

**From "Me" to "We"!
Does Religion Impact Volunteering?
A Qualitative Study of Second Generation
Sikhs' Informal and Formal Volunteering
Practices in South East Michigan**

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This study explored the role of religion in civic engagement of second generation Sikh immigrants. Meanings of religious identity, teachings and affiliations to religious organizations have been deeply explored for the volunteering practices. Since recent social science literature has paid serious attention to how immigrants preserve religious or ethnic identity, the focus of the current study is the direct examination of how religious involvement connects second generation immigrants to a larger civic society. Recruited by snow ball sampling procedures, the sample in the study constitutes of twenty -nine second generation Sikh participants within South East Michigan. Qualitative, face to face interviews was the mode of research followed by qualitative analysis in the years 2013 and 2014. Findings indicate important themes regarding religious involvement and volunteering. Religious involvement plays a significant role for the volunteering actions strengthening community building, service to all. Religious organizations facilitate formal volunteering by connecting Sikhs to diverse, non-profit, humane formal organizations. Informal volunteering occurs within non- religious and religious contexts; however, religious participation eases out volunteering (both formal and informal) outside the Sikh community.

Introduction

This paper examined the role of religion and religious institutions for the civic life of Second generation Sikh immigrants. Since religious participation is a way for individuals to learn how to voluntarily help one another within U.S context, researchers have begun to examine the role of religious participation for the civic engagement of diverse immigrants. Theories that substantiate the role of religious institutions for robust civic

life within a democratic nation, such as the U.S, explains that religious associations are voluntary associations that connect individuals to communities and build social capital (Tocqueville, 1840/ 2000, Putnam 2000). Experts on immigrant religion studies such as Euckland and Park suggest that it is evident that religious participation is really important for vast and diverse immigrant Asian groups. However, a more systematic examination of how religious affiliation connects them to civic life within U.S is more meaningful.

This study is significant for the important insights it will bring to the understanding of cultural identities and empirical understandings of minority immigrant groups and their participation within U.S. First, past studies on Asian immigrant religion and civic engagement cover population groups that originate from large religious traditions such as Christians, Hinduism or Buddhists. Minority religious groups, from Indian origin such as Jains and Sikhs remain excluded in the current examinations of immigrant religion and civic engagement. Experts argue that double minority status (minority in the country of origin and in the migrated nation) may impact “community volunteerism” (Euckland and Park, 2005). It may be even more significant for a double minority immigrant groups to express that they “belong” and “give back” to community, to shield against anti-minority and anti-immigrant sentiment. Sikhs constitute a minority population from India which only constitute 2% of Indian population.

Secondly, the current study presents a second-generation perspective on religion and civic life. Previous literature on Asian immigrants indicated that “being religiously involved” played significant role in determining the civic lives of first and second-generation Asian immigrants (Foley and Hoge, 2007, Cadge & Eucklund, 2007: 367, Kniss & Numrich, 2007). These findings present combined results for both first and second-generation Asian immigrants. Whereas, experts on immigrant civic life urge that future studies on immigrant religion should target second generation immigrants (Euckland & Park, 2007). It has been argued that the focus of future studies should not be limited to immigrant religious centers but examine the “broader context in which religious tradition operates” (Euckland & Park, 2007). Hence, specific aim of the current study is to deeply explore what religious identity or how religion matters for second generation immigrants. Questions such as how religious organizations engage second generation immigrants to

volunteering and to what extent volunteering occurs within community and beyond are assessed.

Thirdly, the nature of current study is a qualitative inquiry to substantiate the role of religion. This means that words or meanings that participants attach to their religious participation and volunteering are discussed. No doubt, existing literature has explained the positive role of religious participation for the adaptation of new immigrants and their children (Foley & Hoge, 2007, Foner & Alba, 2008, Jensen, 2008). However, sometimes scholars have also pointed out a negative role religion plays for obstructing civic engagement of immigrants (Paul & Numrich, 2007, Ecklund & Cadge (2007). Argument is that religious participation may provide individuals links to their own immigrant communities but forbid immigrants' connections with a broader U.S. society. All the studies stated above touch on issues related to second generation immigrant experiences but do not provide in-depth information about their religiosity and connections to volunteering. The social context within which religious association becomes meaningful for second generation and whether religious association augments their civic involvement (and vice versa) needs exploration by qualitative method.

Essentially, existing studies have neither included enough second-generation participants, nor examined religious minority groups like Sikhs. The current study following a qualitative approach may provide important insights to understand "participant's voice which become crucial in understanding identity formation as well as immigrant integration within United States (Yang & Baugh 2002).

Sikh Migration Within U.S and Research Question:

Originating in Punjab, the Northern-Western province in India, Sikhs began migrating to the U.S in the late 1890s and have continued throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Almost 300,000 Sikhs have made "America, their home," thereby contributing to the "religious diversity of American society" (Eck, 2001: 74-76). My research specifically explored following aspects.

1. What types of volunteering experiences second generation Sikhs report (formal or informal)?
2. How do 2nd generation Sikh explain the reasons for their volunteering experiences?

3. What role does religion play in informing the volunteer behavior of second generation Sikh immigrants?
4. To what extent does volunteering expand beyond the Sikh community to include wider participation within U.S. society?

Literature Review

The literature review has been divided into three main sections: (1) Volunteerism within an American context which discusses various types of volunteering identified by past studies. (2) Religion and informal volunteering which examines community volunteering and the nature of informal volunteering. (3) Religion and Formal Volunteering which includes past studies which specifically focus on the relationship between religion and formal volunteering practices among immigrant religious communities.

The meaning of Volunteering within U.S context

The words *volunteering*, and *civic participation* have been used interchangeably in recent social science literature. Volunteering involves giving time generously and freely for the benefit of another individual, group or cause. The number of hours which people volunteer in any nation indicates the vitality of its "civil society" (Sundeen, Garcia and Wang, 2007:243). Volunteers are defined as adults aged sixteen and older who perform unpaid volunteer activities for or through an organization ([Volunteering in America](#), 2011). In 2002, about fifty-nine million people volunteered in the U.S. This number increased to sixty-three million in the year 2009. A plurality of volunteering occurs through religious communities indicating that almost 35% of volunteering occurs through religious organizations or religious communities within American society. Volunteers are not the only crucial assets that provide priceless social and economic value to non-profit organizations and communities, but they also provide immense psychological, social and leisure benefits to individuals (Sundeen, Garcia & Raskoff, 2009: 929).

