance of research fraud was that committed by Cyril Burt in his studies of the heritability of intelligence quotient (IQ). It is possible that Burt fabricated some or all of the study in his twin studies; a conclusion that can be inferred by (a) Burt's report of the same correlation value for the heritability of intelligence in several different studies and (b) Burt's destruction of his raw data and notes. The falsification or fabrication of data has important consequences for the scientific enterprise and for all the real-world applications that emerge from science. Research fraud can also lead to social injustice, such as the use of flawed research to justify unequal treatment of people held to be of differing intelligence levels. As implied by Hudson (2000), there is a link between the kind of flawed research conducted by Burt and the justification of racism on the basis of alleged difference in intelligence between the races. Hudson provided an overview of how Burt's intelligence testing, much of which was proven to be flawed or faked, has been used as a justification

for the creation or maintenance of racial hierarchies in education and other aspects of American social life. There are two distinct ethical issues implicit on Hudson's work: 1) The unethicity of faking data (as also discussed by Scheffer, 1998), and 2) The unethicity of carrying out studies that are vulnerable to confirmation bias; that is, studies that fail to account for plausible explanatory variables other than the ones in which researchers are interested. These kinds of ethical lapses in research are not peccadilloes; they can have an extremely damaging influence in the real world.

For example, as discussed by Jones (1993) and Wilkerson (1996), the U.S. federal government funded a four-decade-long study of syphilis among poor African-Americans in the South, known as the Tuskegee study. Under the pretense of treating these subjects, the researchers merely monitored them to see how long it would take for syphilis to kill them (McNeil, 2011). Gross ethical violations of this sort, whether they occur in the context of research, policy, or both, can be partly blamed on the existence of ethically deficient studies that have prepared a framework for neglecting the rights or even basic humanity of certain classes of society. In other words, unethical research can produce unethical results in the realm of social action. The Tuskegee study, for example, could only have been carried out by a scientific establishment that genuinely believed African-Americans to be deficient, a belief that was itself fostered by generations of pseudo-scientific and unethical research.

There is a temptation to dismiss the faked research of Cyril Burt as a minor trespass of interest only to academics. However, Burt's faked research played an important role in the emergence and flourishing of the eugenics movement. Burt's

provision of support for the claim that intelligence was inherited allowed various extremists in the eugenics movement to propose a termination of the reproductive rights of those held to be of low intelligence. The eugenics movement enjoyed decades of popularity, coming to play a role in the odious ideology of Nazism as well as in the domestic policies of the United States. It has been responsible for untold human suffering, including the forced sterilization of women (Center for Individual Freedom, 1999). In Nazi Germany, people with learning disabilities and other forms of mental illness were indiscriminately slaughtered based on the flawed research surrounding eugenics. It is important to remember the link between unethical research and the commission of real-world atrocities.

Burt's fraud provides an example of the kinds of harm that can be done by research that is faked or flawed, especially when such research touches upon issues of human hierarchy. Given that research can be taken as the basis for grossly unethical human experimentation (as in the Tuskegee syphilis study) or for repulsive social moments and government policies (as in the case of eugenics), researchers must take extra care to ensure that their scholarly work is carried out as diligently and conscientiously as possible. Fortunately, there is ample support available to researchers in terms of identifying and carrying out ethical research. For example, the American Psychological Association (APA) promulgated an ethics code in 1992 that provides detailed ethical guidance to researchers (Spiegel, 1994).

In the current study, one of the main ethical questions was how to present data about Sikh involvement in Khalistan in a transparent, comprehensive, and fair manner.

Sikh extremists have used the idea of Khalistan as support for carrying out the deadliest mass murder in Canadian history (McAndrew, 2005; Turlej, 2001). At the same time, many Canadians have vilified Sikhs, tainting all Sikhs with culpability for the actions of a few extremists (Nayar, 2004). In this environment, any research on Khalistan must be conducted and presented with rectitude and scholarly tact, lest the resulting work inflame destructive passions on either side.

Every effort was made to approach the study in a spirit of fairness to both Sikhs and non-Sikhs. In particular, the embedded cases were designed so as to give insights into various aspects of young Sikh engagement with Khalistan, not just to focus on the motivations of young Sikhs with extreme ideas. An ethical strength of the present study was the generation of embedded cases that spoke to Sikh engagement and non-engagement with Khalistani movements, and that facilitated responsible data collection across the spectrum of young Sikh opinion. The embedded cases reduced the chances that a study on an admittedly controversial topic could inspire extreme reactions. As will become apparent, however, not all of the embedded cases yielded rich analytical results.

Chapter 5: Findings

The purpose of this section of the dissertation is to present the findings of the study. To facilitate analysis, the findings have been divided into numerous sections. First, descriptive statistics pertaining to the sample will be presented. Second, results pertaining to the first research question will be presented. The research question-related results will be further subdivided into the three main cases and 30 embedded cases presented in Chapter 4. Third, results pertaining to the second research question will be presented in the same manner as the first research question.

Embedded cases were conceptual categories related to the four major themes in the study: religion, family, identity, and activism. An embedded case was an example of why a particular force took on the shape that it did, and raw data were participant comments that provided content for the embedded case. Embedded cases—which could be related to behaviour, concepts, or meanings—were thus sub-categories of the study themes. Embedded cases were identified in relation to homeostasis and symbolic interactionism. Embedded cases that were related to homeostasis consisted of discrete forces that supported or failed to support the maintenance of traditional meanings, structures, and behaviours. Embedded cases that were related to symbolic interactionism consisted of discrete forces that supported or failed to support shared meaning. The coding process began with the raw data, in which repeated words, imagery, and content were used to identify embedded cases, which were then related to the four identified themes of the study.

Descriptive Statistics of the Sample

The sample consisted of 48 individuals. The mean age of the sample was 20.52 (SD = 2.104).

Research Question One: Overview and Answer

The first research question was as follows: How does the Khalistan movement serve to order and manage intra-Sikh relationships, primarily those involving young people, in the Greater Toronto Area, Ontario? This research question was broken down into two cases: (1) Participation in Khalistani movements as a pivot for the ordering and management of intra-Sikh relationships and (2) participation in Khalistani movements as a pivot for the ordering and management of intra-Sikh identity issues involving loyalists versus separatists.

Participation could be understood as resulting from some combination of (a) behavioural antecedents, (b) homeostatic forces, (c) non-homeostatic forces, (d) loyalist versus separatist themes, and (e) shared meaning. Data analysis revealed that each of these five categories could be analysed through a combination of religion, identity, activism, and family frames. In addition, given what was learned about gender, Gurdwara attendance, and primary identification in the descriptive statistics, it was possible to generate a conceptual map for the research question. As depicted in the figure below, this progression made it possible to answer the research question in a systematic matter:

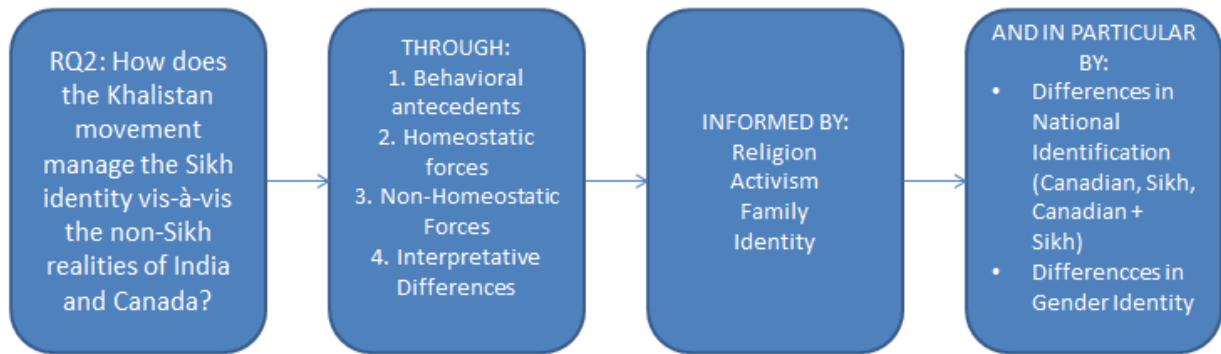


Figure 15. Analytical Schema, RQ1

Simply put, then, the answer to the question *How does the Khalistan movement serve to order and manage intra-Sikh relationships among young Sikhs in GTA?* is as follows: Through behavioural antecedents; homeostatic and non-homeostatic forces; loyalism and separatism; shared meaning that is informed by religion, activism, family, and identity; and in which national and gender identity are the most important explanatory factors. The short answer to the question is that gender and national identity help to inform how, why, and whether Khalistan plays a role in the management of the Sikh identity.

This answer appears to be a somewhat complex one, but its constituent parts are simple enough to understand, and will be shown to emerge in a trustworthy way from the collected data. The interaction between (a) behavioural antecedents, homeostatic and non-homeostatic forces, loyalism and separatism, and shared meaning; and (b) religion, activism, family, and identity is more easily understood when the objects in class (b) are considered as means of analysing the embedded case, as is clear in Table 8 below:

Table 8

Specification and Alignment of Research Questions, Cases, and Embedded Cases: Case 1, Expanded

RQ1, Case 1	Embedded Cases	Explanatory Frames
Participation in Khalistani movements as a pivot for the ordering and management of intra-Sikh relationships.	1 Antecedents arising within Sikh households that colour Sikh youth's decisions to participate in Khalistani movements.	Religious, identity-based, familial, and activism-related behavioural antecedents
	2 Antecedents arising in other Sikh settings that colour Sikh youth's decisions to participate in Khalistani movements.	
	3 Antecedents arising in non-Sikh settings that colour Sikh youth's decisions to participate in Khalistani movements.	Religious, identity-based, familial, and activism-related homeostatic and non-homeostatic forces
	4 Antecedents arising within Sikh households that colour Sikh youth's decisions to not participate in Khalistani movements.	Religious, identity-based, familial, and activism-related approaches to loyalism and separatism
	5 Antecedents arising in other Sikh settings that colour Sikh youth's decisions to not participate in Khalistani movements.	
	6 Antecedents arising in non-Sikh settings that colour Sikh youth's decisions to not participate in Khalistani movements.	Religious, identity-based, familial, and activism-related bases of shared meaning
	7 Homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour Sikh youth's participation in Khalistani movements.	
	8 Homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour Sikh youth's non-participation in Khalistani movements.	
	9 Non-homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour Sikh youth's participation in Khalistani movements.	
	10 Non-homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour Sikh youth's non-participation in Khalistani movements.	
	11 Loyalist versus separatist themes as inspiration for participation in Khalistani movements.	
	12 Loyalist versus separatist themes as inspiration for non-participation in Khalistani movements.	
	13 Shared meaning within the Sikh community as inspiration for participation in Khalistani movements.	
	14 Shared meaning within the Sikh community as inspiration for non-participation in Khalistani movements.	

Thus, the explanatory frames were more precise means of analysing the embedded cases. The explanatory frames were applied to the data to generate the three

precise answers to RQ1. Participation in Khalistani movements was discovered to be a means for men to build a masculine Sikh identity in interaction with each other; for women to build a general social identity based on interactions with each other; and, for men and women to interact with each other on the basis of collective socio-religious identity exploration and affirmation. Participation in Khalistani movements also came to be understood as a means of expression for Sikhs who identified as Sikh only or Sikh and Canadian. Having presented the answer to RQ1, what follows is an illustration of how symbolic interactionism serves as a good schema for these findings:

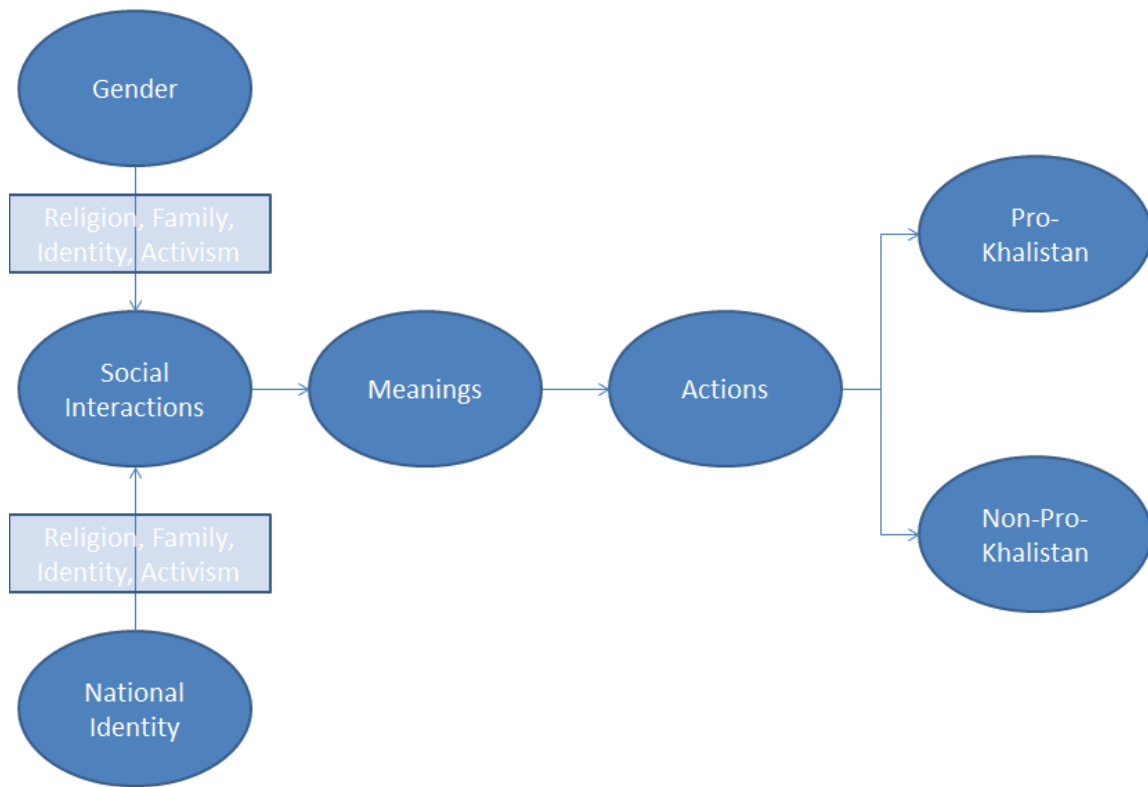


Figure 16. Symbolic Interactionism and RQ1

Analysis of the data for this research question revealed that gender and national identity informed the participants' religious, familial, identity, and activism attitudes, which in turn shaped the social interactions. These social interactions in turn gave rise to meanings which led to actions that were pro-Khalistan or not pro-Khalistan. This schema, slightly altered, was also compatible with a homeostatic understanding:

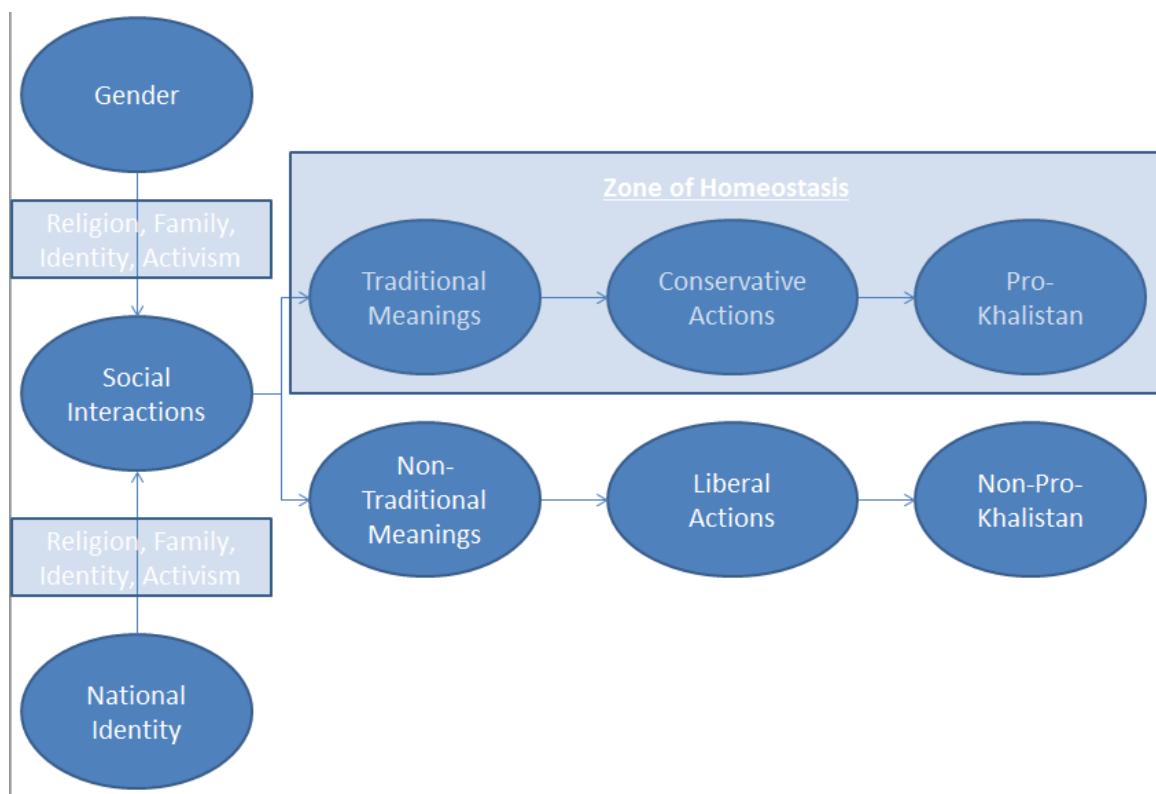


Figure 17. Integration of Symbolic Interactionism and Homeostasis, RQ1

These schemata were derived from the qualitative data coding as well as from quantitative analysis of the data, as described below.

