



University of
Leicester

The Leicester
**HATE
CRIME**
Project

Briefing Paper 5

**RELIGIOUSLY MOTIVATED
HATE CRIME**

**This briefing paper is part of a series of publications produced as part of
The Leicester Hate Crime Project:**

Findings and Conclusions: Full Report

Findings and Conclusions: Executive Summary Report

Victims' Manifesto

Briefing Paper 1: Disablist Hate Crime

Briefing Paper 2: Gendered Hostility

Briefing Paper 3: Homophobic Hate Crime

Briefing Paper 4: Racist Hate Crime

Briefing Paper 5: Religiously Motivated Hate Crime

All of these publications can be accessed at www.le.ac.uk/centreforhatestudies.

RELIGIOUSLY MOTIVATED HATE CRIME

VICTIMS' PERSPECTIVES

Over a two-year period from 2012 to 2014 the Leicester Hate Crime Project team conducted groundbreaking research into acts of hate, prejudice and targeted hostility. Funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, this research – Britain's biggest ever study of hate crime victimisation – engaged with over 4,000 people from a diverse range of backgrounds and recorded the views of 1,421 victims of hate crime. The findings from this work have generated new and significant insights into the nature, forms and impacts of hate offences.

The Leicester Hate Crime Project had three broad aims:

- to discover as much as possible about people's experiences of hate, prejudice and targeted hostility;
- to understand the physical and emotional harms suffered by victims and their families; and
- to identify ways of improving the quality of support offered to victims.

The project used a broad definition of hate crime in order to capture the experiences of anyone, from any background, who felt that they had been victimised specifically because of who they are. Among the research participants were those who felt that they had been targeted because of their religious identity. This briefing paper, the fifth in a series of such papers from the project, outlines the standout findings from this aspect of the research. It focuses upon the nature and extent of religiously motivated hate crime; the impact of being targeted; concerns about future victimisation; the profile of offenders; the reporting of hate crimes; and the value of support services supplied to victims.

This briefing paper refers to the views of people from a range of religious backgrounds. It is important to acknowledge, however, that categorising victims like this does underplay the fact that many of our research participants had been targeted as a result of more than one aspect of their identity. Many issues are therefore shared between different groups and these are noted in the text where appropriate.

A full set of the project's findings, including detailed analysis and commentary, can be found in the *Findings and Conclusions* report.

Profile of religiously motivated hate crime victims

The survey was completed by 215 people who felt that they had been targeted because of hostility towards their religious identity while an additional 33 people took part in individual or group interviews. Combined, this provides a total sample of 248 victims of religiously motivated hate crime. What follows is a demographic breakdown of the profile of participants within this subset of victims.

Age

Age	Total sample ¹	Proportion of total sample (%) ^{2,3}
Under 18	21	8
18 to 24	86	35
25 to 34	36	15
35 to 44	48	19
45 to 54	27	11
55 to 64	12	5
65 to 74	12	5
75 to 84	2	1
85 or over	1	0
Prefer not to say	1	0
Not stated	2	1

¹This includes all of the survey respondents and interview participants who felt that they had been victimised because of their religious identity.

²This is the percentage for the total sample of religiously motivated hate crime victims.

³Individual percentages have been rounded to the nearest integer in this and subsequent tables.

Gender

Gender	Total sample	Proportion of total sample (%)
Male	93	38
Female	155	63

Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Total sample	Proportion of total sample (%)
White British	22	9
White Irish	2	1
Eastern European	2	1
Western European	1	0
Any other White background	4	2
Black/Black British	5	2
Black Caribbean	1	0
Black African	27	11
Asian/Asian British	72	29
Indian	40	16
Pakistani	24	10
Bangladeshi	5	2
Chinese	1	0
Any other Asian background	7	3
Irish Traveller	0	0
European Roma	5	2
Iraqi	8	3
Iranian	1	0
Any other Middle Eastern background	4	2
White and Black Caribbean	1	0
White and Asian	1	0
White and Black African	1	0

Ethnicity Continued

Ethnicity	Total sample	Proportion of total sample (%)
Any other mixed background	2	1
Any other ethnic group	4	2
Not stated	8	3

Religion

Religion	Total sample ⁴	Proportion of total sample (%)
Buddhism	4	2
Christianity	23	10
Hinduism	28	13
Islam	136	62
Judaism	7	3
Sikhism	14	6
Other	7	3
Not stated	1	0

⁴ This data set is based on those participants who stated that they actively practise a religion.