The nature of Volunteering among Asian Immigrants.

There are several issues that remain unclear in the past literature examining volunteering among Asian immigrants. Firstly, most studies indicate that religion and religious factors promote volunteering among

Asian immigrants. It is evident that Asians volunteer due to religious reasons and mostly volunteer at the religious centres. What is not clear is whether religious teachings/ commitment plays primordial role for volunteering among Asian immigrant or is it the religious organizations that provide some incentives for community/ informal volunteering or both. The studies in the past focused more on volunteering in general rather than concrete categorization whether volunteering is formal or informal. According to Little page et al., formal volunteering involves with volunteering within an affiliation to an organization whereas informal volunteering is helping by running errands or doing yard work for people not living with you (Littlepage.et al 2005).

Some scholars argue that religion and religious communities are the basis for community volunteerism, or perhaps there are more instances of community volunteering among Asian immigrants rather than instances of formal volunteering. Sundeen Garcia and Wang, (2007) indicate that among Asian immigrant communities, there is an emphasis on obligations to clan members, family and communities. Some groups such as Chinese, Filipinos and others are likely to volunteer in an informal setting rather than engage in formal volunteering. Engagement in informal volunteering includes activities such as helping neighbors and extended families (Sundeen, Garcia and Wang, 2007: 255). Consequently, less appear are the acts of formal volunteering such as performing unpaid volunteer activities with an affiliation to a formal organization of a civic, political, professional, social and community nature. International educational, youth service, and environmental services are examples of formal volunteering.

The giant problem with existing studies is that they do not distinguish diverse Asian groups. They have been amalgamated in the category of Asian groups even though they originate from diverse religious traditions. How are the comparisons among diverse groups is possible when all Asian groups emerge from totally dissimilar regional, or religious backgrounds? The historical context from which immigrant populations originate can not be parallel and the differences can not be overlooked. To exactly understand how religious/ contextual historical factors impact formal volunteering or informal volunteering, a single group study can illustrate the basis for volunteering. An examination whether volunteering is formal or informal, is it due to religious reasons and most significantly, if the volunteering is formal, does it extend to other populations or communities outside their own immigrant communities is

the range of this study. Comparison among the groups may give statistical information about volunteering but not the rich contextual understanding.

Second generation cohort may be more interesting to understand role of religion and volunteering in their lives within U.S context because it has been neglected in the past as the focus has always been on new immigrants. So, past studies have also looked at volunteering in general without understanding the second-generation perspective on religion and volunteering. Since religion provides moral guidance for helping others, scholars have started to examine the ways in which religion promotes volunteering among second generation immigrants.

The rates of formal volunteering for Asian immigrants are often compared with the national average in the past. For instance, it has been documented that 28.8%, is an average volunteering rate whereas 23% of all Asian Americans engage in the formal volunteering (Sundeen Garcia and Wang, 2007: 262). Gender does not impact the volunteering tendencies of Asian Indians, but Chinese population may volunteer the least among these three groups (Sundeen, Garcia & Wang, 2007). This could be due to differences among religious practices or traditions that often contribute to varied rates of volunteering among immigrant groups. Perhaps it is more important to understand those historical and religious backgrounds which may determine whether volunteering is formal or informal. The discussion about informal volunteering patterns about Asian immigrants is the focus of the next section.

Religion and Informal Volunteering

Community volunteerism is viewed as informal form of volunteering among Asian populations (Ecklund & Park, 2005). Religious organizations provide the primary push to motivate Asian immigrants and their subsequent generations to volunteer in the United States (Jensen, 2008). Most volunteering occurs at religious centers and religious adherence is the foremost reason for volunteering among Asian immigrant populations. Concerns about the nature of volunteering or whether the acts should be qualified as informal or formal are recent. Continuously missing concern is volunteering patterns of second generation and efforts to connect to wider society. The apprehension, whether religious participation connects or forbids linkage to diverse organizations is also a recent debate. The exploration whether religious communities offer ample

volunteering opportunities to second generation immigrants or whether they decide to volunteer due to religious reasons, add to the data of Asian immigrant civic participation in the United States. The fact that small religious minority communities and/or least studied immigrant groups, like Sikhs, cannot be amalgamated with dominant Asian groups like Chinese or Hindu populations which are very high number as compared to minority groups such as Sikh population.

Sikhs are a specific case, being a minority and uniquely situated group, being a double minority group, it can provide some new insights to the existing scholarship. Besides, this study substantially contributes to scholarship in the two significant ways; one it explores second generation immigrant group an important cohort within immigrant group and another to the minority group which are Sikhs. Euckland and Park, (2005) argued that for Asian Americans, religion becomes the principle source for "community volunteerism" even more than education, income or gender. It is also suggested that religious adherence is the most effective source for "pro civic behavior" (18). The meaning of "pro civic behavior" is not very clear from the study and it was also difficult to gain a clear meaning of "religious adherence". Does the "religious adherence" refer to adherence to religious leaders, religious values religious ideals or imperatives?

The existing studies also suggest that informal support systems that exist for new immigrants and their subsequent generations are limiting to immigrant community. As suggested by Ebaugh and Curry (2000) "fictive kin relation" is the most frequently occurring form of networking and support systems among diverse immigrant populations. The members from similar religious background or immigrants from similar geographical origin provide networking as well as emotional, psychological support to new immigrants. However, what are the basis of recruitment for second generation immigrants and how second generation is invited to participate in civic projects at community level and beyond is a missing link.

Yang and Ebaugh (2001) refer to transformed nature of religious organizations within American context. Based on thirteen ethnographic studies of different immigrant religious groups, their religious institutions in the Houston, Texas, the researchers concluded that religious organizations are transformed within an American context. It was indicated that second generations always practice their religious teachings in the purest form since they often consult the main religious texts. The

connections between religious organizations or religious teachings and practices were neither identified nor were clear from this study. Second generation participants were not part of the study, so little is known about how a second generation's religious involvement at worship centers is transformed from their predecessors and lead to integration beyond community.