Ideally, an explanatory theme ought to have fulfilled the following two criteria: (a) Cut across the major themes (that is, occur within religion, family, identity, and activism); and (b) make sense of multiple sub-themes by demonstrating connections between them. The main explanatory themes found in the study were: (a) Gender, because gender was a concept that explained how and why religion, activism, family, and identity took the forms that they did in managing and ordering intra-Sikh relationships; and (b) perceived national identity. Specifically, gender and national identity were the best explanations of how, why, and whether participants took part in the Khalistan movement. Surprisingly, religiosity—as measured by Gurdwara attendance—was not a powerful explanatory theme.

Other approaches were taken to better understand these data. To begin with, participants' degrees of involvement with Khalistan were inferred from the interview questions and subdivided into five categories: (a) Online and real-world activism; (b) online activism only; (c) passive consumption of online materials; and (d) no involvement, which was further subdivided into participants who professed curiosity about Khalistani movements and participants who did not profess curiosity about Khalistani movements. Ultimately, 29 of the participants were involved with Khalistani movements and 18 were not. While data from these participants were used for statistical purposes, it should be noted that both the small sample size and the convenience nature of sampling precluded the results from being generalisable to a larger population. The

statistical results are therefore only capable of shedding light on patterns within the study sample.

The purpose of this coding was to treat the data in a manner that could disclose patterns in commitment to Khalistan, patterns that could then be used to reach conclusions about (a) how and why certain participants were more or less likely to participate in the movement and (b) how the concept of Khalistan played some role in intra-Sikh interactions.

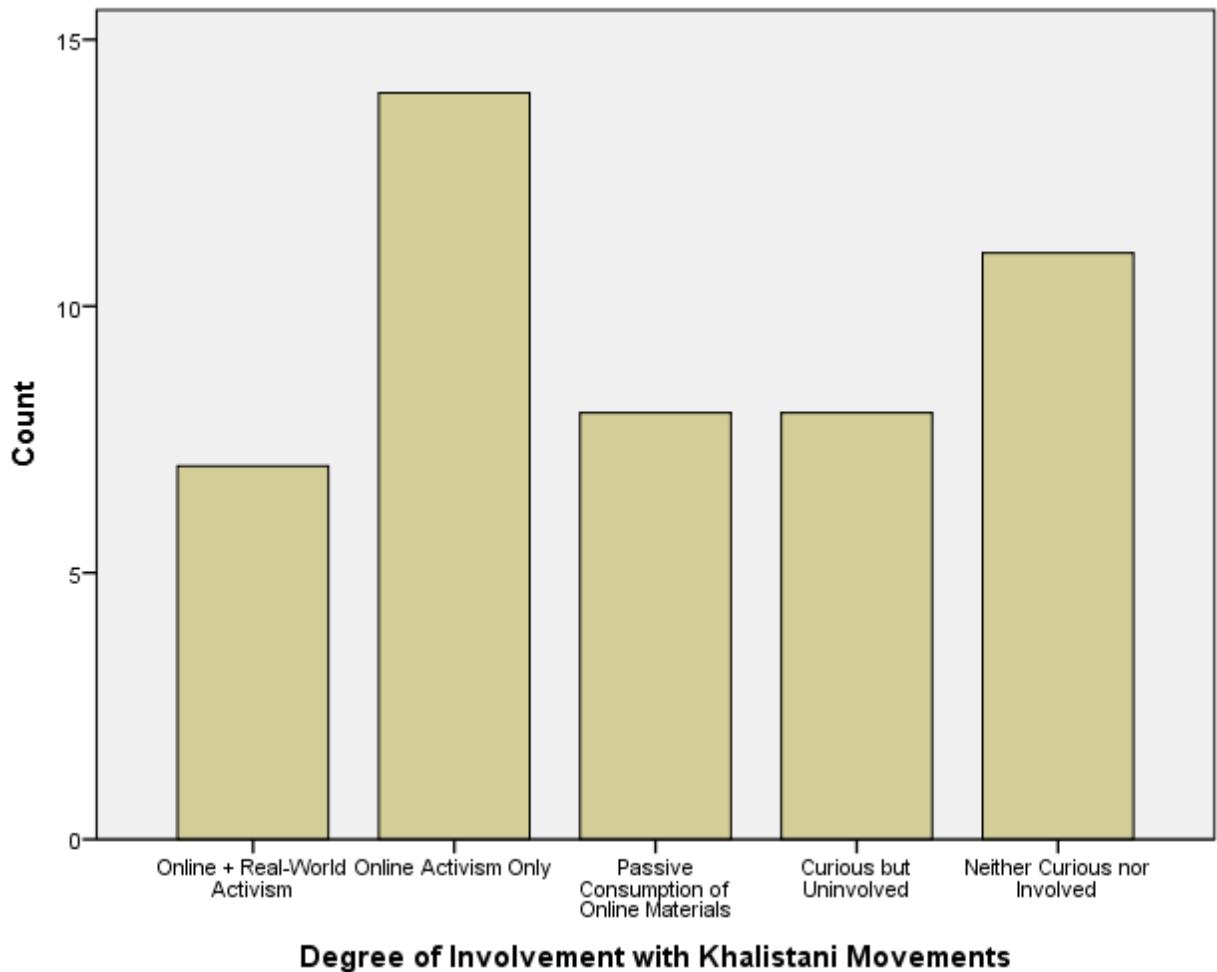


Figure 18. Bar Graph, Degree of Involvement with Khalistani Movements.

The coding of degree of involvement offered an empirical basis for better understanding how the Khalistan movement serves to order and manage intra-Sikh relationships. Once the participants' degree of involvement was categorized, it was possible to examine the intersection between various aspects of the participants' identities (such as gender, religiosity, national identification, etc.) and participation in Khalistani movements. Such an examination was possible because, during the interviewing process, a great deal was learned about the participants. Data on participants' gender, age, religiosity (as measured by Gurdwara status), and primary national identification were obtained. To revert to the language of quantitative analysis, these kinds of data could be thought of as independent variables that could then be superimposed on the dependent variable of participation on Khalistan. While the study was qualitative in nature, the application of these quantitative concepts made it possible to reach empirically supported conclusions about the role of gender and national identity as the main explanatory variables in the first research question.

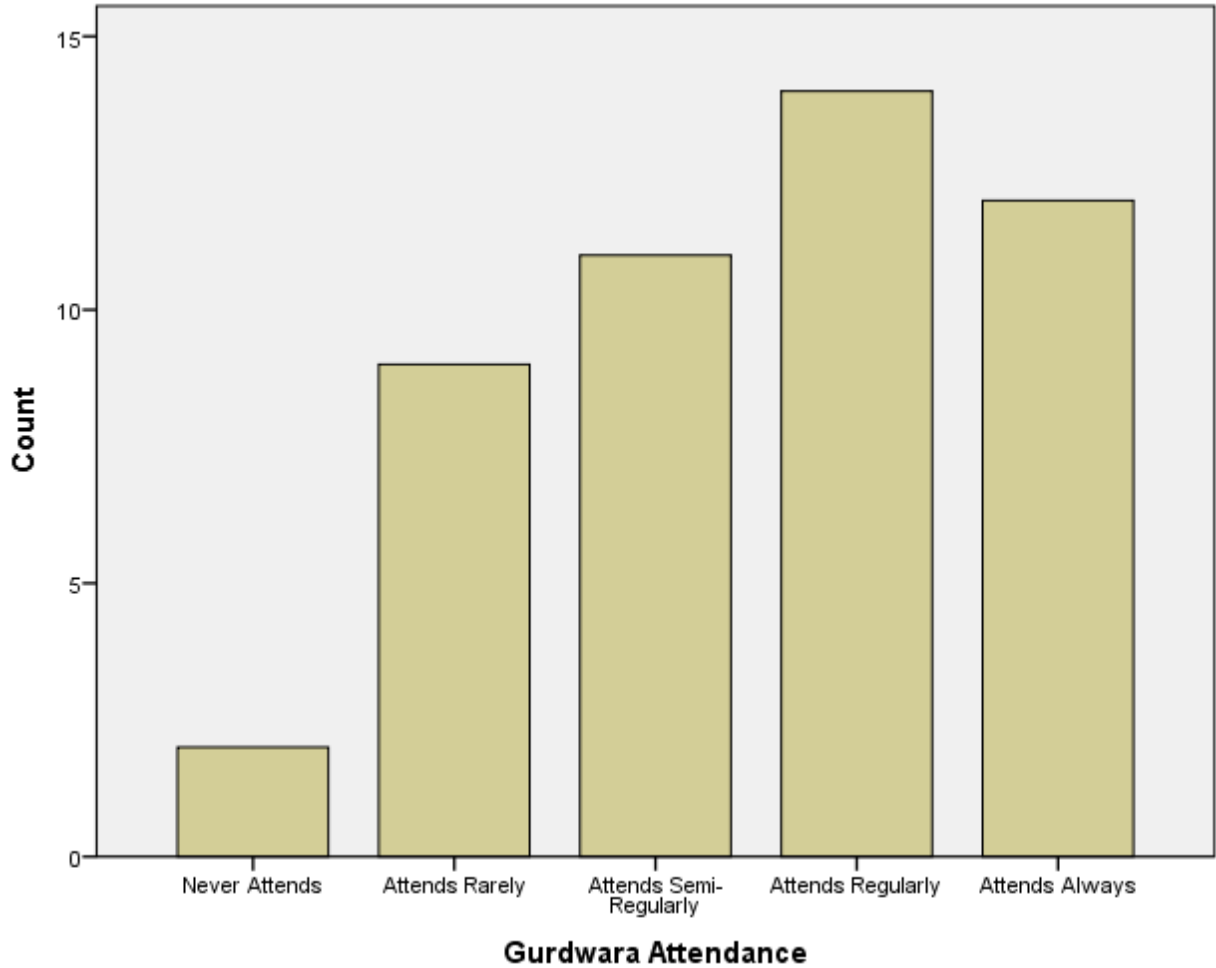


Figure 19. Bar Graph, Gurdwara Attendance Status.

As demonstrated in the bar graph above, there were five categories of Gurdwara attendance reported by participants. Gurdwara attendance functioned as a proxy variable for religiosity in the study, at least for purposes of the kind of analysis carried out in this section. Next, the data were coded in order to determine how participants identified themselves. There were three distinct identities that emerged from this analysis, namely (a) Canadian, (b) Sikh, and (c) Canadian and Sikh equally.

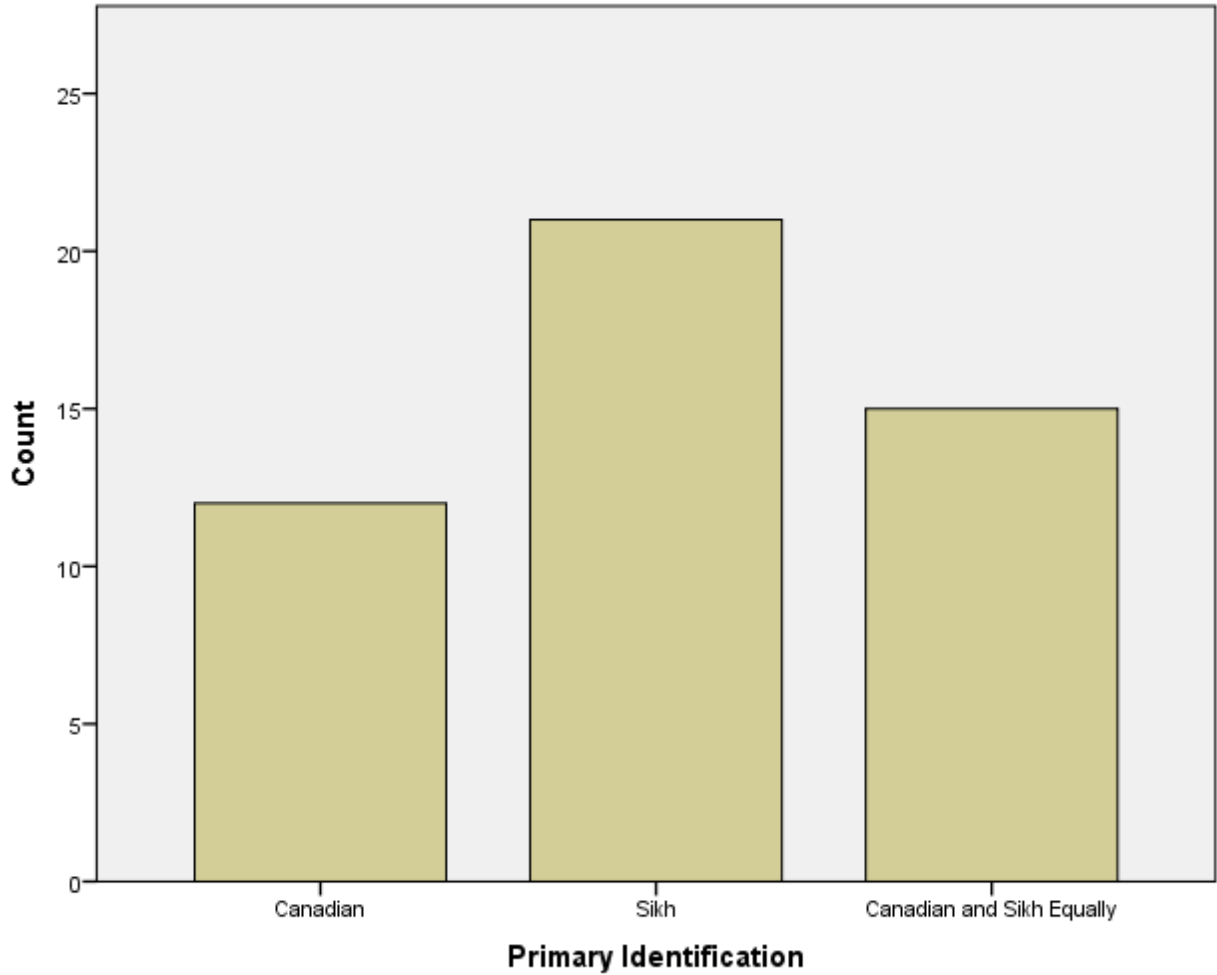


Figure 20. Bar Graph, Primary Identification in the Sample.

After collecting these descriptive data, some two- and three-way visual analyses were conducted in order to learn how gender, age, Khalistan engagement status, primary identification, types of Khalistani engagement, and Gurdwara attendance interacted in the sample. One of these analyses revealed that men exceeded women in activism (particularly online activism). Women were more likely to not be involved in Khalistani movements, or else to be passively involved in the consumption of Web materials related to Khalistan:

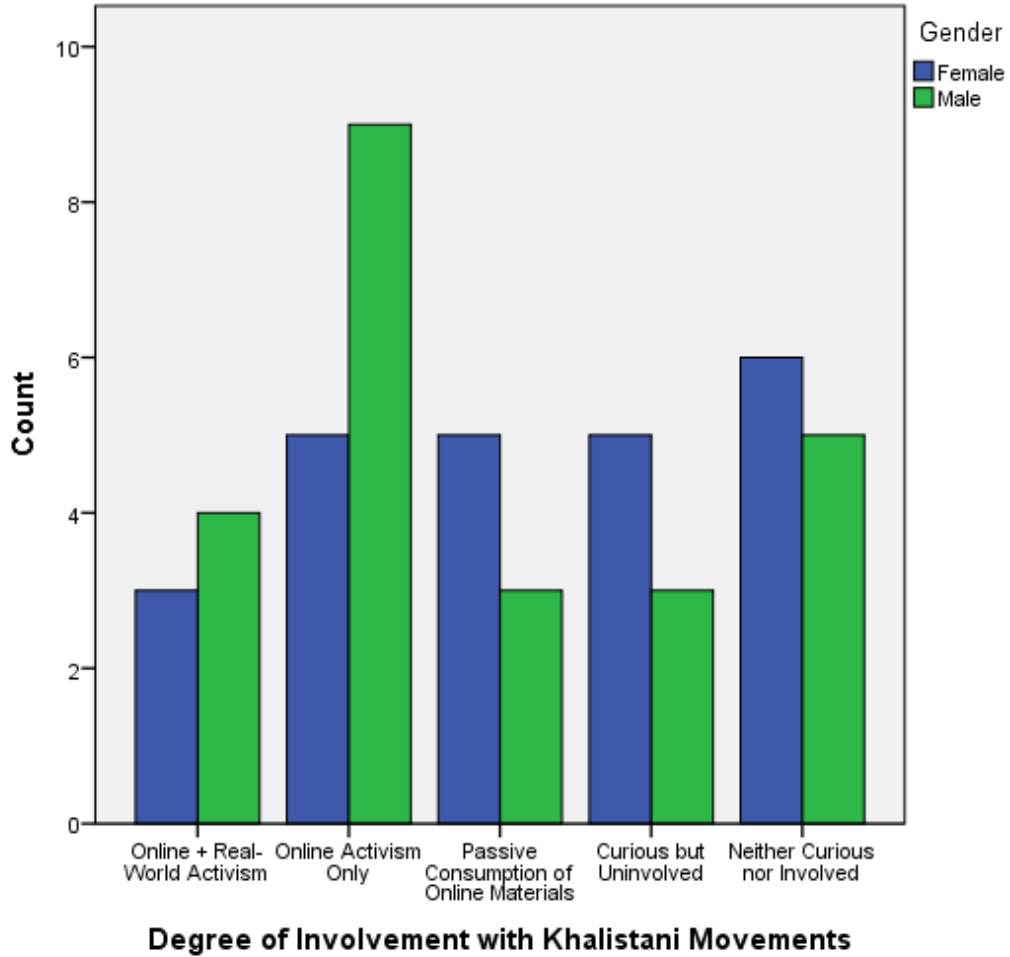


Figure 21. Bar Graph, Gender * Types of Engagement with Khalistani Movements.

