

# Sports Insight

Young Indian Males (16-25)



## Introduction

Our latest consumer research looks at how sports organisations can engage the young Indian male market and how the offer can be tailored to maximise engagement.

The guide is based on findings from our research programme which consulted through faith centre settings and community events. We also carried out focus groups with two key BME youth groups made up of young males from Hindu and Sikh backgrounds. We also completed lifestyle questionnaires at cultural festivals building insight into how this market segment approaches sports participation.

It summarises information on how to engage young Indian males and the areas to consider when planning sports activities.

## National Picture

The Indian population continues to be the largest BME group in the UK. As a result, the UK is home to the 2nd largest Indian population in the western world outside of India, behind only the US. The Indian community grew by 36% from 2001 to 2011 and reached 1.4 million.

The young Indian male group is an important market segment for sports governing bodies and providers to tap into and increase participation. Sporting Equals, looked at three core metropolitan counties which have a significant Indian population.

### Young Asian Males

(Age Groups)	Inner London	West Midlands	Greater Manchester
10-15	4,539	13,692	3,927
16-19	4,731	10,214	2,959
20-24	13,149	16,445	4,895
25-29	19,439	18,748	5,416

## Religion

Indians are the most religiously diverse community, spread across Islam (14%), Hinduism (45%) and Sikhism (22%). Indian people are more likely to have a religion, more likely to practice that religion regularly, and more likely to feel religion plays an important part in their life compared to White British.

The Indian community also show some strong links with community relations, 31% of Indians attend a place of worship weekly and 24% attend at least once a month. Regular attendance highlights the opportunities for sports bodies to engage with and coordinate activities and increase participation.

**“Our religion teaches us to value life and value our health. We use sport and physical activity as a tool to improve well-being but also a social mechanism to bring together our community and work collectively.”**

Focus group response from, Sikh Gurdwara



## Sporting Equals Archetypes

Sporting Equals has defined key BME archetypes from research carried out over the years into participation using focus groups, questionnaires and engagement marketing at cultural festivals.

**Culturally Excluded:** those who face cultural or religious barriers to participation

**Interested but inactive:** passive 'couch potatoes', who may be sport fans but do very little themselves

**Occasionals with potential:** those engaged with sport but could be pushed to do more sport

**Fragile Regulars:** sporting habits drop off as life cycle changes or diminishing opportunities in sport settings

**Early sporting drop-outs:** those who drop out of sport once they leave full-time education



## Typical archetypes

**HARVIR SINGH**  
21, Male, Student

Occasional with Potential

Indian – Sikh

Dropped off participation after school. He feels that his current lifestyle including studies and work does not leave much room for participation.

Harvir is looking for easily accessible sports opportunities delivered locally such as his local faith centre or leisure centre.

Takes part in:  
Football and Cricket

**Prabjot Lidhar**  
18, Male, Student

Interested but Inactive

Indian – Sikh

Prabjoy works part-time to support his studies. His hobbies include new technology including spending time on computer games and the internet.

Prabjot regularly attends a local faith centre based, youth facility and recognises this as a place where sport can be integrated and built into people's lives from an early age.

Takes part in:  
No Participation

**Darshan Pindoria**  
22, Male, Community Organiser

Fragile Regular

Indian – Hindu

Darshan has less responsibility with family commitments and focuses primarily on his work. He attends gym sessions regularly and participates in as much sport as possible.

Darshan understands that work and lifestyle commitments will change moving forward. He will be settling down soon and understands maintaining participation will become a challenge.