Foner and Alba (2008) suggest that participation in religion or in any religious activity gives immigrants and their generations the sense of "belonging to community". Foner and Alba (2008) evaluate the social science literature on immigration and religion within United States and Western Europe to conclude that immigrants' religions help to ease the adaptation process within United States as compared to Western Europe and provides contexts for their volunteering outside their own community. However, Jensen (2008), provided somewhat direct information about the connections between second generation members and their civic involvement by detailing "individual motives" and "institutional contexts" for assessing civic engagement among Asian Indians and immigrants from El Salvador. The inquiry was based on questions such as: to what degree were immigrants aware of civic issues and whether religious motives or religious organizations engaged second generation adolescents in civic issues. The findings suggest that religious affiliation to religious organizations, not the spiritual motives, play a profound role in engaging second generation immigrants to get involved in civic issues (Jensen 2008, 16). Jensen mentioned the role of religious organizations but failed to answer how religious organizations recruit second generation members. The study also indicated a bit about meanings behind religious teachings which are encouraged but lacks clear indication what promotes civic action beyond one's own community. In researcher's opinion, it is more important to identify the range of activities or even the type of volunteering programs available for second generation immigrants.

Second Generation Studies

Previous researchers often refer to the term "silent exodus" to describe the religious involvement of second generation immigrants. The meaning of the term "silent exodus" is unclear as to whether it means a non-explanatory withdrawal or something else. For the second-generation

Asian immigrants, religious involvement has been identified as a mechanism for individual career advancement. For instance, Bankston and Zhou (1996) and Cao (2005) suggested that second generation immigrants attend religious centers to achieve economic and educational success. Cao (2005) suggested that religious communities also offer parental/ surrogate support. By examining how religious involvement and volunteering experiences are connected this research aims to disrupt the "silent exodus", as suggested by many scholars.

A New Directions in Second Generation Studies

By reviewing the entire body of existing literature on religion and immigrants since 1990s, scholars pointed out main drawbacks. Eklund and Cadge (2007) cautioned that past studies, whether examining adaptations of immigrants, organizational structure, or ethnic identities or second-generation immigrants, the focus has been completely on religious centers. They stated that the least amount of attention is paid to the relationship between individual centers and their broader religious context. To fully understand how immigrants, participate in religious life within the United States, it has been directed to understand religious practices of immigrants. The religious practice is an indicator of what immigrants' practice within the United States.

Religion and Formal Volunteering

The existing studies on formal volunteering among Asian immigrant religious communities put forward several important arguments. Asian Americans are more likely to volunteer at their religious places than at other venues. Religious communities also provide opportunities for volunteering to link members to formal organizations and to help them participate widely within American society. Yet, these studies do not identify clearly whether individuals are encouraged by their religious leaders, friends from their place of worship, from weekly announcements, e-mails to engage in volunteering or whether they volunteer due to religious or different reasons. Civic engagement scholars highlight the fact that the religious communities may differ in low or high civic engagement. Members when they are volunteering for their own benefit tend to have low civic participation (Kniss & Numrich, 2007). Religious centers that involve their members in diverse public issues and projects of

wider community seem to be more civically engaged. Formal volunteering via religious organizations may have low civic participation depending on the concerns regarding large public projects or more focus on individualistic, competitive, goals (36).

The study by Foley and Hoge (2007) identified the role of social capital “among religious networks for involving first and second- generation immigrants for civic incorporation.” The authors indicated that Catholic and Protestant religious communities within the United States recruit volunteers for their social services through their places of worship. According to the study, volunteers at the religious center are given opportunities to plan events, organize several programs or events for the community. So, these opportunities develop and flourish within religious venues or formal organizations of religious nature however, they help volunteers to develop leadership skills and organizing skills. The study by Foley and Hoge (2007) identified the role of social capital “among religious networks, how members at religious centers are given opportunities to develop skills. But the question is: how do second generation individuals utilize these skills to participate in civic projects beyond their religious center or communities outside their religious centre? Furthermore, does religion provide second generation immigrants with motivations and incentives to engage in services? Do religious organizations? These important questions remain unattended even by Foley And Hoge.

Kniss and Numrich (2007) pointed out the role of “religious heritage” for “low and high civic engagement” among immigrant groups. Civic engagement was identified as public participation of members in organizations, institutions and associations of society (10). “Low civic engagement” means a minimum involvement beyond one's own ethnic / religious immigrant communities. Reluctance to connect to wider society and individual involvement for volunteering just to improve one's own skills may be indicators of low civic participation. High civic engagement may represent an openness to the larger society, a disinclination to portray a “narrow religious identity” and a willingness to indulge in neighborhood issues or larger community concerns outside of one's own congregation (Kniss & Numrich, 2007:152-153). The scholars make the point that irregular volunteering or volunteering just to achieve skills for personal objectives is different from collectivistic, regular, frequent volunteering. The authors also indicate that if civic engagement is part of a “religious heritage”, the members of the community are more likely to

volunteer. The authors identified the role of religious heritage in directing "moral projects" in which the religious communities chose to participate (Kniss and Numrich, 2007:199) Individualistic, informal and irregular participation by members as a solution to civic issues is termed as low civic participation whereas collaborative, formal and permanent type of participation in civic issues is considered high civic engagement (Kniss & Numrich,2007:203). Again, the study indicated that "religious heritage" may impact the volunteers with both low and high civic engagement. However, the study reveals less about how motivations for high or low civic engagement occurs for second generation.

Except for a few, past studies persistently utilised quantitative methods which measured types of volunteering activities, duration hours and documentation of affiliations to type of formal organizations members volunteer to. Also, being quantitative in nature, these studies put forward comparative analysis of subgroups to show rates of volunteering, predictors of volunteering rather than examining the meaning behind volunteering experiences. For instance, a study by Sandeen, Garcia and Wang (2007) compared subgroups like Filipinos, Asian Indians and Chinese to discover rates of volunteering in formal organizations. The research also focused on predictors of volunteering among these sub-groups. A large sample was collected from a U.S population survey with 1859 Asian Americans and 1138 Asian immigrants. The respondents were asked if they had performed unpaid volunteer activities through one of the eight organizations: civic; political or professional international; educational or youth-oriented services; environmental or animal care; hospital or other health service; religious or community service between September 2003 and September 2004. The authors found that Asian Americans volunteered an average of 113.6 hours at formal organizations. Filipino immigrants were found to have volunteered for the most hours (158.3), while thirty-four percent of all Asian Americans volunteered at religious organizations, followed by volunteering at children's educational institutions. It was found that these three groups devoted the least time to social service organizations. Filipinos volunteered the highest (26%) to formal organizations, followed by Asian Indians (21%) and then the Chinese population (19%). We can not grasp much about meanings behind volunteering experiences for these immigrants. However, the study concluded that future studies of civic behavior must include indicators of religiosity and group history to explore the decision for engaging in volunteering.