The effect of gender on engagement status was readily apparent in the following bar graph:

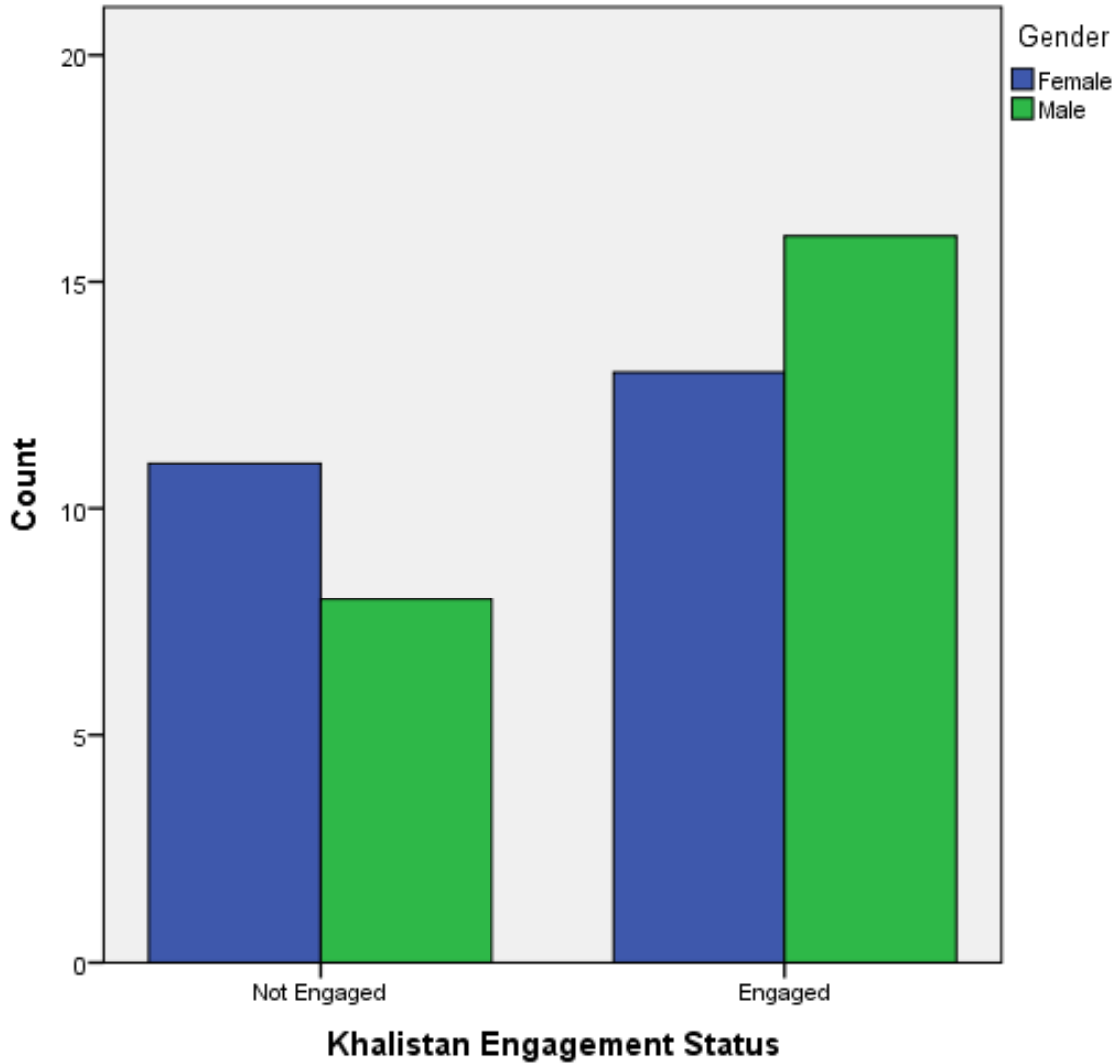


Figure 22. Bar Graph, Gender * Khalistani Engagement Status.

Gender was not the only variable that appeared to be associated with degree and types of engagement with Khalistani movements. Primary identification also exerted some notable effects. To begin with, it was observed that those participants who identified themselves as Sikh only were more likely to be both actively (through online and real-world means) and passively (through reading Web materials) involved with Khalistani movements. Those participants who defined themselves as Canadian only

were more likely to be uninvolved. Those participants who described themselves as Canadian and Sikh equally were an interesting case; they were divided between online activism only and non-involvement.

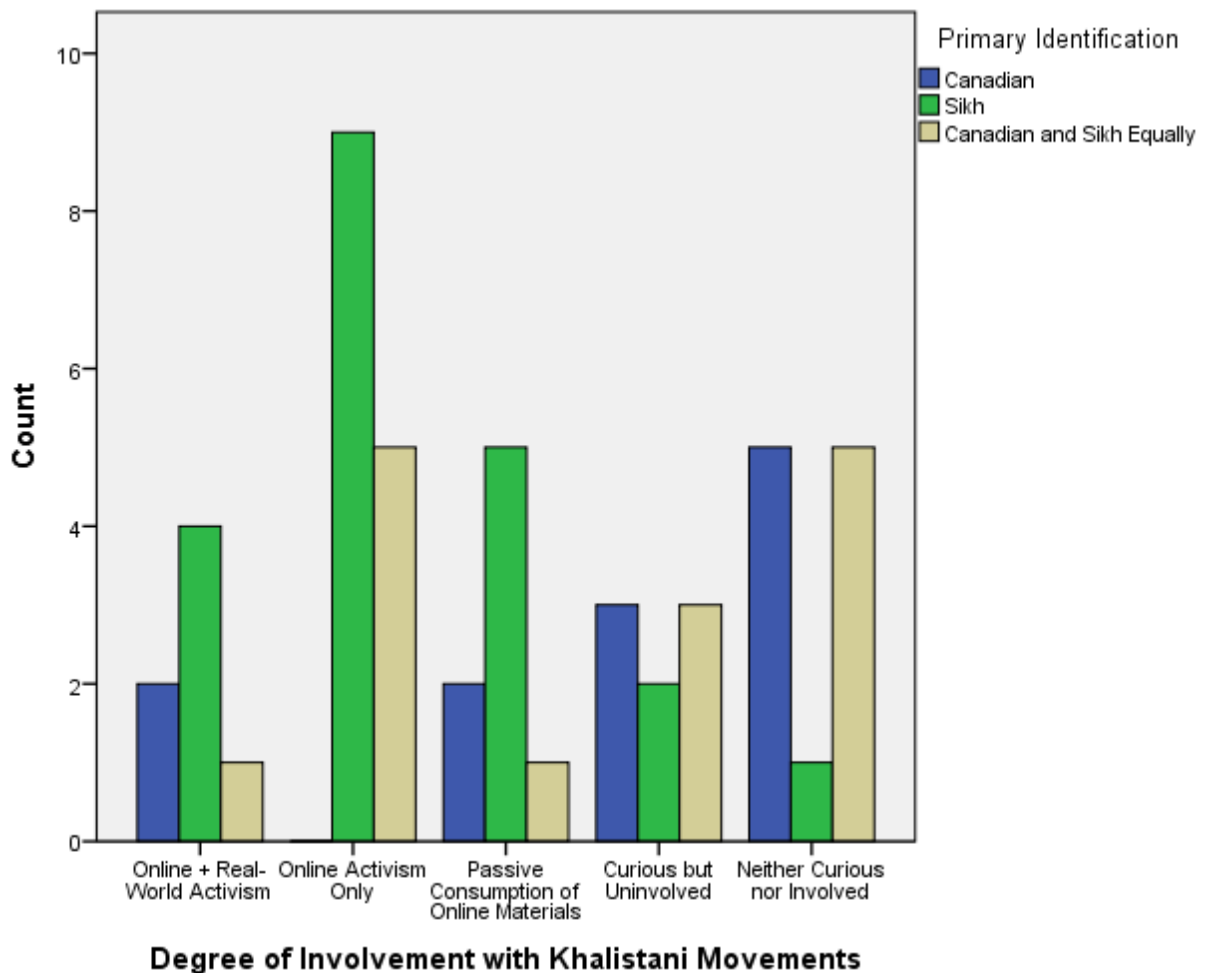


Figure 23. Bar Graph, Primary Identification * Khalistani Involvement Type.

Another way of understanding the interaction between primary identification and Khalistani involvement type was through a boxplot. Given that involvement type was structured as a continuum, this method offered insight into mean involvement across groups and also allowed the identification of outliers:

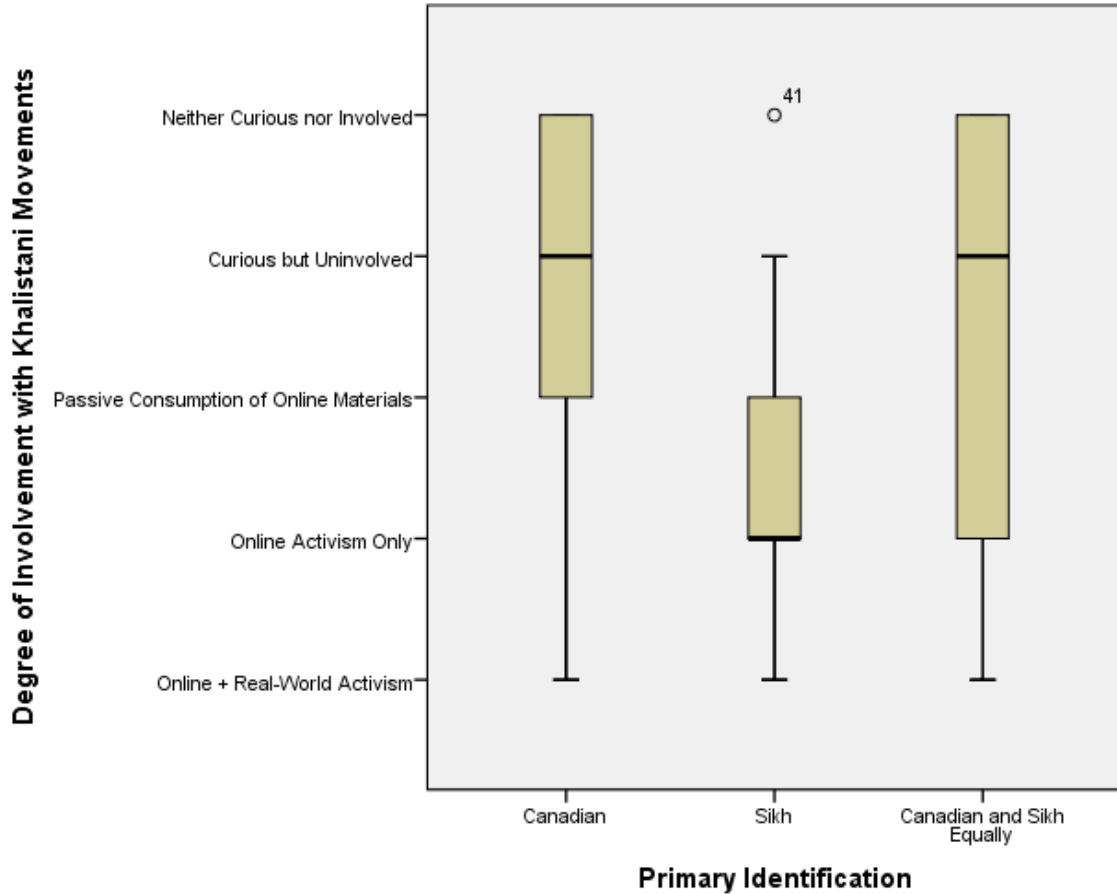


Figure 24. Boxplot, Primary Identification * Khalistani Involvement Type.

Only one participant, #41, self-identified as Sikh only, but claimed to be neither curious nor involved in Khalistani movements. These visual analyses suggest a strong correlation between Sikh self-identification and degree and type of involvement in Khalistani movements.

Gurdwara attendance status was also a meaningful predictor of degree and type of involvement with Khalistani movements. Among those 29 participants who were engaged in Khalistani movements in some way, most attended their Gurdwaras always or regularly. Here, *always* was defined as attending the Gurdwara at least once a week,

regularly as at least once every two month, *semi-regularly* as at least one every three months, *rarely* as at least once a year, and *never* as not in the past year. Gurdwaras are flexible spaces that can be used for specific sacraments and rituals within Sikhism as well as for general meditation; hence, unlike the case with churches and mosques, defining Gurdwara attendance requires some arbitrariness.

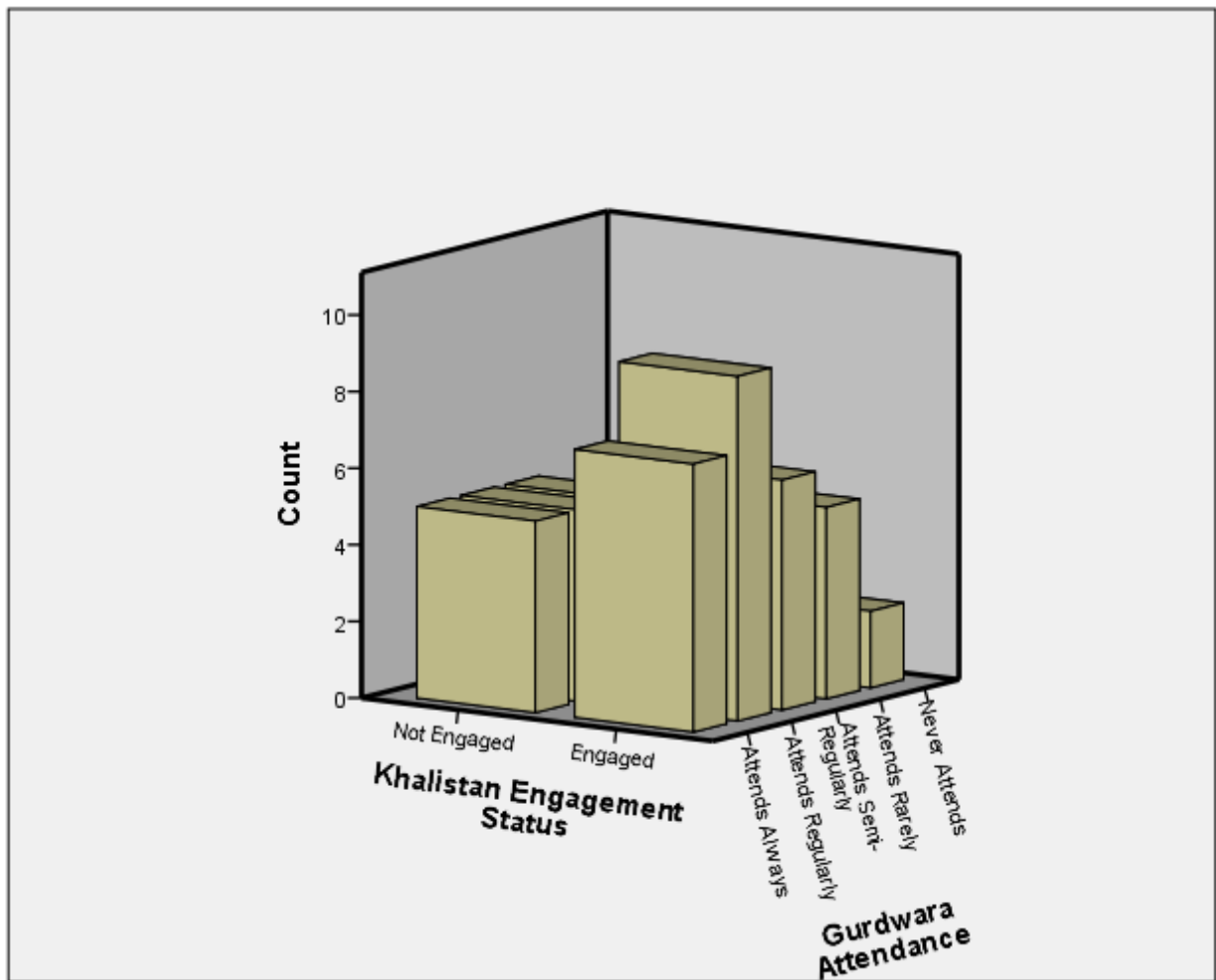


Figure 25. 3D Graph, Gurdwara Attendance * Khalistani Involvement Type.