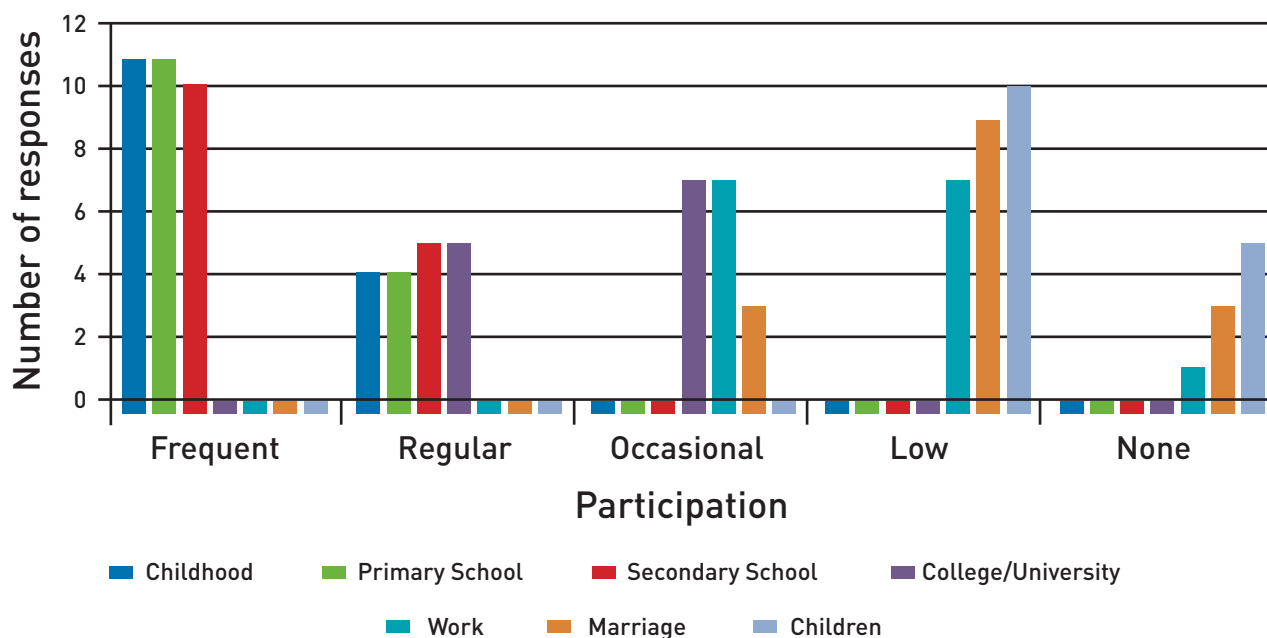
Takes part in:  
Football, Swimming, Gym

## Lifestyles

There are particular moments within young Indian male's life whereby they make key choices as to what they must prioritise and what will be sacrificed to make space for other things. Our discussions were led by lifestyle question to assess when they felt they would reduce participation.

**Sample Size: 18**

### Indian male sports drop-off



The economic challenge facing young people presents additional pressure and often leaves sport as a low priority. Through childhood, and education many highlight engagement with sport and physical activity. Key areas whereby drop off include higher education, at work and planning to settle down.

Young Indian males highlight these lifestyle changes as busy, difficult periods which makes it hard to find time for sport and physical activity. Sport has to benefit the individual and make a logical social choice as many young people including Indian males follow complex lifestyle patterns.

Parents often have expectations of fulfilling academic responsibilities first which often leaves very little time to socialise and take part in organised sport.

**“College, University and work is where it really counts; South Asian parents apply the pressure to make sure we do our best.”**

Many respondents highlighted that a sporting career would not satisfy parents demands, and therefore dedicating time other than for leisure reduced once important exams and studies started.

**“You hardly see top Asian professionals in sport; it's why parents can't see a future there. Most parents would like their son or daughter to be a sportsperson but realistically they won't support it!”**

## Key Messages

**Peer recruitment is the most effective method in encouraging young Indian males to participate.**

Within the Indian community there is a strong sense of brotherhood allowing easier communication and routes to participation.

From our focus groups we found that participants would feel more comfortable if someone within their community was the main organiser and coordinated functions and roles with sports providers.

Word of mouth was the most common method used by young Indian males to engage their peers, followed by the use of social media sites such as WhatsApp and FaceBook to spread communication.

"We have a group chat set-up on our phones, I send out a message whose interested in playing such and such, time, place and everyone can be included. It's about keeping things fast and easy. Why five-a-side works and why other sports need to find the core participation."

Focus group response, Hindu Temple

Other formal methods can include the development of promotional materials to be used in community settings such as faith centre or youth centre to help recruit other young people onto projects.

The peer approach can be successful because:

- Young Indian males enjoy the social aspects of sports participation and would like sports providers to offer social benefits
- Sports programmes can be promoted in a way that other young people can relate to and understand – they talk the same language
- Sports providers can work closely with Indian community leaders as they have access to young members of the Indian community who normally would not participate
- Seeing another young person like them involved in the project activity gives them a realistic role model to which they can aspire, thereby motivating them to give it a go too



"If I was contacted by FA and told to come to pitch or facility they had arranged with some people I did not know then that would be difficult for me or anyone but if it's Darshan and I know the centre and the lads then I will be confident to attend every week."