The current research, by employing qualitative interviewing and analysis, aims to deeply grasp the meanings of religiosity, for formal and informal volunteering. The second part of the research covered how religious organizations involved youth to volunteering and how volunteering extended beyond the Sikh community.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS: Three theories guide this research. First, As Alexis De Tocqueville observed in *Democracy in America* (1840/1945), religion is a voluntary association, which connects individuals to communities. Religious associations are “free spaces” that provide humans liberty, responsibility and interdependence for accomplishment of common goals. By participating in these religious associations, members learn to develop civic skills to voluntarily help each other (Tocqueville 1840/1945:126-127). The aim of this current research is not to test the theory of Tocqueville but to use it as a theoretical framework for understanding how religious associations influence second generation Sikh adults to engage in community service or individual acts of volunteering.

Second, theory that guides as framework of current research is Herberg’s theory of religion, (1955) suggests that second generation immigrants may leave behind language and ethnic roots, but retain their religious roots (Herberg, 1965: 23). Based on the theory of Herberg, the study explores why second-generation Sikhs may retain religious roots or is it important for volunteering?

Thirdly, it is even important to think about the ways in which religious affiliation and strong religious beliefs might become a form of social capital for second generation Sikhs. Putnam (2000), in his book *“Bowling Alone,”* talks about the role of social capital in building communities. Putnam’s’ theory is an important theoretical frame work which can be used to understand the “community building” that occurs among second generation Sikhs and the ways in which initial religious affiliations or associations help build and/or provide this social capital for individuals.

Research Design and Approach

Qualitative research design is best suited to assess subjective understanding of each participant to identify connections between religion and volunteering. “Qualitative researchers study the things in

their natural settings, attempting to make sense or interpret phenomena in terms of meanings people bring to them" (Denzin and Lincoln). The goal of this research has been to understand religious involvement in volunteering experiences as expressed by second generation Sikhs. Since researchers have established that the volunteering behaviors of each immigrant group are informed by language, culture, history, religious beliefs of each group among reasons for migration, as well as acculturation (Sundeen Garcia & Wang, 2007, 243). To assess how participants, explain religious participation and volunteering experiences more fully, a qualitative research design has been chosen (Creswell, 2003, 186, Table 10.2). In-depth interviewing has been chosen as the specific qualitative method to understand the Second-generation Sikh perspective in detail. (Patten, 1990). The meanings of religious involvement for volunteering experiences will be understood and described.

Recruitment Site

Twenty-nine participants were recruited from Sikh religious centers in southeastern Michigan. This center has been selected firstly because the center is easily accessible to the researcher, and secondly, the religious center website elucidates various volunteering programs organized from time to time, activities along with images relating to the volunteering programs organized in the past by this center. The center's volunteering committee was contacted to get further information about second generation participants, and those identified as volunteers were then contacted. Participants included those who had volunteered at least once a year in any program such as summer camps, blood donation camps, career guiding workshops, free medical consultations to the elderly, dental care, free eye surgical camps or any other services to the community or society.

Eligibility Criteria and Description of the Participants:

The researcher aimed to recruit second generation participants from either 2.0 or 2.5 cohorts. The cohort 2.0 refers to the generation born within United States to the foreign-born parents. The cohort 2.5 refers to the generation born within United States with at least one parent born within United States (Rumbaut, 2004 as quoted by Sundeen et.al (2008). Sikh

participants included in this sample are participants that lived in the United States since their birth or migrated very soon after,

Description of the participants

Most the participants included in this study (25) are born within United States, but four participants migrated with their parents when they were small children (between the ages of 18 months and 3 years). All participants included were eighteen years old or older at the time of the interview and had either one parent born in U.S or both parents born abroad (Rumbaut, 2004). Fifteen participants are men and 14 are women. Thirteen participants are ages 18-19 years; eight participants are ages 20-21. Five participants are ages 23-25. Two participants are between ages 28-29 years. One participant is 42 years old. Educational level varies. Thirteen participants are freshmen in college and eight earned undergraduate degrees. Two participants have law degrees, three are medical students and three have graduate degrees in business administration. Overall, this is a very well-educated sample.

All individuals agreed to be interviewed, and the researcher followed informed consent procedures prior to the interviews as specified by the university's IRB. All participants were assured that they could withdraw from the study at any time and were given information about the study before they consented to the interviews. All the interviews were recorded in English.

All interviews were conducted by the researcher at the time and location most preferred by the participants.

Interview Guide Questions: The first four interview questions were regarding initial volunteering experiences about volunteering; like when they started to volunteer, motivations, how often and type of projects they volunteered to. The subsequent section inquired about goal of the organization, the target group for volunteering, if they engaged in formal and informal volunteering, and what their responsibilities were as a volunteer. Questions on the meanings of religious identity, religious teachings, involvement in congregational services, role of religious center and whether the religious center provided incentives to engage in volunteering were explored. Participants were asked about the types of organizations in which they volunteered and how their volunteering patterns changed over time (if at all). The participants were also asked

whether and how volunteering is a channel to participate in the wider American society. The last set of interview questions asked about demographics which covered their age, gender, educational level, and the year their parents migrated to the U.S.

Data Analysis and Findings: Inductive, qualitative data analysis has been employed to draw meaning from the findings. Qualitative experts have defined qualitative data analysis in varying ways but, according to Lofland et.al (2006: 195), "data analysis involves a kind of transformative process in which empirical findings are turned into findings or results". Patterns and themes may emerge at the data collection stage, but qualitative experts generally divide it into two stages. The first stage is called "initial coding" and the second stage is called the "focused coding" (Strauss and Corbin, 1990: 61-74). The first stage may involve dividing information into main categories, i.e. by reading each line and dividing information into main categories. The second stage involves more of a selective process so that the analysis is more focused. Since the transcribed interviews were less than three hundred pages, data has been well grasped by the researcher (Creswell, 2003). The researcher used open coding and focused coding to identify emerging themes from the transcribed interviews (Brumley, 2012). For the open coding the researcher tried to understand what volunteering projects second generation Sikhs participated in, and whether participants engage in formal volunteering. The researcher tried to distinguish whether participants volunteered at the religious center, religious organizations, and whether other non-religious volunteering projects were reported. For instance, if the participant explained volunteering with *Paint the Town*, a local organization that builds houses for low income people, the researcher coded this as an example of formal volunteering beyond the Sikh community. Examples of formal volunteering were also represented in examples of volunteering with or within formal organization (whether religious or other formal organization), such as joining a religious organization to work at a shelter or soup kitchen on a scheduled day. Attention has been paid to how the participants described the meanings of their religious identity. One question that further made this research significantly meaningful is that each participant has been asked how religion and religious organization provided incentives to engage in any volunteering. This triangulation probe whether incentives were provided; signified personal or social benefits to the participants. Moreover, it

helped researcher analyze and insight into evidence of formal volunteering within and outside the Sikh community. The researcher also paid close attention to each case of volunteering (and the context within which that volunteering took place and was initiated) to understand why and how participants volunteered in formal and informal settings. For instance, if the participants explained the meanings of “being Sikh” as community involvement, the researcher looked for projects at the community level at the religious center as well as in the contexts outside the Sikh community such as settings like schools or college campuses or other venues and activities related to that setting.