Females appeared to be more likely to attend the Gurdwara regularly:

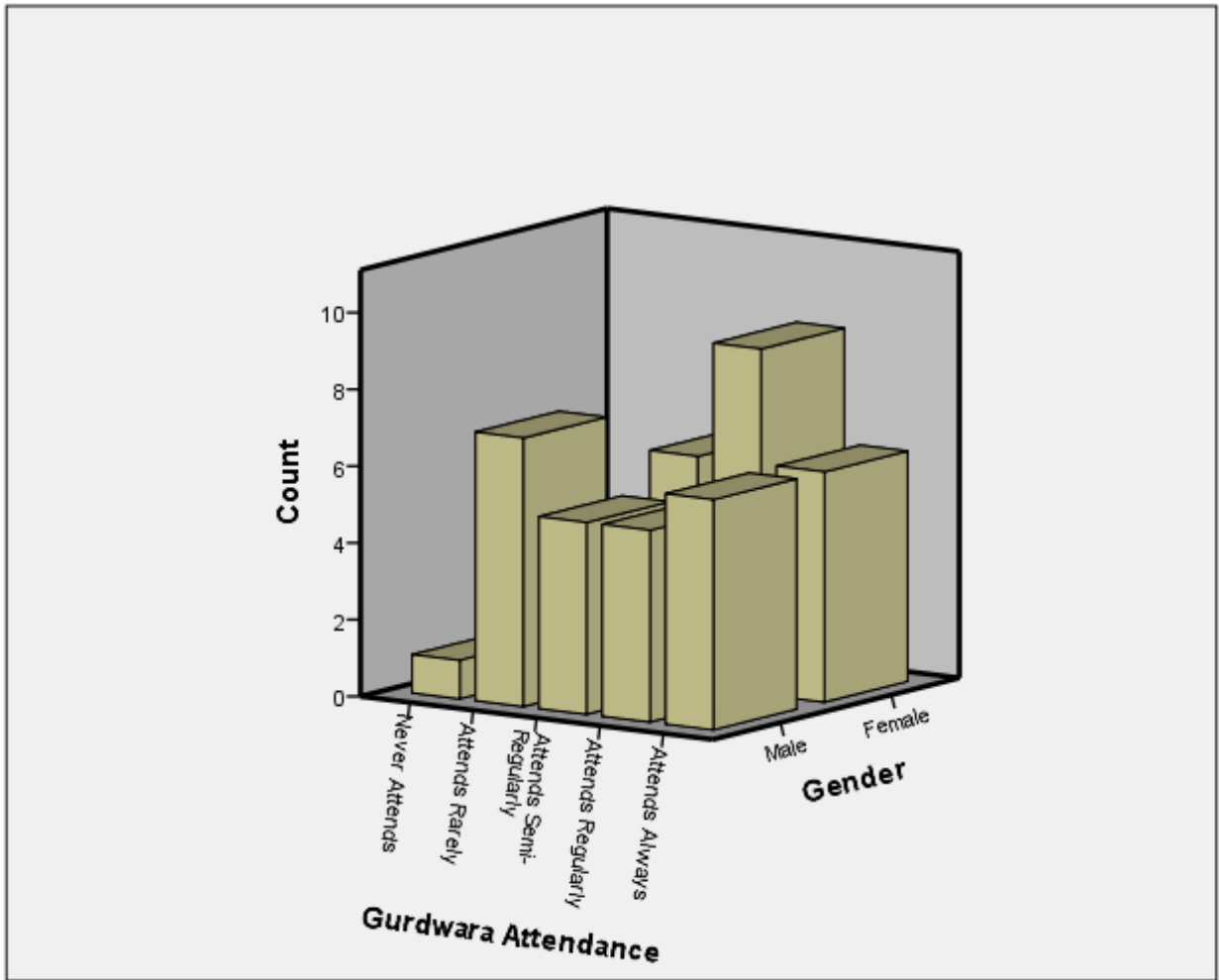


Figure 26. 3D Graph, Gurdwara Attendance * Gender.

Finally, those who self-identified as Sikhs only were far more likely to always attend the Gurdwara:

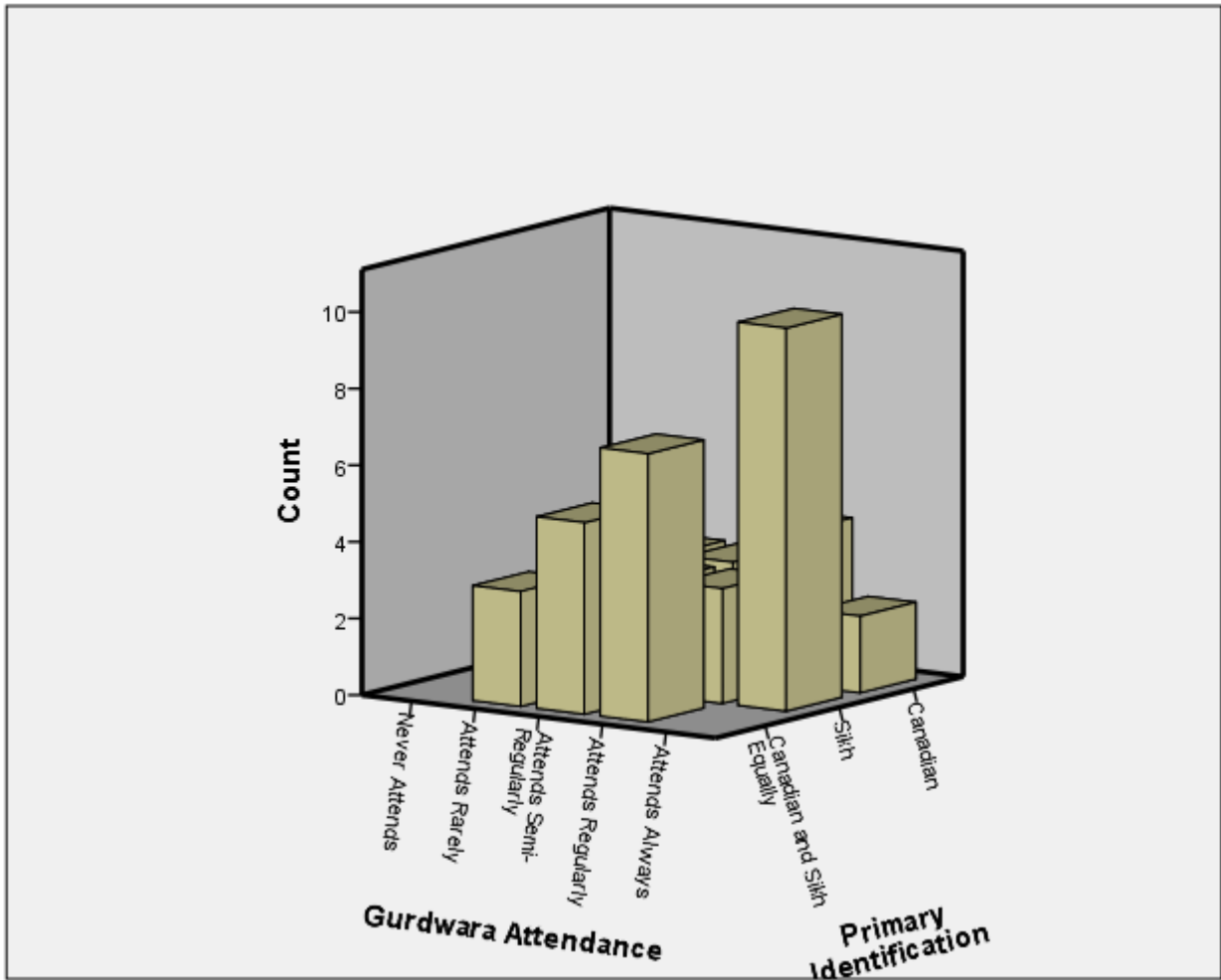


Figure 27. 3D Graph, Gurdwara Attendance * Primary Identification.

Women in the sample attended Gurdwara with the same kind of regularity regardless of whether they identified themselves as Sikh only, or Canadian and Sikh equally; however, women who described themselves as Canadian only were less likely to attend Gurdwara frequently.

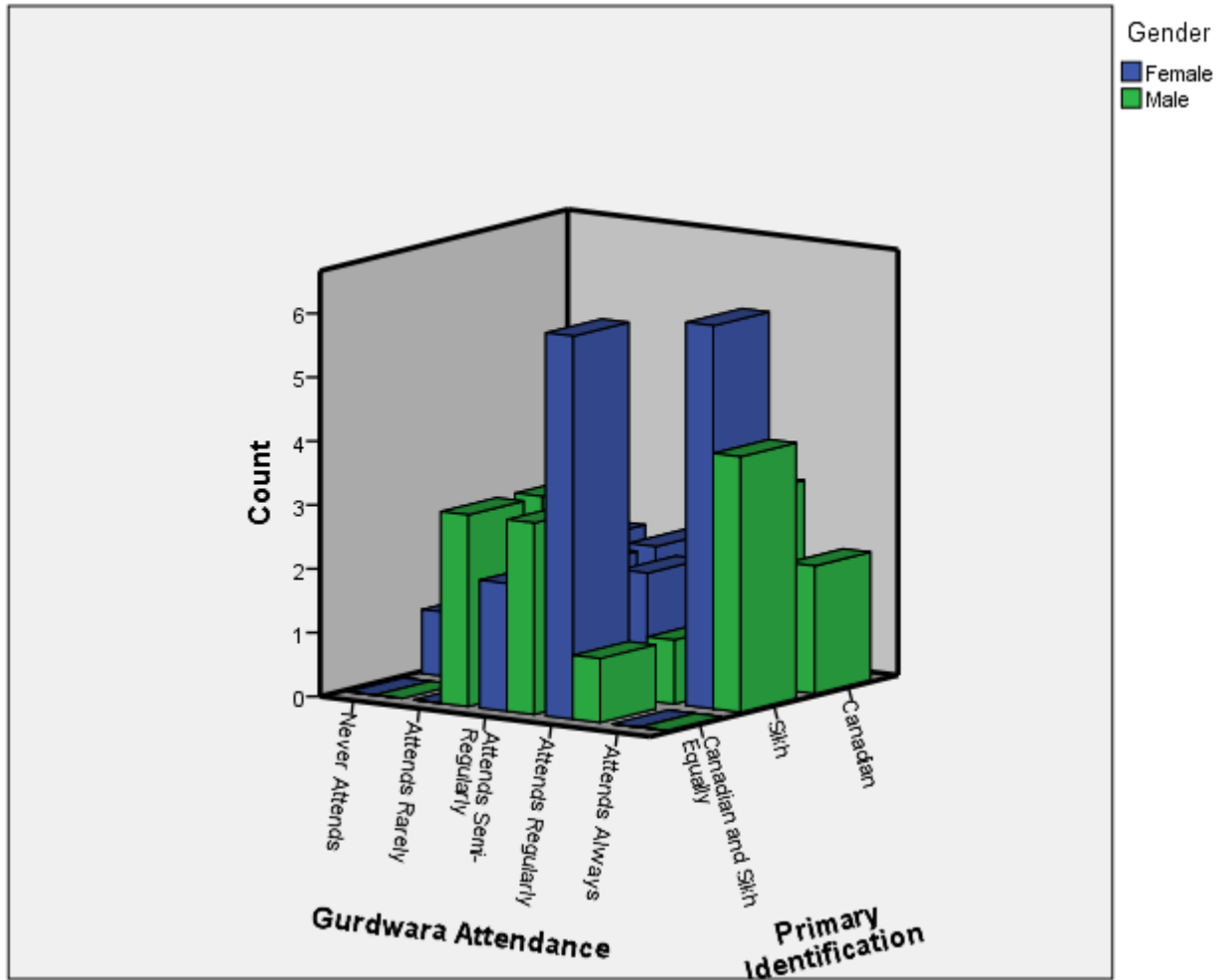


Figure 28. 3D Graph, Gurdwara Attendance * Primary Identification * Gender

Finally, it was observed that those who identified themselves as Sikh only and always attended the Gurdwara were more likely to be engaged with the Khalistan movement. Those who identified themselves as Canadian and Sikh equally, but who also attended the Gurdwara regularly, were also quite likely to be involved in Khalistani movements, but certainly not as likely as Sikh-only participants who always attended Gurdwara.

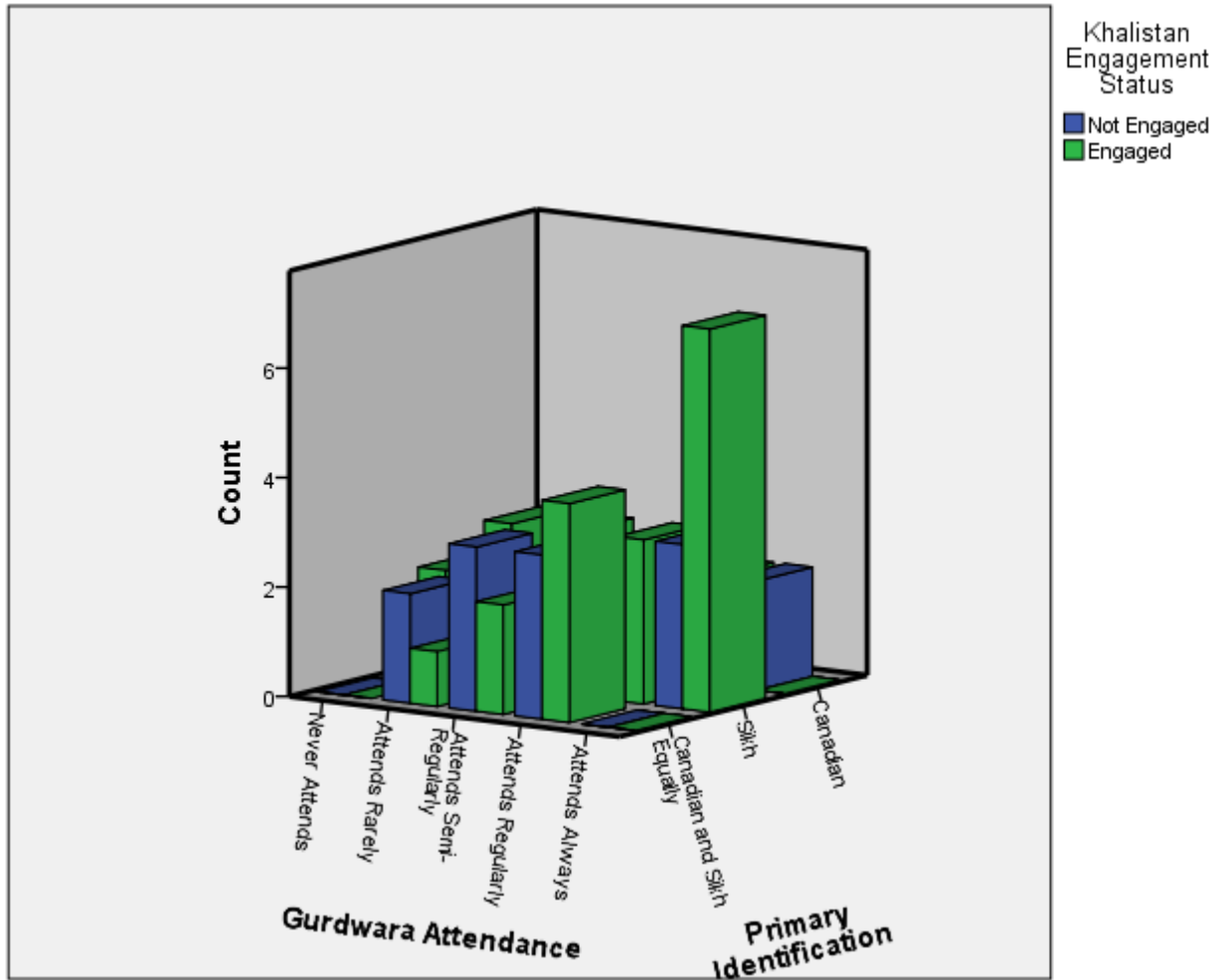


Figure 29. 3D Graph, Gurdwara Attendance * Primary Identification * Gender

The descriptive analyses allowed several useful conclusions to be reached about the sample, conclusions that both provided support for data analysis and generated insights of their own. It was observed that being male, identifying solely as a Sikh, and being a frequent attendee at Gurdwara were all positively correlated with being part of Khalistani movements, and, in particular, with conducting online or online plus real-world activism (no cases of real-world activism without matching online activism were identified in the sample).

Finally, an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was employed to quantify these interactions in a manner that allowed empirical conclusions to be reached about the influence of gender, age, religiosity, and national identity on participation in Khalistani movements. Because degree of involvement was a continuous variable, it was a legitimate dependent variable for the ANCOVA; the ANCOVA's sample size, however, did not achieve an α of .05, which was a limitation of this procedure.

Table 10

ANCOVA, RQ1

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects
Dependent Variable: Degree of Involvement with Khalistani Movements

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	78.417 ^a	41	1.913	.740	.743
Intercept	332.922	1	332.922	128.873	.000
Age	9.444	6	1.574	.609	.719
Gender	5.994	1	5.994	2.320	.179
Gurdwara	4.775	4	1.194	.462	.762
Identity	18.170	2	9.085	3.517	.098
age * gender	2.250	1	2.250	.871	.387
age * gurdwara	1.250	2	.625	.242	.792
age * identity	2.500	2	1.250	.484	.639
gender * gurdwara	.071	1	.071	.028	.873
gender * identity	.000	0	.	.	.
gurd * identity	.000	0	.	.	.
age * gender * gurdwara	.000	0	.	.	.
age * gender * identity	.000	0	.	.	.
age * gurdwara * identity	.000	0	.	.	.
gender * gurdwara * identity	.000	0	.	.	.
age * gender * gurdwara * identity	.000	0	.	.	.
Error	15.500	6	2.583		
Total	538.000	48			
Corrected Total	93.917	47			

A comparison of the p values suggests that both identity ($p = .098$) and gender ($p = .179$) were (at Alphas of .10 and .20, respectively), likely to predict the degree of involvement with Khalistani movements. Both gender and identity were independent factors; note that, when these two variables were treated as an interaction variable (identity * gender), the resulting p value was higher than either gender or identity. This analysis offers support for the claim that male Canadian Sikhs, and Canadian Sikhs who identify as Sikh-only, are more likely to participate in Khalistani movements. The ANCOVA and the previous analyses further established that maleness and Sikh-only identification were independent predictors of Khalistani movement participation. As discussed in the sixth chapter, this conclusion dovetails with some previous studies of transnational participation in separatist movements and has a sound theoretical basis.