Focus group response, Hindu Temple

## Young people's lives are dominated by technology



Time spent in hours a week on each activity

It is vital to recognise that ‘one size does not fit all’ and that engagement activities must be pitched at a level that is appropriate for young Indian males and tailored to their needs.

“People who run clubs and sports facilities tend to tailor for the mainstream and those that are good at sport take advantage. What would make a difference is sessions for people who want to take part for fun and not focus on skill. It can be hard accessing boxing clubs or football centres.”

The research suggested that it is not ‘religion’ or ‘culture’ which prevents young Indian males from taking part. It is the perception around ‘confidence’, ‘skill’ and lack of with mainstream structures which are causing barriers to formal participation.

Young Indian males are more likely to do sport with people from similar backgrounds and familiar environments. This steady introduction to sport allows the testing and upskilling of participants before they feel comfortable to interact with wider groups.

The Sporting Equals faith centre model is a successful approach at engaging diverse communities within community based settings. Similar approaches can help young Indian males participate by bringing sport direct to them; pitching to meet their needs.

**Young Indian males value formal, accredited qualifications.** Young people, especially those who have achieved at school, are highly motivated by formal, accredited qualifications. Young Indian males have a strong connection with academia and would take the opportunity to add further to their skill base.

“Our parents play important role in ensuring we maximise our education for successful careers but if we show how sport is contributing to academics that will go long way in educating parents.”

To ensure the active involvement of this group over a sustained period it is important that they recognise the skills they have developed and feel they have gained something concrete as a result of their efforts. That can be a certificate, part of a club or skills programme including coaching skills or refereeing.



**Find out about the needs of Young Indian males to enable them to be fully involved.** Young Asian males tend to have rapidly changing priorities and circumstances that may make it difficult for long term participation. Give consideration to the short-term before needs of different young people so they are not prevented from taking part.

## Sport by Sport



**FOOTBALL** – This is the most popular and easily available sport within many communities whether that is in a structured setting or leisurely participation. However, drop-off is common when lifestyle changes, therefore focus development around sustainable projects that are flexible around the needs of individuals.



**CRICKET** – Many young Indian males have mixed feelings, they resonate with the sport but do not enjoy the ongoing commitment, longevity of the game. Cricket is defined by seasonality as many Young Indian males take part in the summer as recreation. The sport can be tailored for small-sided indoor games for all year participation.



**SWIMMING** – Majority of young Indian males enjoyed taking part in swimming and felt accessibility and cost was very good. There is mixed use of the swimming pool with some young Indian males indicating that the sport is vital for their overall fitness whilst others, would like to see the availability of classes tailored to their age and background.



**TENNIS** – Young Indian males indicated a high demand for Tennis and wanted further information on where to access facilities and the numbers that can take part. Summertime was highlighted as key part of the year to engage young Indian males with sessions that provide equipment and coaching to improve skill and confidence.



**BOXING** – There are two camps for participation in Boxing, those who want to compete and perform and those interested in the fitness gained from Boxing classes to improve body image and confidence. Young Indian males see Boxing as an important sport to shape their identity and they use Boxing as a mantra to succeeding in life and work.



## Sport England Youth Review

The primary research and focus groups were based upon the main findings from the Sport England Youth Review.

The insight supported us to build an understanding of how young Indian males participate and engage with sport.

Our findings agreed with those of the Sport England youth review. However, we explored what we have learned about young Indian male's attitudes towards sport and the relationship these have to their participation.

The emerging Indian youth has switched on to the digital and technological changes with access to real-time information and value of the association of sport in improving health and well-being. There is an acceptance that some sports do not accommodate them or they have no interest in them but keep their doors open for new opportunities and engagement at a later date.



## References and Acknowledgements

2 focus groups took part in West London within faith centre setting with Hindu Temple and Sikh Gurdwara. Quantitative data was also gathered at key cities throughout 2014 including Manchester, Birmingham and London Mela's.

### Our Thanks To:

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**Sporting Equals**  
Promoting ethnic diversity in sport & physical activity

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