Coding Scheme

To understand the volunteering experiences of Second generation Sikhs, the questions such as what it means to be Sikh, how is the religious ideal of Sewa is meaningful for volunteering and how weekly congregational services involve you in volunteering were coded to understand the meanings of being Sikh, religious involvement and connections to their volunteering experiences. A three-step process was followed. First, all the words or phrases that were most commonly used by participants were used as initial codes. The researcher then differentiated the responses of males in one section and the responses females in another section, to check for possible gender differences (which, for the most part, remained undetected in the findings). The most commonly occurring themes identified in participants’ interviews were about community involvement.

FINDINGS: The results section includes analyzed findings, meanings of religious identity, role of religion or religious organizations for formal and informal volunteering among second generation Sikhs.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SIKH

The meanings of Sikh identity are embedded in community involvement, helping others, equality and following the Sikh teachings such as Sewa (selfless service). The meanings of Sikh religious identity were concluded by the participants.

Community involvement

Most of the participants (n=16) identify being Sikh means involvement in a community, helping others (n=8) and following Sikh teachings such as equality (n= 7). For instance, Puneet, a 24-year-old woman, explains the meaning of Sikh identity, a major motivator for her action at community level.

"For me being Sikh is who I am. I cannot separate those things from the fact that I am a Sikh. I know some people like to compartmentalize what I am here and what I am there but for me I never saw myself separate from being Sikh. Yes, it does define my actions because my actions hopefully represent tenets of Sikhism. It was a big factor for me for the fact that I was continuously involved in the community and being Sikh I saw volunteering as Sewa doing something for the community as being Sikh, it is a personal worthy and Sewa and Volunteering went hand in hand".

The participant identifies that her identity of being Sikh is not separate from what she is. Being Sikh implies there is a single meaning to her identity and action. This means there is one consistent meaning to her being Sikh and it remains the same no matter where she is. The participant indicates integrity (or reliability of action and character) inform her thoughts and actions always. It is the actions she engages in that makes her Sikh identity meaningful to her, and she is clear that she does not see herself as separate from her Sikh identity. The basis of her action is living Sikh tenets like Sewa: "doing something for the community." For her, Sewa and volunteering are the same.

"Getting connected to the community", "doing something for the community" "involvement in the community," "giving back to community" are often used by second generation Sikh participants in the study when they tried to voice the meanings attached to being Sikh. Not only did participants often refer to themselves as "we" often, but the basis of their community involvement is in the action of this "we". In conversation, then, it was clear that the strong "we" identity translated into "we" (community) action. Another, nineteen-year-old male participant asserts:

"Oh, that is hard one. You have to define something. My view point is being Sikh means to help. Our duty as a religion is kind of helping everyone and it is very accepting religion. If, you need help, we will be there. We are not very arguing kind. Not take but give more.

We kind of help everyone. We are a volunteering religion. We might have adopted from other religions because our religion came into existence quite late and might have taken ideas from other religion. But I guess we are more a benevolent religion.”

Sikh religious identity is defined in the concept of “we” and “our” religion; the idea of helping others and the idea of equality in community is deeply rooted in the “we” concept. Accepting, giving and benevolence are activities described through the definition of being Sikh. The participant brings the point that “we are kind of helping everyone,”....we are a more benevolent religion. The participant further explains that if help is expected of Sikhs, they provide help without arguing. The participant explains later that Sikh religion does not stress adherence of certain rituals or traditional worship patterns but seeks helping all or benevolence.

Helping Others and Acceptance of All (Equality)

More than one quarter of the participants agreed that being Sikh meant the acceptance of others, equal treatment of all human beings, and perhaps (at times) a blending of individuals. Ravinder, a 24, year old man and a doctor, explains:

“Being Sikh means giving respect to elders or young, rich or poor and giving positive help to whenever wherever you can”.

This participant understands that being Sikh means treating everyone equally. “He also suggests that part of Sikh identity is also providing positive help to everyone whenever possible; thus, beyond the belief of equality, being Sikh means trying to ensure that others have what they need to survive.

The Sikh identity does not allow second generation Sikhs to embrace the distinctiveness of their own individual identities or to discriminate in any form. Saminder, an 18-year-old woman, explained:

“I do not distinguish people on other’s religion or race. I feel everyone is equal. If someone ask me what my religion is I am proud to tell them that I am a Sikh, like about the five Ks, like, and our history. I am also very big about the Bhangra aspect. I am proud to tell about [our] Bhangra group (Punjabi folk dance) but I do not distinguish people based on religion and race.”

It is explained that equal treatment of everyone is important, as is the awareness about Sikh history, Sikh symbols. In Saminder’s explanation,

we can see that belief in the fair treatment of all fellow beings is strong belief to Sikh ideology and Sikhs like to practise that ideology in day to day life. The importance of being fair or equal is drawn from Sikh history as clearly stated by the participants.

Sewa, A Fundamental Sikh Teaching

One quarter of participants explained that being Sikh means following the teachings of Sri Guru Granth Sahib (Sikh holy book), which translates to doing humanitarian work and selfless service (or, Sewa). Being Sikh also means applying Sikh teaching in day to day life. Aminder, a 21-year-old woman, explains meanings of being Sikh by mentioning Sewa.