Variations in gender were not meaningfully correlated with expressed reasons for participating in Khalistani movements. There were many comments made by men emphasising that participation in the movement was a way of expressing and upholding Sikh manhood. Meanwhile, there were many comments by women expressing that participation in the Khalistani movement was a means of 'being taken seriously' by other Sikhs. In addition, women felt that they were participating in the more gender-egalitarian environment of Internet activism. A similar interpretation applied to national identity. Sikhs who identified as Sikh-only or Sikh-primary saw participation in Khalistani movements as a way of reaffirming their chosen identity. For these participants, the influences of religion, family, identity, and activism combined to make participation in

the Khalistan movement a way of not only managing their own identities, but also managing interactions with other Sikh individuals.

Research Question Two: Overview and Answer

The second research question of the study was as follows: How does the Khalistan movement manage the Sikh identity vis-à-vis the non-Sikh realities of India and Canada? There was one case in the research question, namely participation in Khalistani movements as a pivot for the ordering and management of Sikh-non-Sikh identity interactions. The first level of analysis for the second research question was identical to the approach taken for the first research question, as the main case was explored through seven embedded cases. These embedded cases (which touched on behavioural antecedents, homeostatic forces, and interpretative meaning) were then sorted by the frames of religion, family, identity, and activism.

The analysis of this research question and its associated main case was not difficult, because the data were more limited than those collected for the first case and the first research question. The two main explanatory themes that emerged from the analysis of these data were: (a) Family influences that solidified Khalistan-involved youth's attitude of differentiation from other Canadians and (b) personal identity interpretations that led Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's to develop and reinforce a sense of differentiation from other Canadians.

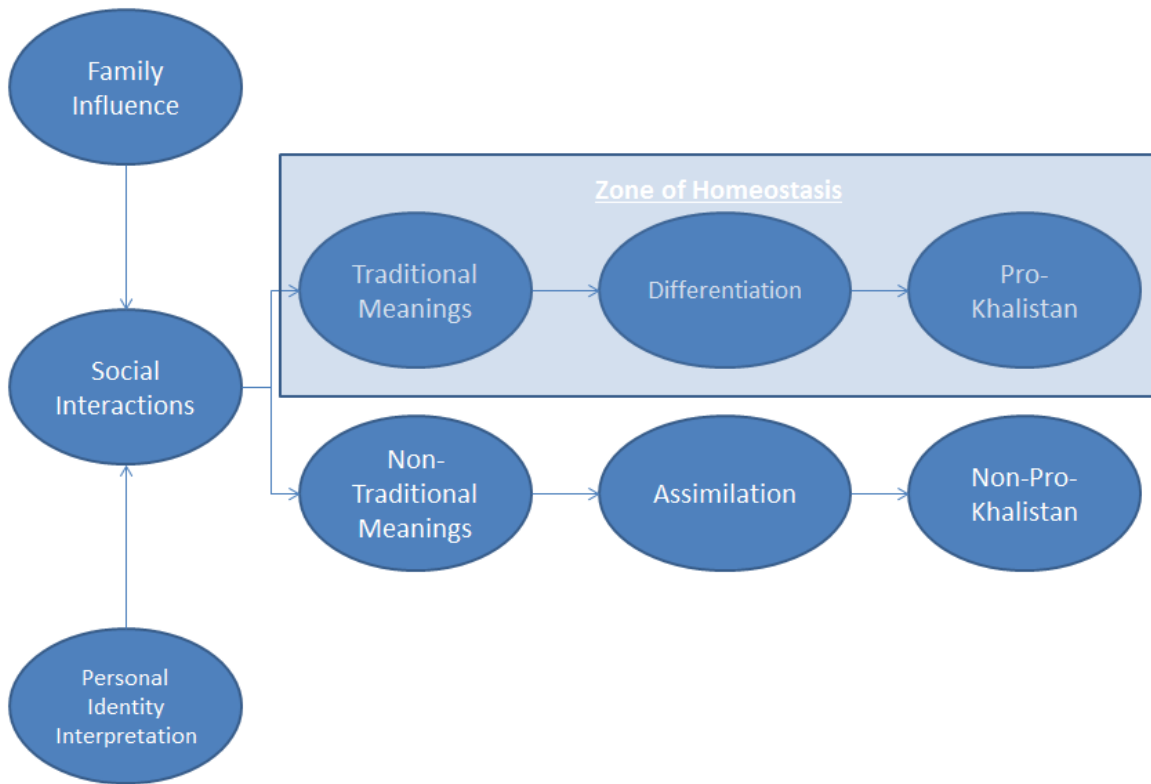


Figure 30. Symbolic Interactionism and Homeostatis in RQ2

The next chapter, the conclusion, contains a discussion of the theoretical and empirical dimensions of these findings with reference to past scholarship, as well as a utilisation of the findings to generate both practical and scholarly recommendations.

Chapter 6: Implications and Conclusions

The purpose of the concluding chapter of the study is to offer a summary of findings, note the limitations of the study, discuss implications based on past scholarship, suggest avenues for future research, explain how the research will be disseminated, and offer a personal reflection.

Summary of Findings

The first finding of the study was that family influences solidified Khalistan-involved youth's attitude of differentiation from other Canadians, and personal identity interpretations led Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's to develop and reinforce a sense of differentiation from other Canadians. Khalistan thus provided an important pivot of differentiation for these participants. The second finding of the study was that participation in Khalistani movements was discovered to be a means for men to build a masculine Sikh identity in interaction with each other, women to build a general social identity based on interactions with each other, and men and women to interact with each other on the basis of collective socio-religious identity exploration and affirmation. Participation in Khalistani movements also came to be understood as a means of expression and differentiation for Sikhs who identified as Sikh only, or equally Sikh and Canadian.

Limitations of the Study

The study has numerous limitations. One limitation of the study was that not all the main cases and embedded cases within the case study format yielded equally rich data. In particular, the first and third main cases yielded richer data than the second main

case; the richest data were collected for the first main case. Another limitation of the study was the treatment of gender. Gender became an important explanatory theme that emerged from the data; however, gender was not considered in depth in the literature review. Occasionally, case studies generate explanations or suggest themes that were not anticipated in advance by the researcher (Yin, 2009). This limitation of the study will be addressed by devoting more attention to gender in the discussion of past scholarship relevant to the study.

Connections to Past Scholarship

The findings of the study can be related to several categories of scholarship, including scholarship on: functional homeostasis, symbolic interactionism, diasporic and multicultural studies, and Sikh studies.

Connections to Functional Homeostasis

According to functionalism, collectives exist and prosper largely because of the benefits that they provide to individuals (Durkheim, 1951; Ludke & Obermiller, 2011). These benefits are characterised by stability; in other words, social benefits are predictable and overt. The homeostasis of a culture, or the culture's ability to remain differentiated from other cultures and to perpetuate its own core identity down through current and future generations, relies both on positive and negative benefits (Anderson, 2001). A positive benefit is one in which a culture makes a contribution to an individual's quality or quantity of life. An example of such a benefit is the way in which people who subscribe to certain religious beliefs are less likely to commit suicide (Durkheim, 1951). A negative benefit is one in which remaining within a culture prevents individuals from

being exposed to the consequences of leaving that culture, such as shaming, stigma, or related forms of social exclusion or punishment (Schulkin, 2011). Together, positive and negative benefits bind individuals to cultures. When individuals are bound tightly to culture, then cultures are able to perpetuate themselves; individuals pass on the requisite cultural codes to their own progeny, and thus culture survives indefinitely (Rapaille, 2007). The survival of a culture can be thought of as homeostasis, because the basic characteristics of the culture are unchanging, or at last subject to fairly limited change (Ludke & Obermiller, 2011). If a culture is not homeostatic, it is *prima facie* giving way to some other culture (Rapaille, 2007).

With these theoretical points in mind, the results of the study offer numerous means of engagement with functional homeostasis. First, the results of the study made it clear that Sikhism as a culture is self-perpetuating through a balance of both positive and negative benefits; however, these benefits appear to be distributed differentially with respect to gender. Data analysis revealed that there were more negative benefits for Sikh women, who, more so than Sikh men, were exhorted and reminded of both the importance of remaining endogamous and the penalties for not doing so. For several of the Sikh women in the study, participating in the Khalistan movement appeared to be a way to satisfy the enormous social (and, in particular, familial) pressure on them to enact, transmit, and model Sikhism. On the other hand, one of the main pressures on the men appeared to reflect a crisis of masculinity (which will be discussed further in the section on diasporic and multicultural scholarship). The men were enthusiastic about the

Khalistan movement because of the perceived masculinity associated with the movement; a positive benefit of Sikhism.

One of the implicit assumptions of functionalism in general, and functionalist theories of homeostasis in particular, is that successful cultures ultimately outweigh individuals (Schulkin, 2011). A culture, after all, reflects a fairly narrow spectrum of beliefs and behaviours (Rapaille, 2007) that are adopted to the exclusion of other beliefs and behaviours. In this sense, the spectrum of Sikhism is narrow indeed. As discussed in the literature review, Sikhism came under direct threat of assimilation or destruction during Mughal times, and the Sikh response to this threat was to embrace an extreme form of differentiation (Alam, 2009; Anooshahr, 2008; Blake, 1986; Farooqi, 2004). The so-called 5 Ks of Sikhism make Sikhs a visually distinct population even among peoples (such as South Asians) to whom they are genetically identical. In this context, the perpetuation of Sikhism requires a certain sacrifice of differentiation among individual Sikhs. In other words, for Sikhism to survive in a recognisable and continuous form, individual Sikhs have to make decisions that conform to the cultural code of Sikhism. Theory suggests that individuals would continue to make such culture-conforming decisions, which collectively result in cultural homeostasis, as long as the benefits of doing so outweigh the drawbacks (Ludke & Obermiller, 2011).

On the basis of the study results, it can be concluded that gender remains a powerful mechanism through which Sikh men and women are co-opted into perpetuating a demonstrative form of Sikhism, such as the kind of Sikhism that is committed to Khalistan. Historically, gender has long been at the center of Sikh homeostasis (Gayer,

2012; Kapur, 2010). When Sikhism took root in the Punjab in the 15th century, there was a standing practice of male Muslim elites (both those associated with the Delhi Sultanate and the Mughal Empire) intermarrying with non-Muslim women (Anooshahr, 2008; Balabanlilar, 2010; Blake, 1986). These Muslim elites were themselves originally descended from Arabs, Persians, Mongols, Turks, and other peoples non-indigenous to the Indian sub-continent (Dewhurst, 1931; Farooqi, 2004). Thus, over the course of centuries, there developed a demographic shift in which Muslim men increased the number of Muslims in India by marrying native women and raising resulting progeny as Muslims, whereas the accessibility of native Indian men to women of Muslim descent was far more difficult, unless the Indian man converted to Islam (Anooshahr, 2008; Balabanlilar, 2010).

Logically, therefore, a new cultural tradition such as Sikhism could only survive if it were able to create and enforce a form of endogamy that rivaled the endogamy of the Muslim Mughals. Simply put, the purpose of Sikh endogamy was to ensure the propagation of Sikhism by ensuring that (a) sufficient men were converted to Sikhism from other religions, (b) sufficient numbers of existing Sikhs reproduced, and (c) protecting the reproductive base of Sikhism by creating incentives and penalties for Sikh women to marry endogamously.

Over time, Sikh endogamy has come to be a very powerful force. Scholars have noted that Sikhism is often successful in creating a feeling of specialness among its adherents, a feeling that is reflected in Sikh liturgical and cultural practices promoting the idea of a chosen and blessed minority (Fenech, 2000; H. McLeod, 2008). At the same

time, there are steep social penalties for leaving Sikhism, particularly for women. Women who leave the religion may have a difficult time maintaining good relations with their Sikh relatives and friends, and may come to feel shunned and ostracized from the Sikh community (Chohan, 2009; Gayer, 2012; Kapur, 2010). Given that Sikhs often feel embattled and ill-at-ease in Western societies in which they are seen and treated as others, Sikh women in diasporic communities might be less likely to risk this kind of ostracism (Chohan, 2009). It can therefore be hypothesised that Sikh women engage in prototypically Sikh behaviours (including a commitment to Khalistan activism) as a means of embedding themselves further in the comfort of their existing cultural context, and professing distance from causes, relationships, and ways of thinking that might serve to alienate them from Sikh culture. However, as discussed later in the chapter, this hypothesis remains to be explored in greater depth by future researchers.

Connections to Symbolic Interactionism

The crux of symbolic interactionism is the claim that, “Only through imitation and opposition to others could one’s own conduct and expression gain any meaning for one’s self [...] the diameter of the self waxes and wanes with the field of social activity” (Mead, 2010, p. 10). In the context of this study, symbolic interactionism was chosen as a means of understanding how participation in Khalistani movements might serve as a means of creating a field of opposition between Sikhs and non-Sikhs, opposition that could result in differentiation for Sikhs. Based on the results of the data analysis, however, Khalistan did not appear to play this kind of role in the lives of young Canadian Sikhs. The reasons for participating in Khalistani movements were rooted more deeply in

the collective and individual identities of participants, who were not as concerned or aware of what non-Sikhs thought about them.

In retrospect, the applicability of symbolic interactionism to this study lay not in the context of opposition, but rather in the context of imitation. A recurrent theme in the data analysis was the importance of family behaviours, comments, and emotions, each of which contributed to younger Canadian Sikhs' desire to participate or not participate in Khalistani movements. It seems that Canadian Sikh youth calibrated their participation or non-participation in Khalistani movements based at least partly on the kinds of messages and feedback they received from their families, although the nature of the individual-family interaction remains to be explored more thoroughly in future studies.

It should be noted that, as per the schemas attached to each research question, symbolic interactionism and homeostasis could be easily integrated into a single theoretical structure. The core premise of symbolic interactionism is that actions arise from meanings ascribed to the objects of action, and that the nature of meanings arises from social interactions. Understood from this perspective, religion, family, activism, and identity all informed the interactions (both within families and in other contexts, such as schools) that gave rise to the meanings, which then informed the nature of the participants' engagement with Khalistan. The interactive process of meaning-making is illustrated in Figure 16 on p.188 in which the relations between the four main themes (religion, family, activism, and identity) and the emergent explanatory themes of national identity and gender help to determine meaning, which in turn determined action.

Data analysis revealed that gender and national identity were even more powerful explanatory frames than the four main themes of the study. Gender and national identity informed the ways in which religion, family, activism, and identity led to specific interactions, which generated meanings, that then informed actions related to Khalistan. When gender and national identity worked in ways that reinforced traditional Sikh interactions (traditional in the sense of inward-oriented, gendered, and conservative), Khalistani involvement was an end result. Thus, homeostatis could be used to explain the subset of symbolic interactionist outcomes that led to Khalistani involvement.

One of the complexities of symbolic interactions involves understanding exactly how interactions take place: In other words, what are the forces that inform interaction?

In this study, four main kinds of interaction were detected:

- Sikh youth interaction with same-gendered Sikh youth
- Sikh youth interaction with differently-gendered Sikh youth
- Sikh youth interaction with parents and other familiar authority figures
- Sikh youth interaction with non-Sikhs of any age or gender

The main purpose of the analysis was to find themes that could explain the content of these interactions. Gender and national identity became these themes. These two themes were important because they could be used to include various components of religion, family, activism, and identity in a single, more parsimonious explanatory framework (however, these themes should not be understood as discrete and self-contained. Gender, for example, emerges out of engagement with family, religion, and many other forces).

The proof of the interaction lies in the way in which, in the statistical analysis, the measures of gender and national identity were the best predictors of participation in Khalistani movements. The other measures of religion, identity, activism, and family in the study were not as strong as predictors. There is a clear conceptual relationship, however, between religion, identity, activism, and family on the one hand, and gender and national identity on the other. In other words, because gender and national identity clearly emerge from the other four themes, gender and national identity's explanatory power over Khalistani participation are also clues about the importance of religion, identity, activism, and family in this regard. While there is no clear map establishing the precise linkages between each of these variables, the combination of statistical and qualitative analysis for this study strongly suggests that gender and national identity are the concepts through which the relevance of religion, identity, activism, and family to Khalistani participation are expressed.

Connections to Diasporic and Multicultural Experiences

One of the characteristic experiences of diasporic living is a sense of pervasive powerlessness (Phillips, 2001). There are numerous ways in which diasporic communities, such as the Sikhs in Canada, respond to such powerlessness. One approach is to negotiate better terms of accommodation with the majority community or communities. There is extensive evidence that Canadian Sikhs have been active in this area. Canadian Sikhs have, for example, become deeply invested in Canadian politics and business (Hayford, 2001; Hudak, 2005; La Brack, 2000; Loveleen, 2014). These kinds of investments in Canadian civil society make it easier for Canadian Sikhs to become part of

the Canadian fabric, while also ensuring better institutional and social treatment for themselves.

Another approach to diasporic living is some form of rebellion, whether real or symbolic, designed to further differentiate the diasporic subject from surrounding people (Jaspal Singh, 2013). In multicultural and democratic societies such as Canada, the widespread perception that non-white, non-Christian Canadians can still succeed and be treated fairly in society somewhat restricts the scope of rebellious behaviour. In terms of the Khalistan movement, it is important to note that the vast majority of Sikh-committed violence has taken place in India, where there has been a long tradition of suppressing Sikh rights and freedoms. The sole act of terrorism known to be carried out by Canadian Sikhs, the Air India bombing, was framed by its perpetrators as an attack against India, not as an attack against Canada (Turlej, 2001).