⁵ 'Other' responses included 'Catholic' (n=4), 'Jehovah's Witness' (n=1), 'Shaman' (n=1) and 'Wicca' (n=1).

Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation	Total sample	Proportion of total sample (%)
Heterosexual (straight)	205	83
Gay	6	2
Bisexual	2	1
Undecided	2	1
Prefer not to say	13	5
Not stated	20	8

1 What is the nature and extent of religiously motivated hate crime?

1.1 What forms of hate crime do people experience, and where do they occur?

Of those targeted because of hostility towards their religious identity:

- 88% of survey respondents had been a victim of verbal abuse. Within this subset of victims, Christian respondents were more likely to have experienced verbal abuse regularly (38%) compared to 19% of Muslim and 4% of Hindu participants.
- 69% had experienced a form of harassment such as bullying or threatening behaviour.
- One quarter (24%) had experienced cyberbullying, whilst four in ten had experienced property crime (41%).
- Just under a third had been the victim of violent crime (39%). Experiences of violent crime were slightly more frequent for Hindu (46%) and Muslim respondents (42%) than for people from other faith groups.
- Around a third of hate crimes against these groups had occurred in a public street or park, the most common location for incidents (37%). Outside, near or in the home of a respondent accounted for 24% of offences.
- Overall, four in ten respondents had been victimised when they were on their own (40%).

The most common form is verbal abuse - attacks, kind of, where people are swearing or getting a bit heated. People will come up to you just to have an argument.

Evangelical Christian youth

On a day-to-day basis we have comments passed, people giving us weird looks, saying something. We've always had that, but since high profile incidents such as Woolwich it does spike up.

Veiled Muslim woman

Yeah, I've experienced some abuse for my race, but more religious and also for my sexuality. I've been called a terrorist, and just generally saying that we [Muslims] are a problem at the moment ... I got called Paki in the workplace, I was really, really angry about it. Then I started a new job, no one made any racist comments but they made it about my sexuality. It just replaced race.

Gay Muslim man

1.2 What concerns do people have about future victimisation?

Of those targeted because of hostility towards their religious identity:

- Significant proportions of survey respondents expressed concerned about being verbally abused and harassed on those grounds again in the future (91% and 88% respectively).
- Two thirds referred to being 'fairly' or 'very' concerned about becoming a victim of a violent crime in future (66%).
- Just over a quarter were 'very concerned' about being a victim of sexual violence in the future (27%). Both Hindu and Muslim respondents described higher levels of concern compared to members of other faith groups (42% and 45% respectively).
- Other than their religion, victims within this subset were also concerned that their ethnicity (55%), dress and appearance (41%), and gender (28%) could be contributing to their experiences of hate crime.
- 57% felt that their quality of life had been significantly affected by the fear of hate crime.

I feel I can't walk outside that door [pointing to the front door]. If I go to the shop anything could happen. I just don't feel safe in this country anymore.

Hindu youth

You're always living in fear. I mean a woman in a burka or a man with a beard will try not to go out at night, avoid pubs, avoid dark alleyways, avoid stopping near a car and speaking with someone looking for directions. It's all just fear.

Muslim man

1.3 Who commits hate crime?

In cases involving people targeted because of hostility towards their religious identity:

- Over half of the most recent incidents experienced by respondents (56%) had been perpetrated by more than one offender, with around one in eleven cases involving over five offenders (8%).
- In 61% of incidents the victim did not know at least one of the offender(s).
- The offender(s) had been single males or groups that included males in 71% of incidents.
- 5% of the most recent incidents had involved an offender or offenders aged under 13, 29% were aged 13-19, and 44% had involved those aged 20-30.
- Six out of ten of the most recent incidents had involved perpetrators of White ethnicity (60%), with 13% involving Asian/Asian British perpetrators and 7% Black/Black British.

All of them were under age, they were 17 or 18 and all of them were totally drunk. You can smell it when they talk to you.

Sikh youth

She said "I know, I'm Sikh, and we know about Islam, we know about your religion, pathetic. I can't believe in this day and age you're allowed in this 21st century". She just went on and on. Oh another bit I missed out, she said "You're terrorists, you're terrorists!"