"When you look at the word Sikh it literally means a learner. So, you are supposed to learn from Guru's teachings. There are two fundamentals of Sikhism: Simran and Sewa. Volunteering comes from Sewa, so we are taught to be selfless and help others in need, without expecting something in back. I feel as a Sikh you should not only volunteer but do it from heart. You do not feel that you are obligated to do it. But it should come naturally to you and you should find peace doing it"

The connections between Guru's teachings, Sewa, and learning this selfless service are central to Sikh identity. Aminder explained that Sikh individuals learn from the teachings of the Guru (Gurbani). She explains that there are two foundations of Sikh faith: Simran (meditation on God's name) and Sewa. Volunteering drives from individuals' socialization to Sewa, or selfless service to others. Aminder also clarified that, once learned, Sewa should occur to Sikhs without any expectations or hesitations. The actions of Sewa should give peace rather than any tangible benefit. The ideal of Sewa and its relevance and important are fundamental to Sikh history, Sikh philosophy, and practice at religious centers. Raj, a 28-year-old man, explains how Sewa became part of him.

"Just growing up and going to Gurdwara, Sewa is going around. As soon as you walk in there are always people doing things that is Sewa and Sewa related. You might not notice it but your body kind of picks it up. Sewa is a natural and it becomes a part of who you are. You learn from Sikh history and you hear from Sakhis, the Gurus, the type of service they did for the Sikh religion. It just empowers you to continue the tradition. I think a lot of it has to do with Sikh history and What Sikh Gurus did."

Sewa is practiced at the religious center and members automatically get engaged in Sewa because it is a Sikh core value. Sewa becomes part of individual Sikhs once they enter the threshold of Sikh Gurdwara (the religious center). The religious center is the main place where Sewa initiates, as the Sikh Gurus teach this core value in that setting. The participant explained that the concept of Sewa can also be learned in reading Sikh history and stories about Sikh religion.

Sewa is oriented towards service to all, and brings peace to individuals when it is practiced, without the gain of tangible benefits in return. Talwinder, a 21-year-old man, explains how being Sikh means continuous adoption of positive and rightful behavior in their lives and discarding negative and wrong behavior. According to Talwinder,

“To me personally, in this age, in this society, the world is a learner. There is an interaction going around you both positive and negative. So, it is an understanding to follow the teachings of Sri Guru Granth Sahib (Sikh Holy book) and incorporate in your life and understandings.”

Being Sikh, according to this participant, following the teachings of Sri Guru Granth Sahib is to make life positively meaningful. According to Talwind, being Sikh means continuously discarding negative behavior around them and incorporating values given by Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

Formal Volunteering (Non- Sikh Contexts)

This section presents findings from twenty- nine cases to explore formal volunteering practices among second generation Sikhs. For this research, I am defining formal volunteering as: the volunteering that takes place through one’s affiliation to a formal organization or institution. I first describe how schools and colleges become venues for volunteering within non-Sikh context. Sikh participants’ formal volunteering can be divided into two other categories as well: volunteering within non- Sikh context and volunteering within Sikh context. Volunteering in a non-Sikh context is represented in part by the volunteering that participants did in school settings.

Volunteering in Schools

Second generation Sikhs start to volunteer in formal ways in a non-Sikh context at school by participation in the key clubs in middle school or high school. In only three cases did formal volunteering begin in elementary

school. Parents encourage their children because participation is service opportunity for their children. For instance, jazmine, 19 years old woman explains that her initial volunteering experience was in a school assisting the community. Jazmine recalled her involvement into volunteering during elementary school:

"I started volunteering in the elementary school through this program called "Gate" (Gifted and Talented Education) and we are like a...it was in California and when you are advanced in the subject they will take you out and put you in that program and through that way we volunteered a lot and we did different activities, like to help our community and elementary school children. When I got to middle school, we used our gate program to help specifically elementary students like to teach them American history or any subject they needed help with."

The participant also explained that she was volunteering in the school setting by teaching younger kids. There were instances when participants explained volunteering experiences beginning from religious center and extending to other non- religious contexts for the self and support for the cause. Harpreet, a 21-year-old man, explains:

"I started volunteering with the local religious center that is Gurdwara, and it was mostly related to religious volunteering like passing out the Langer (community food) and distributing napkins, in high school it changed into more than religious, during high school it was all over. We participated in an environmental protection initiative. It was a structured way to volunteer and a lot of it was hospital related to look good on the resume. Volunteering at the Harper Hospital, volunteering with Red Cross, it continued along with volunteering at Gurdwara (the religious center). Now it was religious as well as outside religious."

The participant explained that his initial volunteering at the religious center progressed to volunteering outside of the religious context. Participation in the religious organizations ease the process of volunteering for second generation Sikhs to connect to other non- Sikh contexts as well. These examples also show that volunteering does not always initiate at school, but religious center may become first venue to volunteer for Sikhs when they are young children. It can also be to support a cause or to learn some skills.

Volunteering in College

Besides volunteering in elementary and secondary school, affiliation to Sikh organizations shaped how participants reported volunteering in college. In total, 11 participants reported they affiliated with a Sikh organization called "Sikh Cess" in the metropolitan Detroit area, to engage in formal volunteering. Sikh Cess not only provides opportunities to engage in Sewa at the Gurdwara but also it helps to smooth individuals' transition and adaptation in a college setting. Simardeep, a 25, year old woman, agreed her start at a local university was assisted through her connections to Sikh Cess. She explained:

"When I joined the college, I was not familiar with the area around there, so I joined the Sikh student organization at [a local university]. We would go to [a local] Gurdwara for community service, like health screening for diabetes and other health issues for members. We would offer members [information about] good nutritional food habits and exercise routines. Diabetes was the main thing. After that experience, I decided that after my undergrad I will give one. year to Detroit Schools. There was this program called City Year and I [worked at an urban high school and did] counseling."

This is an example which demonstrates how Sikh organizations play vital role in connecting college-aged Sikh youth to the larger community by giving service opportunities in the Gurdwara as well as extending in the campuses. Another example of a Sikh Cess experience in college was given by Raj, a 28-year-old man.

"Once I got to the college, I had an opportunity to work with organizations that gave me opportunity to meet with other Sikhs and share experiences with them. I guess I already touched on Gurdwara. . . [and] the Sikh youth camp that was held every year. In college, [I participated in] the Sikh students Association, which was a student run organization. [Also] Sikh Cess, which is a Greater Detroit organization. That was the way to stay active and get involved in the community."

The participant above stated that volunteering in college gave him a chance to get involved with other Sikhs as well share his volunteering experiences. These connections to Sikh organizations was the way to stay active in the community.