None of the participants in this study expressed outright support for terrorist actions. Participation in the Khalistan movement offered youth some way in which to strengthen their identities and differentiate themselves from others in Canada's multicultural melting pot. For the men in the study, participation in Khalistani movements was frequently associated with some form of hyperbolic masculinity rooted in concepts of strength and fighting. It is worth noting that, even in democratic and multicultural societies, men from minority communities are often emasculated (Chua & Fujino, 2008). This emasculation takes many forms: Scholars have noted that, in North America, media tropes portray Asian men as effeminate and weak, which is part of a larger power structure designed to make Asian women more accessible to white North

American men (Chua & Fujino, 2008). One of the end results of this phenomenon is that the rate of intermarriage between Asian women and white North American men is significantly higher than the rate of intermarriage between Asian men and white North American women (Chua & Fujino, 2008). In this context, male and female participation in Khalistani movements can be understood partially as a Sikh-centric system of imitation and social reference. In other words, Khalistani movements represent a social sphere in which meanings, interpretations, and experiences are defined in a manner that is special to Sikhs, and which consequently brings them closer together. It is worth noting that several of the women in this study noted that they engaged in Khalistani movements in order to be able to moderate or otherwise respectfully interact with Sikh men, with whom they would not have egalitarian or fulfilling dealings. Therefore, one of the functions of Khalistani movements could be to enact a strictly Sikh sphere of symbolic interactionism. Khalistani movements could represent a social safe haven for Sikhs who can use such movements to interact with one another in identity-affirming ways.

One of the recurrent themes in multicultural studies is the confused sense of place and belonging common to many diasporic communities (Phillips, 2001). While the study was not specifically designed to address this point, the results indirectly revealed that young Sikhs indeed occupy an interstitial space. For example, many of the participants expressed extreme closeness to the Punjab, but had never been there.

Connections to Sikh Studies

The work of Jaspal Singh (2013) identified Khalistani rap as a means of empowerment for diasporic Sikh men. Singh's conclusion was affirmed by the findings

of the study. Sikh men were particularly apt to relate the Khalistani cause to their manhood, which in turn they interpreted from Sikhism's approach to gender roles. For Singh, the idea of diasporic masculinity was best understood in terms of crisis. Sikh men in the diaspora are likely to be part of a larger society in which they are marginalised; in particular, some of the Sikh men discussed in Singh's study reported not being taken seriously. For marginalized Sikhs such as these, participation in Khalistani movements could be a means of burnishing the credentials of masculinity; that is, signaling the fact that they are to be taken seriously, whether as potential purveyors of violence or something else. If this interpretation is accepted, then it stands to reason that marginalized Sikh men would telegraph their participation in Khalistani movements to society at large, but such a phenomenon was not observed in this study. Sikh men related participation in Khalistani movements to intra-Sikh issues, rather than to issues of winning certain credentials or repositioning themselves in mainstream Canadian society.

Directions for Future Research

There are a number of fruitful directions that can be taken by future researchers interested in Canadian Sikhs and their participation in Khalistani movements. One of the most interesting directions would be to consider the intersection between gender and Khalistani activism, from both male and female perspectives.

From the male perspective, one point of note is the close alignment between participation in Khalistani movements and a Sikh male sense of combined empowerment and frustration. In Sikh culture, every man is explicitly asked to be a warrior. Sikh men carry a dagger in acknowledgement of this social role. In India, the Sikh male warriors'

code is typically satisfied by enrollment in the Indian Army, in which the proportion of Sikhs is far higher than the proportion of Sikhs in India as a whole. For some decades now, however, the Khalistani movement has provided an alternate venue for Sikh male masculinity. This movement has been associated with numerous acts of terrorism; however, the vast majority of participants in Khalistani movements have not committed any acts of violence. For Sikh men in particular, the Khalistani movement appears to provide some outlet for martial empowerment rooted in an explicitly Sikh case. What scholars would do well to examine is exactly how and why Khalistani movements are meeting the psychic needs of Sikh men, particularly Sikh men in the diaspora. Do these men suffer what some scholars have called a “crisis of masculinity,” a crisis prompted by life in countries in which Asian men are invisible, belittled, or otherwise marginalised? Are these men unable to find outlets for their gender identity outside of affiliation with the Khalistan movement and other extremist or pseudo-extremist causes? Does participation in the Khalistan movement compensate for late marriage or other social and economic roadblocks increasingly faced by diasporic minority men in Canada? These questions remain to be explored at greater length in future studies.

In this study, one of the more interesting reasons that Sikh women gave for participating in Khalistani movements was to serve as a moderating force on Sikh men. This aspect of Sikh femininity, especially in the context of diasporic Sikh communities, does not appear to have been extensively explored by previous researchers. There is research on how social control helps to preserve endogamy among Sikh women, but Sikh

women's ability to serve as a countervailing force to hyperbolic Sikh masculinity could be an entirely novel research theme.

Dissemination of Research

The study will be disseminated in numerous ways. First, the study will be published as a dissertation and made available on microfilm. Second, I will use the study as a basis for writing a scholarly article that I will submit to appropriate scholarly journals. Third, I will attempt to make scholarly presentations based on either the dissertation or that the study that I craft from the study.

Personal Reflection

Sociologists, anthropologists, and other scholars who work on topics of local culture can gain a great deal by reflecting on their work, as such reflections offer the chance for methodological insights and professional growth (Brym & Lie, 2012; Colomy, 1990). Accordingly, I have chosen to conclude this study with a discussion of what I learned, how I was limited, and what I would do differently if I conducted the study again. This discussion will also provide a degree of transparency to readers who wish to understand the study in the context of the researcher's own identity.

First, as a Sikh, I approached the topic as both an insider and an outsider. Khalistan is a concept that has long been familiar to me. In carrying out the study, however, I came to develop a more acute awareness of exactly how Khalistan has been socially constructed, by its adherents as well as by its enemies. Indeed, one of the recurring tropes in the historiography of Khalistan is the constructed nature of Khalistan as a concept. Neither India nor Pakistan are acknowledged as socially constructed

communities, however. The difference between imagined entities such as Khalistan and actual political entities such as India is that political entities have armies, governments, and other means of claiming legitimacy. The historical study conducted for Chapter 2 revealed to me, however, that India has long been a contested and socially constructed place. From its earliest recorded history, India has been home to multiple, often warring polities that have claimed different swaths of the country in different ways. In Canada, the concept of Khalistan has been tainted by association with the Air India bombing and subsequent displays of Sikh nationalism that have unsettled many Canadians. However, the historical and intellectual provenance for Khalistan is unexpectedly strong. The Indian province of Punjab is demographically dominated by Sikhs, and has been home to large numbers of Sikhs for about four centuries. At one point in time, large parts of the Punjab were united as part of a Sikh state for nearly half a century. The Sikh claim to Khalistan is certainly no weaker than, say, the Bangladeshi claim to Bangladesh; in 1971, thanks largely to the interference of India, the former East Pakistan was able to secede from Pakistan and enter the world community as Bangladesh. The justification for statehood was that the Bengali people were being oppressed by West Pakistan, and that the Bengali people were culturally homogenous enough to warrant their own ethno-state. Given the changing tableau of the Indian map over the past century, the claim to Khalistan cannot be dismissed as a historic oddity or a fringe claim. However, I came to conclude that Khalistan is dismissed in this way because, despite its legitimacy as a historic idea, it is seen by Indian historians as a threat to the territorial integrity to India.

For Canadian observers Khalistan movement are seen as an expression of the same militarism that resulted in the most violent act of terrorism in Canadian history.

While the possibility of a dispassionate scholarly approach to any cultural topic has long been discredited, I believe that the study benefited from my ability to simultaneously understand (a) how and why Khalistan holds enormous symbolic importance for so many Sikhs and (b) how and why so many people who, if they are aware of Khalistan at all, associate this proposed state with terrorism. In the Canadian context, there is legitimacy to both viewpoints. Canada has recently come to be more forthright about recognising some of the aspirational desires of its own First Nations population, and, in terms of foreign policy, Canada has a long history of recognizing the aspirations of newly founded nation-states. In this context, Canada is certainly a safer and more accommodating place than India for expressing support for Khalistan.

Unfortunately, Canada was also home to a cell of terrorists who committed a particularly heinous bombing, one that has contributed to a growing distance between Sikh Canadians and non-Sikh Canadians. In this environment, it is all too easy to succumb to either the positive or negative narrative about Khalistan. While being aware of my own biases as a Sikh, I nonetheless engaged in conscientious exploration of my own viewpoints with a willingness to understand Khalistan from multiple points of view. I emerged with the conclusion that, regardless of how one classes the legitimacy of Khalistani movements that are active today, it is not intellectually honest to impugn Khalistan as a relatively recent movement, or as a movement with little basis in history.

A final reflection on the study has to do with the role of quantitative analysis as an adjunct to qualitative analysis. This study was conceived and carried out as a qualitative study; however, in coding the participants' responses, I came to realise the difficulty of identifying themes without some form of quantitative analysis. There are software packages, such as NVivo, that claim to offer qualitative analytical capabilities, but in reality NVivo utilizes quantitative methods such as word count frequency analysis. In coding the transcripts, I understood that each of the participants had situated himself or herself in terms of gender, national identification, and kind or degree of support for Khalistan. When I was attempting to reach conclusions from the data, I found it helpful to turn this kinds of information into numerical equivalents to reach conclusions that I could not have reached otherwise. For example, it rapidly became clear to me that both gender and national identification had some important role to play in determining the extent of participants' involvement with Khalistani movements. It was not until I conducted the ANOVA, however, that I was able to obtain an empirical understanding of this role, which I then used to ground my qualitative analysis.

If I had the opportunity to conduct the study again, I would approach it differently in a number of respects. First, I would probably have taken a grounded theory approach rather than a case study approach. In grounded theory, researchers begin with a foundation of data and then analyse the data in order to generate explanatory theories (Creswell, 2009). In this study, I began with a theoretical basis in both functionalism and symbolic interactionism, which prevented me from using the grounded theory approach. Even though my empirical results affirmed numerous theoretical aspects of both

functionalism and symbolic interactionism, I feel that the opportunity to generate more Sikh-specific theories of behaviour, interaction, and participation was lost. Both functionalism and symbolic interactionism are high-level theories; that is, theories that furnish general explanations of social phenomena. While conforming to the predictions of both functionalism and symbolic interactionism, the Sikhs in the sample also expressed ideas and evinced behaviours that seemed to require a more precise, locally grounded theory. For example, even though functionalism homeostasis predicts how and why individuals and cultures interact in order to ensure the perpetuation of a culture, this theory has little to say about why a population such as the Canadian Sikhs might seek homeostasis in a different manner than, say, Canadian Hindus. Grounded theory would have furnished one way of generating a Sikh-specific theory based on my data, but so might forms of functionalism and symbolic interactionism that have emerged in more anthropological settings, such as studies of Canadian Sikhs in particular. Unfortunately, the paucity of literature on Canadian Sikhs would have made the identification of more specific, community-based articulations of functionalism and symbolic interactionism difficult. It would certainly have been methodologically liberating to approach the study through grounded theory and, in retrospect, to compare the emergent theory with more general predictions made by functionalism and symbolic interactionism.

If I retained my basic approach to the study, I would still make some meaningful changes in my approach. In particular, I would reduce the number of embedded cases. I made an effort to account for as many permutations as I could identify. This approach was fruitful in its own way, because I was able to take a systematic approach to data

analysis. The existence of so many embedded cases rendered it difficult for me to identify or acknowledge data or interpretations that fell outside the embedded cases.

Perhaps the most important reflection that I made over the course of this study was that Sikhism in Canada, considered as an overall cultural system, continues to face many of the same issues that it has faced historically in India. Of course, Canadian Sikhs possess the same rights and opportunities as any other citizens or residents of Canada, and many Canadian Sikhs have been able to reach high positions in politics, business, and other endeavours. Just as in ancient India, Sikhs in Canada face the pressure of being highly visible and differentiated minorities in a larger culture that threatens to ruin the delicate homeostasis of Sikhism. In the case of Mughal India, Sikh homeostasis was threatened primarily by Muslim unease at coexisting with non-Muslims who resisted assimilation; Muslim elites in the Mughal Empire tried to disrupt Sikh homeostasis through military means, occasionally resorting to committing atrocities among the civilian Sikh population. In independent, post-1947 India, Sikhs were not subjected to the same kinds of martial harassment as under the Mughal Empire. They were, however, disenfranchised by the federal government's pointed decisions to revoke regional sovereignty and to de-emphasise Punjabi as a language of culture and administration among Sikhs.

In contemporary Canada, Sikh homeostasis is not threatened in any organised way by the state. Indeed, thanks to recent court decisions, Sikh men's right to wear daggers and turbans has been recognised to prevail over existing Canadian public safety laws. The danger to Sikh homeostasis in Canada seems to me to be more of an environmental

danger. Canadian society is, in its own way, as exogamous and open as Sikh society is endogamous and closed. For Sikhism to survive in the fairly hostile environment of Mughal India, and later republican India, it had to differentiate itself radically from Islam and Hinduism. In the very early days of Sikhism—for example, in the time of Guru Nanak—there was a remarkable syncretism at play through Northern India which resulted in the Bhakti movement and the kinds of theological cross-fertilizations that resulted in Sikhism itself. After its formation, Sikhism’s survival required a rejection of both Bhakti-style syncretism and assimilation into the orthodoxy of Hinduism or Islam. This dynamic seems to have pushed Sikhism closer to being a closed society over time. The Canadian multicultural context is, in some ways, similar to the Bhakti environment of medieval northern India; many Canadians also espouse the interweaving of religious traditions, the search for personal religious truth disconnected from orthodoxy, and other principles that recollect the Bhakti era. In such an environment, Sikhs will never be formally threatened or pressured in regards to their religion, but they will face enormous pressures to fit in. These pressures are ultimately hedonic pressures; remaining so visibly ‘other’, even in a multicultural society, can exert a heavy psychic burden that, in the case of Sikhs, can be reduced somewhat through more secular behaviour, orientations, and dress.

At the same time that Canada poses a special challenge to Sikhs, it also poses a unique opportunity. Never since the time of the Sikh Empire have so many Sikhs lived under a polity in which there are no substantial obstacles to the practice of Sikhism. Sikhs in Canada are freed from the burden of having to struggle to survive in the teeth of

immense social and institutional opposition and repression. So much of the cultural development of Sikhism has taken place in the context of hostility that, at least for some of the Sikhs I interviewed, there is some confusion over how to live as Sikhs in the absence of hostility. Some Sikh men reading their history appear to see themselves as somehow disadvantaged by the absence of a military wing of Sikhism; for these men—several of whom I interviewed—the various Khalistan movements provide an anchor for a Sikh male identity that is otherwise in crisis. For perspective, Sikh men took on warrior identities at a very specific point in Sikh history in which the religious was under an existential threat from the Mughals. This warrior identity calcified and became part of the cultural DNA of Sikhism under the final Gurus of the Sikhs. There does not appear to be any insuperable theological reason that Sikh men cannot discover or explore other kinds of identities for themselves, however. In Canada, where Sikhism is not under institutional or populist attack, Sikh men are in fact liberated from their historical duty of soldiery; there is an opportunity for these men to develop and express themselves in non-martial ways.

Canada might prove to be the venue in which a truly contemporary Sikhism emerges. Freed from the historical burdens of conflict, and able to get a fair shake in an open society, Canadian Sikhs can develop Sikh culture in a new manner. Of course, in some important respects, Sikhism is a closed belief system; the Guru Granth Sahib cannot be altered or added to in any way. The way in which Sikhs choose to practice Sikhism remains very much open, however. In some respects, the Khalistan movement forecloses on this openness: By tying Canadian Sikhs back to the context of land claims in the

Punjab, the Khalistan movement is also preventing Canadian Sikhs from fully engaging their current contexts. During the interviews, I was impressed with the fact that, even among the participants involved in Khalistani movements, so few people reported having lived in or being born in the Punjab. For these Sikhs, the everyday reality is Canada; the role of Khalistan and the Punjab has more to do with language, liturgy, and family culture. In this context, the kind of embedded veneration of the Punjab found in Khalistani movements is a force that prevents Canadian Sikhs from utilising the Canadian vernacular as a vehicle for cultural expression. It remains to be seen whether Canadian Sikhs will take advantage of this opportunity or neglect it.