Muslim man

2 What is the impact of victimisation?

2.1 Verbal abuse and harassment

Of those targeted because of hostility towards their religious identity:

- Only 2% of survey respondents stated that being a victim of verbal abuse and harassment had had no impact on them.
- A wide range of impacts were referred to which included feeling upset, anxious, fearful and vulnerable as a result of their victimisation.
- 38% said that their experience(s) had made them feel angry towards others.
- 58% had avoided certain areas in order to feel safer, 44% had avoided going out at night and 29% had improved home security.
- Just 13% stated that they had not changed any aspect of their life in order to feel safer and reduce the risk of victimisation.

It makes you feel demoralised. It makes you feel hated. It makes you feel isolated, unwanted.

Muslim man

We all know somebody who wears a veil. And in my case it's my sister and her daughters. So it affects us all when someone is victimised ... it just demoralises you, because you feel even more vulnerable.

Veiled Muslim woman

2.2 Violent victimisation

Of those targeted because of hostility towards their religious identity:

- Only 4% of survey respondents stated that being a victim of a violent or sexual hate crime had had no impact on them at all.
- 53% said that being the victim of a more violent or extreme form of hate crime had made them feel vulnerable, followed by 50% who referred to feeling fearful and 45% who had felt anxious as a result of their victimisation.
- 32% had begun avoiding certain areas and a similar proportion reported that they wanted to move house as a result of their experiences (29%).
- 24% said that their experiences had made them feel depressed.

It's that feeling that gets left with you. You do feel scared. Now whenever I go to town I'm extra careful what I do and where I go. Even when you go down an escalator I'll wait until no one's there before I get on the escalator. If there are lots of people in the lift I won't go in there. It affects you in different ways.

Muslim woman

He spat and I swear to God I didn't even know a human could have that much saliva. It was disgusting, he covered my face with spit. And he drove off and the worse thing was the kids seen that.

Muslim man

3 How are agencies responding to victimisation?

3.1 Did victims report their most recent hate incident or crime to anyone?

- Only 23% of survey respondents targeted because of hostility towards their religion had reported their experiences to the police.
- The reason most frequently cited for reporting to the police was that it had been a serious crime (cited by 78% of respondents). 22% of religiously motivated hate crime victims had also reported their experiences to the police because they needed practical support.
- Of those who had reported to another organisation, the most common forms of help provided were emotional and practical support (26% and 11% respectively).
- 56% of those targeted because of their religion had not reported their last experience of hate crime to anyone. Muslim respondents were most likely to say that they had not reported (63%), followed by Hindu respondents (50%).
- The most common explanations given for not reporting recent experiences to the police were that the police would not take it seriously (33%); that the respondent could deal with it themselves or with help of others (24%); and that the police could not have done anything (21%).

When I told my friends about what happened to me, they found it hilarious that I reported it to the police. Because they think it's something weird to do, they're just so used to it they no longer view it as a hate crime at all.

Muslim youth

3.2 How satisfied were victims with the support they received?

- 28% of victims targeted because of hostility towards their religion did not believe that the incidents they had reported to the police had been recorded.
- Nearly half (48%) said that the police had not investigated their hate incident.
- Only one in ten cases reported by victims of religiously motivated hate crime had gone to, or were in the process of going to court (10%).

I'm beginning to think there is now some sort of, what do they call it, institutionalised racism. So is this institutionalised Islamophobia? We have two ladies who have reported incidents, conveniently the CCTV is the wrong way. It's not recorded as a hate crime but as a public affray. Let's report another one and conveniently the CCTV footage is lost.

Veiled Muslim woman

- Overall within this subset, 32% of victims would not encourage others to report hate crimes to the police.
- Of those who had reported to organisations or individuals other than the police, only 35% said that they would encourage others to report to these services.
- Although 38% were satisfied with their response from the police, 50% were dissatisfied.
- 26% felt that the police were doing a good or excellent job of tackling hate crime in Leicester.
- However, 40% felt the police were doing a poor or very poor job of tackling hate crime in the city.

We are all told to report incidents, we went and reported this to the police. Our experience following that was actually extremely negative ... we were told that because they couldn't find anybody that they were not going to record it as a hate crime, but as a drunk and disorderly incident, public affray or whatever they call it. That has made me feel extremely sad ... I started to think I would have been better off not reporting it because then I would not have had the added stress of going through all of that and nothing happening.

Veiled Muslim woman



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