As evidenced by the above quote, SIKHCESS was not the only organization through which college-aged students volunteered. Simrat, a 21, year old woman, explains that the reason for her volunteering is not

only to learn specific skills but also to become familiar with her community.

Arvinder, a 25-year-old woman, had always volunteered with non-Sikh organizations like volunteering at Detroit Free Clinics also at the Harper hospital but she recently started volunteering with a Sikh organization at the National and International level. One example of her work with a non-Sikh organization was her work as a medical student in the Metro Detroit free clinics. She regularly volunteered with non-Sikh groups, but it was only recently she decided to volunteer with an organization based in New York, which assists larger causes.

Formal Volunteering within Religious Contexts

Besides providing weekly congregational events, the Sikh religious center links Sikhs to the wider American society by arranging various volunteering events for connecting second generation Sikhs to larger American society. The religious center helps to link interested volunteers to organizations through announcements about forthcoming community events by sending emails, information about the newsletter for the forthcoming volunteering events. Blood donation camps are organized and affiliated to Red Cross Society of America and considered a big event to give back by second generation Sikhs. Veer explained his formal volunteering experience at the Sikh religious center at the blood donation camp which was organized by the Sikh community. He could help doctors and nurses draw blood and with which he could assist.

Seven participants recalled that they volunteered at events for either Paint the Town (n=5) or Habitat for Humanity (n=5) in their volunteering activities. (Paint the Town is an organization that paints or repairs home for poor communities in Detroit.) Both organizations help to build houses for the less resourceful people in the Detroit. Ajit, 29-year-old man, recalls an event of Paint the Town as the most memorable experience of his young life.

"We used to have the Paint the Town Event and one Uncle from Gurdwara organized it. There were 30-40 people from our community will go and do the painting for the needy the whole day".

At least five participants reported this event as an interesting community event, which allowed them to assist those in need as a member of the community. Arvinder gave the example of different projects she participated in through the Gurdwara (religious center).

“Programs through Gurdwara were Habitat for Humanity, for making homes, and soup kitchens. Habitat for humanity is an organization that exists for 10 -20 years. The initiative was in urban areas to provide people houses in the urban areas. People are doing good work and have families but do not have potential to buy houses. It is not that people are not working but they do not have sufficient [money to buy a home]. These brand-new homes are given to these people. Supplies are provided by the organization to build homes for helping people to become self-sufficient. A grass root effort was to make them self-sufficient.”

The Sikh community makes it easier to find available volunteering events than it is to find as an individual, not associated with a specific group. The religious center also organizes programs such as soup kitchens and food banks, where members of the congregation can help to pack the food to help the poor and other needy individuals in society. Puneet, 24 explained how the health fair served the Sikh community but offered help to everyone in the surrounding area as well.

“[The] Medical Health Fair is the huge event we have every year in Gurdwara; it does not focus on the Sikhs in the area, [it] is open to the entire public in the South East Michigan area. We publicize it for everybody in the South -East Michigan area. It is easy for us to target the Sikh community, but anybody is welcome. We have people come from all over the area. We provided medical services like blood work or medical attention to medically uninsured, underprivileged, or other medically underserved. Provide resources and medical services. This obviously goes hand in hand with the Sikh philosophy. It was absolutely for anyone who needed help or whatever resources we could provide.”

As the participant described above, medical fairs are not targeted to the Sikh community specifically since everyone is welcome, but it is initiated within the religious organization, creating a formal volunteering opportunity for second generation individuals.

Sometimes, then, formal volunteering was just “easy” when participants were affiliated with religious centers. All participants reported that they received information about upcoming volunteering from the Sunday congregational meeting at the religious center. Information about volunteering events is announced after weekly prayers, is also easily accessible at the religious center web site and by the monthly newsletters. Flyers are often displayed on the notice board at the religious center notice board.

Most the participants (n=23) make the point that they visit their religious center to get involved in community as well as for spiritual involvement. There are no material benefits expected or encouraged by the religious center to get second generation individuals involved in the Sewa. "Working together" and "making a difference" in the community are the sole motivations behind Sikhs engaging in volunteering, at least according to the participants in this sample. Puneet, a 24-year-old woman, explained:

"There was no incentive. The biggest incentive was growing up in this community. It was more you think you are part of that community and you own it and feel responsibility towards it. There was no external push, but I think you are part of it and if you think some part of it needs to be fixed, you will work together and make [a] difference."

The participant explained that growing up as part of the Sikh community, both Sewa and volunteering come naturally to Sikhs and they perform the action solely because they know they should do it. According to Davinder, a 24-year-old male,

"No incentives were given. I mean coming to Gurdwara, listening to Gur Bani [religious hymns] . . . It tells you to be selfless, so that is the biggest incentive."

Veer, Raj, and Saminder also confirmed that while performing Sewa they gain useful utilitarian skills. Most importantly, while engaged in Sewa they benefit from the social aspect of formal volunteer work as Sikhs work together and share and learn from each other's experiences.

The majority (n=23) of the participants in this study who have either volunteered through a Sikh organization or non-Sikh organization have also done significant fundraising for the American Cancer Society, have always participated in blood donation Camps for American Red Cross or made homes for poor through the organization called Habitat for humanity

Participants when asked benefits of volunteering responded, "humbles us" (n= 5), allows us to see different perspectives (n=9), "raises us above our personal horizons" (n=1), and links us to different non-profit organizations (n=7). Three participants agreed that they volunteered because of the cause they supported n=3). At least two participants agreed that volunteering is for making the difference in your community (n= 2). The question, what are the benefits for volunteering from second generation participants was a triangulating question to explore further their experiences of volunteering. Triangulating in qualitative

methodology is an approach that provides further validity to the data or the findings. Expression of tangible benefits identify underlying motives. In this case, the responses by all the participants indicate altruistic values motivated by religious teachings. Five participants responded that volunteering humbles them. By engaging into volunteering, they become modest and meek rather than self elevated, or egotistic. Nine participants agreed that by volunteering they can see diverse perspectives. Volunteering is a way to learn diverse perspectives indicating that United States is a diverse society and by seeking diverse perspective one contributes to the values of diversity for appreciating pluralism. Almost seven participants believed that they connected to non-profit organizations. Connection to non-profit organization via volunteering also validates that service orientation is more valuable than profit or certain personal benefits. At least three participants acknowledge that they volunteered because they believed in the cause of volunteering one example was environmental organization. This also makes me interpret that Sikh community strive to live as a humane community. Volunteers also engaged in volunteering to support humane and social causes. To be Sikh is to volunteer and to volunteer is to be Sikh, according to many second-Generation Sikhs in this study.