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Appendix A: Raw Data

	Embedded Case: Antecedents arising within Sikh households that colour Sikh youth's decisions to participate in Khalistani movements.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	<p>Reading Guru Granth Sahib at home.</p> <p>Thinking about Sikh religion at home.</p>	<p>“I usually go on Khalistan Web sites after my family has religious talks. It's part of a process, I think. My dad influences me a lot, I think I'm closer to him because of my involvement with Khalistan.”</p> <p>“Sometimes I read the Guru Granth Sahib in my room and wonder why we Sikhs don't have our own place in the world, you know, a country. So, yeah, I guess those two things are connected in my mind. I talk about it a lot with my brothers.”</p>
Family	<p>Parental or other family member making positive comment vis-à-vis Khalistan in the home.</p> <p>Seeing Khalistani paraphernalia in house.</p>	<p>“My dad talks about Khalistan a lot. He's been an influence in my thinking, for sure.”</p> <p>“I've seen booklets and magazines about Khalistan. My brother usually brings them home, and I read them too.”</p>
Identity	<p>Recurring positive thoughts (occurring at home) about personal Sikh identity.</p> <p>Recurring positive thoughts (occurring at home) about a Sikh homeland, real or imagined.</p>	<p>“Sometimes I think Khalistan would be like a big version of my family. Just a place where we Sikhs could get together, be ourselves, support each other. Like it is with me and my brothers and my dad.”</p>

	Embedded Case: Antecedents arising within Sikh households that colour Sikh youth's decisions to participate in Khalistani movements.	Selected Illustrative Comments
	Recurring critical thoughts (occurring at home) about Indian loyalism.	“My older brothers and my dad don't identify as Indian, even though they were born there. It's like calling yourself an Indian when you're a Sikh is a sellout. I think that's one reason I'm involved with the [Khalistan] movement.
Activism	<p>Seeing parent or other family member active in Khalistani movement.</p> <p>Reading Khalistani activist material (print) in home setting.</p> <p>Reading Khalistani activist material (online) in home setting.</p>	<p>“It's definitely a family affair. I have multiple family members involved [in the Khalistan] movement. I don't think I'd be involved if they weren't involved.”</p> <p>“I've seen booklets and magazines about Khalistan. My brother usually brings them home, and I read them too.”</p> <p>“I do most of Web activism from home. I just feel safer and more supported there.”</p>

Analysis of RQ1, Case 1, Embedded Case 2

	Embedded Case: Antecedents arising in other Sikh settings that colour Sikh youth's decisions to participate in Khalistani movements.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	<p>Reading Guru Granth Sahib at Gurdwara.</p> <p>Thinking about Sikh religion at Gurdwara.</p> <p>Participating in devotional activities at Sikh gatherings.</p> <p>Pro-Khalistani comments by a religious figure affiliated with a Sikh school or club.</p>	<p>“Yeah, when I’m at the Gurdwara, that’s when I see real community, and I think Khalistan is community, basically. Being involved in the Gurdwara makes me want to be involved in Khalistan somehow.”</p> <p>“At our school, Khalistan is definitely promoted. That’s probably one reason I see the formation of Khalistan as a religious duty.”</p>
Family	<p>Parental or other family member making positive comments vis-à-vis Khalistan in the Gurdwara.</p> <p>Parental or other family member making positive comment vis-à-vis Khalistan in another devotional setting.</p>	<p>“When I see my dad speak up about Khalistan at the Gurdwara and when we’re in the community, you know, talking about religion, that gets me excited about participating too.”</p> <p>“I think it’s about finding myself as a Sikh woman. The values my mom has, the values my dad has, it’s a way of connecting with them and kind of maintaining my identity. I don’t know if I really expect my work to have a real political impact, but I see how it defines me inside my family and with my Sikh friends.”</p>

	Embedded Case: Antecedents arising in other Sikh settings that colour Sikh youth's decisions to participate in Khalistani movements.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Identity	<p>Recurring positive thoughts (occurring at Gurdwara) about personal Sikh identity.</p> <p>Recurring positive thoughts (occurring at Gurdwara) about a Sikh homeland, real or imagined.</p> <p>Recurring critical thoughts (occurring at Gurdwara) about Indian loyalism.</p> <p>Recurring positive thoughts (occurring in a devotional setting) about personal Sikh identity.</p> <p>Recurring positive thoughts (occurring in a devotional setting) about a Sikh homeland, real or imagined.</p> <p>Recurring critical thoughts (occurring in a devotional setting) about Indian loyalism.</p>	<p>“The Gurdwara’s like a little Khalistan. That’s what it would be like if we had a country.”</p> <p>“Being in the Gurdwara makes me feel clean, pure, like a real Sikh. In Khalistan, I think every Sikh could feel like that all the time.”</p> <p>“As a girl, I think one of the few times I feel I’m taken seriously if when I get into conversations about Khalistan. I think a lot of my positive feelings about Khalistan are positive feelings about sharing something with other Sikhs, especially boys and men who wouldn’t otherwise listen to me, you know?”</p>
Activism	<p>Seeing Khalistani activism in a Gurdwara.</p> <p>Seeing Khalistani activism in another devotional setting.</p>	<p>“There’s a lot of pro-Khalistan stuff at the Gurdwara. You either get pulled in or put off by it.”</p>

	Embedded Case: Antecedents arising in non-Sikh settings that colour Sikh youth's decisions to participate in Khalistani movements.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	<p>Reading Guru Granth Sahib in general setting.</p> <p>Thinking about Sikh religion in public setting</p>	<p>“Sometimes I’ll be in a park or train just thinking about Sikhism and I kind of fantasize about how cool it would be to have our own country.”</p>
Family	<i>None noted</i>	
Identity	<p>Recurring positive thoughts (occurring in a general location) about personal Sikh identity.</p> <p>Recurring positive thoughts (occurring in a general location) about a Sikh homeland, real or imagined.</p> <p>Recurring critical thoughts (occurring in a general location) about Indian loyalism.</p>	<p>“I kind of feel vulnerable as a girl, like my identity is under threat in Canadian society. People don’t understand, or they want me to act more Canadian, or whatever. Whenever I feel that, I find myself thinking a lot about Khalistan and how I’d fit in there, what it would be like.”</p> <p>“When I see Indians around, I just remember how little I have in common with them, and that gets me more pumped about the idea of Khalistan.”</p>
Activism	<p>Seeing general social justice activism in real life (IRL).</p> <p>Seeing general social justice activism in an online setting.</p>	<p>“I’m involved in a lot of social justice stuff, but it doesn’t address all my needs as a Sikh woman. My causes, sure, I work for them, but they remind me how important it is to work for Khalistan.”</p> <p>“I figure, everyone’s got causes online, there are so many sites I come across. Why don’t we Sikhs get together and make</p>

Embedded Case: Antecedents arising in non-Sikh settings that colour Sikh youth's decisions to participate in Khalistani movements.	Selected Illustrative Comments
	<p>Khalistan a real online presence.”</p> <p>“Something cool about online activism is that you cross a lot of gender boundaries. That’s true for the Khalistani websites too. I feel taken seriously, I’m able to communicate equally with men, which is something that could never happen at home or at the Gurdwara.</p>

	Embedded Case: Antecedents arising within Sikh households that colour Sikh youth's decisions to not participate in Khalistani movements.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	<p>Reading Guru Granth Sahib at home.</p> <p>Thinking about Sikh religion at home.</p>	<p>"I just don't get the leap from the Guru Granth Sahib to Khalistan. I do so much reading and home and I don't make the connection, I really don't."</p>
Family	<p>Parental or other family member making negative comment vis-à-vis Khalistan in the home.</p> <p>Seeing Indian (non-Sikh) paraphernalia in house.</p>	<p>"I want to say something, I think that Khalistan is kind of an excuse for patriarchy. When I hear my dad talking about it, I don't connect, at least not as a woman."</p> <p>"I think India's big enough to include us. I'm always moved when I see Indian movies—and it'll be all of us watching as a family. No one's thinking, 'Oh, we don't come from there, we hate it.'"</p>
Identity	<p>Recurring negative thoughts (occurring at home) about personal Sikh identity.</p> <p>Recurring negative thoughts (occurring at home) about a Sikh homeland, real or imagined.</p> <p>Recurring positive thoughts (occurring at home) about Indian loyalism.</p>	<p>"It can be kind of narrow sometimes. Like we're so defined, we dress like this, we look like this, we believe this. It's Khalistan in our house but Canada outside. I don't like that feeling."</p> <p>"I think India's big enough to include us. I'm always moved when I see Indian movies—and it'll be all of us watching as a family. No one's thinking, 'Oh, we don't come from there, we</p>

	Embedded Case: Antecedents arising within Sikh households that colour Sikh youth's decisions to not participate in Khalistani movements.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Activism	<p>Seeing parent or other family member active in activism based on non-separatism.</p> <p>Reading about non-violent activism (online) in home setting</p>	<p>hate it.””</p> <p>“I've seen my brother, he kind of uses it [involvement in the Khalistan movement] to indulge some scary thoughts and attitudes. That doesn't appeal to me. It's not that I find Khalistan a bad goal, but I don't like the way the men are approaching it. When I go online, I have an easier time getting Sikh guys to kind of moderate themselves.”</p> <p>“In my room I surf social justice sites and I'll always impressed by nonviolence. I don't think Khalistan embodies that ideal right now, that's why I keep my distance.”</p>

	Embedded Case: Antecedents arising in other Sikh settings that colour Sikh youth's decisions to not participate in Khalistani movements.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	<p>Reading Guru Granth Sahib at Gurdwara.</p> <p>Thinking about Sikh religion at Gurdwara.</p> <p>Participating in devotional activities at Sikh gatherings.</p> <p>Anti-Khalistani comments by a religious figure affiliated with a Sikh school or club.</p>	<p>“At our school, I’ve heard some good reasons why focusing on Khalistan isn’t a service to us as Sikhs.”</p> <p>“The Gurdwara’s peaceful, meditative. Khalistan, well, it can kind of a noisy, angry movement! I liked my identity in the Gurdwara better than my identity in the Khalistan movement, so I quit [the movement].”</p>
Family	<p>Parental or other family member making negative comments vis-à-vis Khalistan in the Gurdwara.</p> <p>Parental or other family member making negative comment vis-à-vis Khalistan in another devotional setting.</p>	<p>“My family’s never been on the side of Khalistan in public debates.”</p>
Identity	<i>None noted.</i>	
Activism	<i>None noted.</i>	

	Embedded Case: Antecedents arising in non-Sikh settings that colour Sikh youth's decisions to not participate in Khalistani movements.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	<p>Reading Guru Granth Sahib in general setting.</p> <p>Thinking about Sikh religion in a general setting.</p>	<p>"I'll be reading the Grant Sahib in the same library as people who're reading the Qur'an, the Bible, whatever, and I think, we should really all live together, like we do now in Canada. Building Khalistan knocks down that togetherness."</p>
Family	<i>None noted</i>	
Identity	<p>Recurring negative thoughts (occurring in a general location) about personal Sikh identity.</p> <p>Recurring negative thoughts (occurring in a general location) about a Sikh homeland, real or imagined.</p> <p>Recurring positive thoughts (occurring in a general location) about Indian loyalism.</p>	<p>"This is kind of painful to say, but I don't really embrace my identity as a Sikh woman. I see myself as a Canadian. Most of my life, I'm not around Sikhs. For me, the idea of Khalistan makes sense in terms of self-determination, but participating would lock me in to an identity that isn't close to me anymore."</p>
Activism	Seeing pro-Indian activism in a general setting.	<p>"I've been to Indian events and, frankly, I think the country's going in a good direction. I don't know what we gain by separating."</p>

	Embedded Case: Homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour Sikh youth's participation in Khalistani movements.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	<p>Religious figure tying Khalistani participation to Sikh religious and social responsibility.</p> <p>Guru Granth Sahib as inspiration for Sikh continuity through independence.</p> <p>Religious literature as inspiration for Sikh continuity through independence.</p>	<p>“Yeah, when I’m at the Gurdwara, that’s when I see real community, and I think Khalistan is community, basically. Being involved in the Gurdwara makes me want to be involved in Khalistan somehow.”</p> <p>“At our school, Khalistan is definitely promoted. That’s probably one reason I see the formation of Khalistan as a religious duty.”</p>
Family	<p>Parental figure or other family member requiring prototypical Sikh behaviour.</p> <p>Parental figure or other family member shaming purportedly non-Sikh behaviour.</p>	<p>“[Khalistan] activism is a way of respecting my family, showing that I’m plugged in to their values and determined to keep them going.”</p> <p>“Getting involved [in Khalistan movements] kind of builds my identity—my credentials, you know? Otherwise I think there’s more scrutiny and pressure on me because I’m a girl.”</p>
Identity	<p>Recurring thoughts about playing a role in ensuring the continuity of Sikh tradition.</p>	<p>“As a Sikh woman, I feel there’s pressure on me mainly to give birth to other Sikhs, to be this figure in the background. But participating [in Khalistani movements] lets me feel like I’m doing something more for our tradition, our religion.”</p>

	Embedded Case: Homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour Sikh youth's participation in Khalistani movements.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Activism	Observing Sikh activism that prioritises continuity of Sikh community.	“It’s scary thinking we [Sikhs] could disappear from the world, because then it’s like I never existed either. Activism gives me that sense that we’ll always be here, living as Sikhs.”

	Embedded Case: Homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour Sikh youth's non-participation in Khalistani movements.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	<p>Religious figure de-emphasising Khalistan.</p> <p>Guru Granth Sahib as inspiration for practicing Sikhism in all circumstances.</p> <p>Religious literature as inspiration for Sikh continuity without independence.</p>	<p>“Sikhs have been persecuted and murdered for centuries. In all that time, adversity just made us stronger. When I look at that history, when I read the Guru Granth Sahib, I just think how we don't need a nation to be Sikhs. In fact, I think we're here as Sikhs precisely because we've had to fight so hard. That's why I don't support Khalistan.</p>
Family	<i>None noted.</i>	
Identity	<i>None noted.</i>	
Activism	Observing Sikh activism related to serving others, with no connection to Khalistan.	<p>“We already have such a strong tradition of serving others. We already have a social identity. What's to be gained by building Khalistan, even if we could? I say, let's concentrate on what we already have.”</p>

	Embedded Case: Non-homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour Sikh youth's participation in Khalistani movements.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	<i>None noted.</i>	
Family	<i>None noted.</i>	
Identity	<i>None noted.</i>	
Activism	<i>None noted.</i>	

	Embedded Case: Non-homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour Sikh youth's non-participation in Khalistani movements.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	Guru Granth Sahib as emphasising syncretism, which then militates against the idea of Khalistan.	“I read the Guru Granth Sahib, and what impresses me is that there's actual material in there from Muslim writers, people like Kabir. We're like a salad bar. We have a little bit of Islam, a little bit of Hinduism. We put it together and added some flair of our own. When I think about that, then I feel that we don't need a separate state. We're about putting things together, not separating.”
Family	Mixed families and their influence.	“God, it's really fluid, our situation. My dad's an Africa-raised Sikh married to a white Canadian. I kind of fell between the cracks in terms of who I am. We have all these allegiances, all these connections, all these forces taking us different places. In all of that, it's kind of bizarre to think I could be advocating for the formation of a state in India.”
Identity	Controversy within the Sikh community renders Khalistan a non-core issue.	“What does it mean to be Sikh? I hear a dozen ideas every day. Some people are down with traditions, others say we have to adapt with the times. Plus, with Khalistan, there's like a huge debate within the community. There's no consensus, and that leads me to believe that fighting for Khalistan isn't what I'd call a

	Embedded Case: Non-homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour Sikh youth's non-participation in Khalistani movements.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Activism	<i>None noted.</i>	core issue.”

	Embedded Case: Loyalist versus separatist themes as inspiration for participation in Khalistani movements.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	<p>Reading religious literature emphasising holy duty of independence.</p> <p>Observing discussions in Gurdwara about relation between separatism and Sikh piety.</p>	<p>“I think of Khalistan not as a political but as a religious imperative. If you take Sikhism seriously as a religion, then you must believe that Sikhs have to have some kind of autonomy. Otherwise how can be guarantee that Sikhism survives? That’s why I support separatism.”</p> <p>“In the Gurdwara, we talk all the time about how we are already separate from Hindus and Muslims, and therefore we should be separate from politically in India.”</p>
Family	<p>Observing parental or family member support for separatism.</p> <p>Observing parental or family member critique of loyalism.</p>	<p>“For my parents, the idea of being an Indian is not attractive, because both the Muslims and the Hindus oppressed us.”</p> <p>“I hear a lot of bad-mouthing of India at the dinner table. I can’t say I’ve agreed with all of it, but it kind of shaped my stance on separatism.”</p>
Identity	<p>Seeing oneself as distinct from the Indian tradition.</p> <p>Seeing oneself as part of a specifically Sikh tradition.</p>	<p>“You’ve used the word <i>separatism</i> in opposition to <i>loyalism</i> to India. But I think what I’m doing is just being loyal to the Sikh tradition.”</p>

	Embedded Case: Loyalist versus separatist themes as inspiration for participation in Khalistani movements.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Activism	<p>Positive response to separatist activism.</p> <p>Negative response to loyalist activism.</p>	<p>“If you want to ask me what you think I’m separating from, then I’d tell you that I don’t like this idea of this passive Sikhism that I see around me all the time. Sikh men are supposed to be warriors. How are we going to be warriors if we don’t have anything to fight for? The fight for Khalistan, that’s about Sikhism plus manhood, you know?”</p> <p>“Activism kind of sold me on the idea of a separate state.”</p> <p>“Some of the pro-Hindu activism out there is really extreme. It gets me scared for what Hindus might do to Sikhs, and that’s why I think we ought to separate.”</p>

	Embedded Case: Loyalist versus separatist themes as inspiration for non-participation in Khalistani movements.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	Observing discussions in Gurdwara about importance of loyalism.	“Believe it or not, not everyone in the Gurdwara is pro-Khalistan, anti-India. We’ve had a moderate influence here. Lots of people talking about why staying with India is the best move, the best chance for Sikhs back on the Subcontinent.”
Family	Observing parental or family member critique of separatism. Observing parental or family member support for loyalism.	“It’s kind of a boy’s thing. When my dad and brothers get heated about it, my mom and sisters kind of drift away. It’s just two different ideas about Sikh identity, really. As a woman, I think I have a bias to looking for opportunities to integrate and synthesize. And the men are looking for more extreme solutions.”
Identity	Seeing oneself as part of the broader Indian tradition.	“Maybe this makes me sort of a sellout, but I don’t really see why I shouldn’t just think of myself as an Indian. That’s who I am. I was born in India and there are thousands of religious beliefs and communities there. We’re all Indians.”
Activism	Negative response to separatist activism. Positive response to loyalist activism.	“Separatist activism can be frightening. There’s a lot of extremism. Sometimes I think it’s a bunch of macho posturing bullshit, excuse me. I just don’t connect to any of that—whether as a person, a woman, a

Embedded Case: Loyalist versus separatist themes as inspiration for non-participation in Khalistani movements.

Selected Illustrative Comments

Canadian, whatever.”

“There are good arguments online for why India should hold together as a country. Look at Iraq. Breaking a country up into ethnic or religious lines is dangerous for everyone. I prefer the idea of working to build a more inclusive India.”

	Embedded Case: Shared meaning within the Sikh community as inspiration for participation in Khalistani movements.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	Reading Guru Granth Sahib as supporting cause of Sikh independence.	“Why are we going on about Khalistan? In my opinion, it’s because you can’t read the Guru Granth Sahib and come away with the conclusion that Sikhs should just assimilate into wherever they are.”
Family	Observing family associations of Sikh independence with positive outcomes for Sikhs.	“Whenever we talk about history of the Sikhs, at least in my family, we all agree that the Sikh Empire was the high point. When we were independent, we could really express ourselves as Sikhs. So that’s what Khalistan means to me.”
Identity	Believing personal Sikh identity to be strengthened by commitment to Khalistan.	<p>“What does it mean to be a Sikh man? To me, it means being ready to fight, being ready to die, for what you believe in. Not everyone’s going to die for Khalistan, and maybe you don’t want to, but, as a Sikh man, it’s the closest thing we have to going close to war.”</p> <p>“What Khalistan means to me? I’d say it’s a community. A community of committed men and women who’re online and in the real world, trying to bring about positive change for our community. And what community means to me is a fair, supportive place. It’s a place where I can be taken seriously as a woman and a Sikh, two aspects of my identity that aren’t always taken seriously outside that context.”</p>

	Embedded Case: Shared meaning within the Sikh community as inspiration for participation in Khalistani movements.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Activism	Believing Khalistani activism to represent a positive Sikh community.	“What Khalistan means to me? I’d say it’s a community. A community of committed men and women who’re online and in the real world, trying to bring about positive change for our community. And what community means to me is a fair, supportive place. It’s a place where I can be taken seriously as a woman and a Sikh, two aspects of my identity that aren’t always taken seriously outside that context.”

	Embedded Case: Shared meaning within the Sikh community as inspiration for non-participation in Khalistani movements.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	Reading Guru Granth Sahib as not supporting cause of Sikh independence.	“No, I don’t think the Grant Sahib is behind the cause [Khalistan]. If we look at the Guru Granth Sahib plus the history of the Gurus, we see that the meaning of being a Sikh isn’t determined by being independent.”
Family	Observing family associations of Sikh independence with negative outcomes for Sikhs.	“I haven’t told anyone this, but I have relatives who were killed in the Punjab, when they [the Indian government] were cracking down Khalistan supporters there. So, for me, the meaning of Khalistan is really danger. It’s kind of meaningless, really, dying for some cause like that.”
Identity	Believing personal Sikh identity to be weakened by commitment to Khalistan.	“The Khalistan supporters I know, they think that the movement makes them better Sikhs. I disagree. I think they cut corners because they tell themselves how important the cause is. They don’t read the Guru Granth Sahib as much, they stack off.”
Activism	Believing Khalistani activism to represent a negative Sikh community.	“There’s so much testosterone online, my God. The men in the movement, they can be extremists, they can talk a lot of violence. It just puts me off.”

Men	Women
<p>“What does it mean to be a Sikh man? To me, it means being ready to fight, being ready to die, for what you believe in. Not everyone’s going to die for Khalistan, and maybe you don’t want to, but, as a Sikh man, it’s the closest thing we have to going close to war.”</p>	<p>“I think it’s about finding myself as a Sikh woman. The values my mom has, the values my dad has, it’s a way of connecting with them and kind of maintaining my identity. I don’t know if I really expect my work to have a real political impact, but I see how it defines me inside my family and with my Sikh friends.”</p>
<p>“Who I am, I’m a disciplined Sikh man. That’s my identity. My non-Sikh friends aren’t like that. No wonder they’re not really involved in anything meaningful, anything that goes beyond them and touches their community.”</p>	<p>“As a Sikh woman, I feel there’s pressure on me mainly to give birth to other Sikhs, to be this figure in the background. But participating [in Khalistani movements] lets me feel like I’m doing something more for our tradition, our religion.”</p>
<p>“I’m ready to die for Khalistan. I’m ready to join my ancestors if I have to.”</p>	<p>“It’s a community. It’s our community. I don’t care for the violence and extremism. I care about steering the movement in a direction that supports our needs as Sikhs.”</p>
<p>“If you want to ask me what you think I’m separating from, then I’d tell you that I don’t like this idea of this passive Sikhism that I see around me all the time. Sikh men are supposed to be warriors. How are we going to be warriors if we don’t have anything to fight for? The fight for Khalistan, that’s about Sikhism plus manhood, you know?”</p>	<p>“There’s so much testosterone online, my God. The men in the movement, they can be extremists, they can talk a lot of violence. It just puts me off.”</p>
	<p>“Separatist activism can be frightening. There’s a lot of extremism. Sometimes I think it’s a bunch of macho posturing bullshit, excuse me. I just don’t connect to any of that—whether as a person, a woman, a Canadian, whatever.”</p>

“It’s kind of a boy’s thing. When my dad and brothers get heated about it, my mom and sisters kind of drift away. It’s just two different ideas about Sikh identity, really. As a woman, I think I have a bias to looking for opportunities to integrate and synthesize. And the men are looking for more extreme solutions.”

“Getting involved [in Khalistan movements] kind of builds my identity—my credentials, you know? Otherwise I think there’s more scrutiny and pressure on me because I’m a girl.”

“[Khalistan] activism is a way of respecting my family, showing that I’m plugged in to their values and determined to keep them going.”

“I’ve seen my brother, he kind of uses it [involvement in the Khalistan movement] to indulge some scary thoughts and attitudes. That doesn’t appeal to me. It’s not that I find Khalistan a bad goal, but I don’t like the way the men are approaching it. When I go online, I have an easier time getting Sikh guys to kind of moderate themselves.”

“I want to say something, I think that Khalistan is kind of an excuse for patriarchy. When I hear my dad talking about it, I don’t connect, at least not as a woman.”

“Sometimes I think Khalistan would be like a big version of my family. Just a place where we Sikhs could get together, be ourselves, support each other. Like it is with me and my brothers and my dad.”

Sikh Only

“Why are we going on about Khalistan? In my opinion, it’s because you can’t read the Guru Granth Sahib and come away with the conclusion that Sikhs should just assimilate into wherever they are.”

“You’ve used the word *separatism* in opposition to *loyalism* to India. But I think what I’m doing is just being loyal to the Sikh tradition.”

Canadian Only or Canadian + Sikh

“This is kind of painful to say, but I don’t really embrace my identity as a Sikh woman. I see myself as a Canadian. Most of my life, I’m not around Sikhs. For me, the idea of Khalistan makes sense in terms of self-determination, but participating would lock me in to an identity that isn’t close to me anymore.”

“Maybe this makes me sort of a sellout, but I don’t really see why I shouldn’t just think of myself as an Indian. That’s who I am. I was born in India and there are thousands of religious beliefs and communities there. We’re all Indians.”

“God, it’s really fluid, our situation. My dad’s an Africa-raised Sikh married to a white Canadian. I kind of fell between the cracks in terms of who I am. We have all these allegiances, all these connections, all these forces taking us different places. In all of that, it’s kind of bizarre to think I could be advocating for the formation of a state in India.”

“I’ll be reading the Grant Sahib in the same library as people who’re reading the Qur’an, the Bible, whatever, and I think, we should really all live together, like we do now in Canada. Building Khalistan knocks down that togetherness.”

“It can be kind of narrow sometimes. Like we’re so defined, we dress like this, we look like this, we believe this. It’s Khalistan in our house but Canada outside. I don’t like that feeling.”

“When I see Indians around, I just

Sikh Only	Canadian Only or Canadian + Sikh remember how little I have in common with them, and that gets me more pumped about the idea of Khalistan.”
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	Embedded Case: Antecedents arising within Sikh households that colour Khalistan- involved Sikh youth's attitudes to Indian loyalists.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	<i>None reported.</i>	
Family	Observing family associations of Sikh independence with negative outcomes for Sikhs. Family bad-mouthing of loyalists.	<p>"I haven't told anyone this, but I have relatives who were killed in the Punjab, when they [the Indian government] were cracking down Khalistan supporters there. So, for me, the meaning of Khalistan is really danger. It's kind of meaningless, really, dying for some cause like that. I'd rather just belong to India."</p> <p>"A lot of people in my family criticize Sikhs who have no problem with India. It's an attitude I have to fight against pretty actively, because I can feel it in myself. It's a knee-jerk response."</p>
Identity	Seeing oneself as a loyalist. Seeing oneself as a separatist.	<p>"I don't know, maybe I'm not involved enough in Sikh activities, but I don't see a big enough difference between us and other Indians to justify breaking off. Why can't we see ourselves as Indians?"</p> <p>"I see myself as a Sikh, and that means I see myself supporting Khalistan."</p>
Activism	<i>None reported</i>	

Table 27

	Embedded Case: Antecedents arising in other Sikh settings that colour Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitudes to Indian loyalists.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	Peer pressure in Gurdwara	“In our Gurdwara, the whole idea of wanting Sikhs to remain in India is looked on badly. It's hard to go against that. I guess there's some pressure to support Khalistan, even if you aren't like actively involved.”
Family	<i>None reported.</i>	
Identity	<i>None reported.</i>	
Activism	<i>None reported.</i>	

	Embedded Case: Antecedents arising in non-Sikh settings that colour non-Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitudes to Indian loyalists.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	<i>None reported.</i>	
Family	<i>None reported.</i>	
Identity	<i>None reported.</i>	
Activism	Being influenced by parades, online postings, and other forms of activism to embrace separatism.	“At Sikh pride parades, or even on Sikh websites, there's a lot of support for Khalistan. I find myself getting really excited about Khalistan when I'm around people like that, but later it kind of fades away.”

	Embedded Case: Antecedents arising within Sikh households that colour non-Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitudes to separatists.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	<i>None reported</i>	
Family	Family support for loyalism.	“At home, I hear my parents missing India, praising India. They're not separatists. I've been influenced by the affection they have for India. I feel it myself.”
Identity	Feeling more Indian or Canadian than Sikh.	“Well, other people see me as an Indian or Canadian, they don't have that Sikh filter. I mean, yes, they know I'm Sikh, but that's more about religion than who I am. That's part of the reason I feel either Indian or Canadian, depending on where I am and what the context is.”
Activism	<i>None reported.</i>	

	Embedded Case: Antecedents arising in other Sikh settings that colour non-Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitudes to separatists.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	Gurdwara support for loyalism.	“At my Gurdwara, there’s emphasis on how Sikhs can make their way, today, in India and Canada and other places. I’ve just never heard a really good case for Khalistan at the Gurdwara.”
Family	<i>None reported.</i>	
Identity	<i>None reported.</i>	
Activism	Gurdwara support for Indian events.	“When I see that the Gurdwara turns out at India Day and events like that, it confirms that we’re part of the Indian fabric.”

	Embedded Case: Antecedents arising in non-Sikh settings that colour non-Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitudes to separatists.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	Being influenced by other religions and secular environment of Canada.	"When I see the freedom of religion that exists in Canada, I think we don't need Khalistan."
Family	<i>None reported.</i>	
Identity	Fitting in to mainstream Canadian society as a counterforce against separatism.	"Making my way in Canada, I really like the feeling of being part of a multicultural society. Defining myself as a separatist, well, it's like I'm marginalising myself in a way that doesn't make sense to me."
Activism	Being influence by general and ecumenical activism.	"Social justice movements are pretty inclusive now. Why should we narrow our focus to Khalistan."

	Embedded Case: Homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitude to Indian loyalists.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	<i>None noted.</i>	
Family	<i>None noted.</i>	
Identity	<i>None noted.</i>	
Activism	<i>None noted.</i>	

	Embedded Case: Non-homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitude to Indian loyalists.	Selected Illustrative Comments.
Religion	<i>None noted.</i>	
Family	<i>None noted.</i>	
Identity	<i>None noted.</i>	
Activism	<i>None noted.</i>	

	Embedded Case: Homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour non-Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitude to separatists.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	<i>None noted.</i>	
Family	<i>None noted.</i>	
Identity	<i>None noted.</i>	
Activism	<i>None noted.</i>	

	Embedded Case: Non-homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour non-Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitude to separatists.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	<i>None noted.</i>	
Family	<i>None noted.</i>	
Identity	<i>None noted.</i>	
Activism	<i>None noted.</i>	

	Embedded Case: Antecedents arising within Sikh households that colour Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitudes to non-Sikh Canadians.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	Reading Guru Granth Sahib as emphasising distinctions between Sikhs and non-Sikhs.	“Why are we Sikhs in the first place? When I first reading the Guru Granth Sahib a lot, my dad would always emphasise how we were different, how the holy book defined us as being different from others.”
Family	Family criticisms of non-Sikhs and non-Sikh lifestyles.	<p>“Why are we Sikhs in the first place? When I first reading the Guru Granth Sahib a lot, my dad would always emphasise how we were different, how the holy book defined us as being different from others.”</p> <p>“My parents are pretty critical of white Canadians and pretty much everyone who isn't a Sikh. I definitely get the message that I'm different. They'd probably kill me if I married a non-Sikh. All of that kind of defines the limits of my world.”</p>
Identity	<i>None noted.</i>	
Activism	<i>None noted.</i>	

	Embedded Case: Antecedents arising in other Sikh settings that colour Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitudes to non-Sikh Canadians.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	Taking a cue from homogeneity of the Gurdwara.	"Everyone in the Gurdwara's a Sikh, and I spend a lot of time there. Then in Sikh school. Then at home. I'm around Sikhs all the time, so I have a pretty sharp sense of difference between me and non-Sikhs, you know?"
Family	<i>None noted.</i>	
Identity	<i>None noted.</i>	
Activism	Sikh activism promotes differentiation.	"When you're at parades, events, whatever, or even when you're online, you just realise how much in common you have with other Sikhs and how non-Sikhs don't get a lot of stuff that's important to us."

	Embedded Case: Antecedents arising in non-Sikh settings that colour Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitudes to non-Sikh Canadians.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	<i>None noted.</i>	
Family	Family disapproval of certain kinds of relations with non-Sikhs.	"I have to be careful when my parents are around uni. My girlfriend's a white Canadian. I definitely can't be seen with her."
Identity	Reports of feeling different when in non-Sikh settings.	<p>"Whenever I'm not around Sikhs, I get reminded of how different I am. How I'm dressed, my hair, everything. To me, that's a good thing. It helps me remember that I really am different, that I have a unique identity as a Sikh."</p> <p>"I've met people who have grudges against me because I'm a Sikh, because they associate me with terrorists or whatever. There's probably a lot of people who think the same thing but won't say it."</p>
Activism	<i>None noted.</i>	

	Embedded Case: Homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitude to non-Sikh Canadians.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	Influence of Gurdwara on differentiation.	"If we were just like all the other Canadians, there wouldn't even be Gurdwaras. Whenever I'm there, I think about how important it is to remember that I'm set apart. I'm part of the Khalsa, that comes before being Canadian."
Family	<i>None noted.</i>	"My parents straight up told me that it was my job to marry a Sikh.
Identity	<i>None noted.</i>	
Activism	Pressure at parades to act in a hyperbolic way.	"At Sikh events like parades, especially when non-Sikhs are going to be watching, it's like I feel this pressure to act like 'Super Sikh.' You figure they're judging you, might as well be proud and in their faces."

	Embedded Case: Non-homeostatic forces within the Sikh community that colour Khalistan-involved Sikh youth's attitude to non-Sikh Canadians.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	<i>None noted.</i>	
Family	<i>None noted.</i>	
Identity	<i>None noted.</i>	
Activism	<i>None noted.</i>	

	Embedded Case: Interpretative differences between Khalistan-involved Sikh youths and non-Sikh Canadians, as disclosed by Sikh youths.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Religion	Differences in religious interpretation.	<p>“We see everything differently, and that begins with religion. People I know who aren’t Sikh, they don’t think of religion as making special demands on them. That’s why we’re so different.”</p> <p>“For sure, I believe my religion tells me to be separate, to separate myself. That’s the Khalsa. Everything is about showing everyone that we’re different, being proud in our difference.”</p>
Family	Different meanings placed on family.	<p>“What family means to me is obedience. They gave birth to me, they raised me, I owe them. People who aren’t Sikhs don’t get that. I don’t think they see themselves as fighters for their family, their way of life.”</p>
Identity	Identities informed by different principles and influences.	<p>“Who I am, I’m a disciplined Sikh man. That’s my identity. My non-Sikh friends aren’t like that. No wonder they’re not really involved in anything meaningful, anything that goes beyond them and touches their community.”</p>

	Embedded Case: Interpretative differences between Khalistan-involved Sikh youths and non-Sikh Canadians, as disclosed by Sikh youths.	Selected Illustrative Comments
Activism	Differences in understandings of activism.	“For me, activism means taking risks, committing to a really tough cause that isn’t going to be achieved anytime soon. It’s a lifelong commitment. My [non-Sikh] friends? To them, activism is signing some Facebook petitions from your bedroom. Two very different things.”