Volunteering Protects and identifies the Sikh Community

Since September 11, 2001, Sikh volunteering participation has increased in U.S. At least five participants have mentioned that volunteering is the way to educate about the true beliefs of Sikhs to their fellow Americans. Through their volunteering, they aim to increase awareness about Sikhs, what meaning their religion brings to their lives to decrease the hate crimes against Sikhs among other reasons. Religious leaders at religious centers make Sikhs aware and concerned about the image of Sikhism they embody so that they may prevent hate crimes against the greater Sikh community. Volunteering is the path that may increase the actual image of Sikhs in U.S. society.

Dialjit, an 18-year-old man, observed that: "It is the way we can tell American people who we are. Volunteering does not hurt [the Sikh] image. I mean, it has certainly improved [in the] last 10-12 years. It helps people fit in[to] American society. Now most people know who Sikh [s are]. It is to tell people who we are."

Dialjit responded to the question posed by the researcher as to how volunteering is a way to participate in the wider American society. His answers also clarify that the awareness about Sikhs in American culture has increased in the last decade or so and believes volunteering is an important technique to educate Americans about the Sikh faith.

Nivaan, a 22-year-old man and law school graduate, recalled his most recent volunteering project with the SALDEF (American Sikh Advocacy Legal Defense and Educational Fund) in Washington, D.C. He explained that the SALDEF is working upon several issues, but a primary focus of the organization is evident in their mission statement: to "help and restore positive Sikh image through media monitoring." He further explained that there are some Sikh organizations that are working to restore positive Sikh images within American society and he decided to work for one of these organizations because he believes that it is one of the major concerns of the Sikh community in the U.S. He goes on to say that part of this image work is done through volunteering in the larger community: "Working with organizations that help people in need, like food banks or homeless shelters or organizations for interfaith or working with communities larger than Sikh community."

Jyot, a 23-year-old woman, also notes that volunteering is the method to educate U.S. citizens about Sikhism and its tenet of service to others. She states: "People from diverse communities will know who Sikhs are and [that] they are people who help others." Two things can be noticed from Jyot's argument. First, the participant is aware that not many people know about this faith group. Secondly, people from "diverse communities" are mentioned. This goes along with the principle of equality which demonstrates that Sikhs help everyone. By helping diverse communities, Sikhs help to spread awareness about Sikhism.

Harpreet, a 21-year-old man, when asked how volunteering is the channel to participate in wider U.S. society answered: "Religion and religious community make Sikh aware and concerned about a positive Sikh image and makes efforts to prevent hate crimes against the Sikh community." Harpreet also points out that religious communities play an important role in protecting communities and by creating awareness about certain issues, particularly to young second generation Sikhs. It also becomes apparent that hate crimes against Sikhs is a serious concern for the Sikh community. Religious organizations try to inform and motivate young individuals for volunteering so that they can integrate well; making other non-Sikh Cultures known who Sikhs are:

These quotes are also important to understand the context of a post-September 11th era and how this event weighs heavily on the Sikh community because of the potential negativity from non-Sikhs in the U.S. This means that practicing Sewa within the larger U.S. community becomes extremely important for elevating the positive presence of the Sikh community and showing outsiders that Sikh individuals are good, responsible, helpful people and not linked to terrorists around the world. Volunteering and awareness about Sikhs become an important goal for the Sikh community and protects them from the potential prejudice, discrimination, and violence that comes from a social and political context that is defined by the unfortunate event of September 11th.

Conclusion

This study is based on twenty-nine second generation Sikh participants and their volunteering experiences. Recruiting through snowball sampling procedures from a Sikh religious center in Southeastern Michigan, face to face interviews are the modes of data collection. A phenomenological, qualitative approach for the analysis highlighted lived experiences regarding religion and volunteering and how it extended beyond Sikh community. This study is also a study on a minority religious group that occupies double minority status a, minority religious group in the country of origin as well as in the migrated nation. This is a single group study to explore the ideas and connections between religion and volunteering.

Major findings include that religious involvement still has a substantial influence on volunteering practices of second generation Sikhs in my study. Sikh identity is, in large part, the identification with religious teachings not an upkeep of outward appearance of religious symbols. Being Sikh in a larger context means practicing religious values/ teachings, such as Sewa, or selfless service to others. Thus, second generation Sikhs treat fellow beings as members of human community and hold strong spirit of "we" identity, by living in the spirit of community, and value Sewa. In other words, helping others is the basis for, or spirit of the Sikh religion, and thus, attention to Sewa remains even when second generation individuals step outside the Sikh community.

Religious organizations also become the basis for formal volunteering among second generation Sikhs as well, according to my study. In the category of formal volunteering, participants in my sample reported

volunteering at events at the religious center; as well as programs, events, and camps organized by the religious center in the larger community, by schools and colleges, and by other non-profit or professional organizations. Participants in this study quickly pointed out formal volunteering would include involvement in a local Paint the Town or Greening of Detroit event, to help less resourceful people in Detroit or to support environmental causes. Other formal volunteering activity included regular service to soup kitchens and food banks, regular participation in programs such as Habitat for Humanity, or Red Cross programs, that could make them responsible to community at large. These activities were often, but did not always have to be, initiated by Sikh religious organizations or the religious center. Participation in Sikh Youth Camps at the religious center also played a special role in keeping second generation Sikhs protected from negative stigma, and many participants were dedicated to helping out/giving back to these camps (and other similar efforts) because of this benefit to their community.

Being a minority religious group, Sikhs talk intrinsically about their faith, practices and Sikh ideology. My research contradicts the "silent exodus" established from the past literature on Asian immigrants and religion in the past. My participants express enthusiastic yet expressive views about their religion, collective action social responsibility via volunteering. They are quite aware about their cultural history and certainly religion directs their actions. They contribute to the society they are part of. A participant observed "

....."Well, I think that as I guess I am using the word proactive a lot. I feel that Sikh religion is very active religion and that we are mandated not to be just doing prayers but also to be productive to better the creation around us and just not better yourself only but also to see yourself as a part of larger community or creation we do if we do not do something to improve around us is just like not always keep taking but also give back"
....

My research concludes with the value argument that Sikhs makes the human creation better by improving and contributing to the society they are in. According to Barry and Paul, 2014 "Most immigrants seek a place where they can prosper without giving up their religious beliefs".

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