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Media Portrayals of the Indian community in the UK

Neha Sinha

DEMO-India Research Report 2015/08

DEMO-India
Developing Evidence based Management and Operations in
India-EU Migration and Partnership

Research Report
Thematic Report
DEMO-India RR 2015/08

Media Portrayals of the Indian Community in the UK

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DEMO-India – Developing Evidence based Management and Operations in India-EU Migration and Partnership (DEMO: India-EU MaP)

The Demo: India-EU MaP project, co-funded by the European Commission, is a continuation of the Carim India project (www.india-eu-migration.eu) and it examines the multiple facets of Indian migration to the EU. Its overall aim is to improve migration management between India and the EU, strengthen EU-India relations, and produce in-depth empirical knowledge about the different migration streams and pathways of Indian nationals in the EU. Its specific goals include providing:

1. Evidence based research for more informed policy making and state intervention.
2. Improved source country capacity in managing migration.
3. Raising awareness among potential migrants of the risks of irregular migration.
4. Collaboration with civil society groups.
5. Empirical research and analysis of Indian communities across the EU, and their impact.

The project is led by the Indian Centre for Migration in Delhi with the partnership of the Migration Policy Centre, RSCAS, EUI.

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Abstract

Through an analysis of 300 news articles, this report is an attempt at measuring and understanding the portrayal of the Indian community in the UK through a media content analysis of the articles published in the UK press. It contains an overview of the media themes ranging from business and investments to the education and labour market integration of Indian immigrants. Other issues addressed are integration, cultural aspects, crime reporting and religion. This analysis of the UK media's portrayal of the Indian community shows that media has mostly focused on culture, religion, integration and business issues. Furthermore, on some topics, there is definitely a divide in treatment between broadsheet and tabloid newspapers, ranging from positive portrayal of the Indian community to extremely biased reportage related to some specific issues.

Key words: migration, integration, media, content analysis

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1. Introduction

The UK's migration policy has been focused on reducing net migration in recent years, particularly since the general elections of 2010. The repeated statements of the David Cameron's government stating that they are aiming to reduce net migration "from the hundreds of thousands to the tens of thousands" has created a negative discourse regarding migration issues and migrant communities. In this context, it is important to understand the role of the media in representing migration-related news stories, as it is well established that the media plays a central role in the construction of public opinion and that it helps shape public policies.

This report is an attempt at analyzing and measuring the portrayal of the Indian community in the UK through a media content analysis of the articles published in the UK press. As part of the research conducted by the Migration Policy Centre in its project on "Developing Evidence-based Management and Operations in India-EU Migration and Partnership", this report contains an analysis of media themes ranging from business and investments to the education and labour market integration of Indian immigrants. Other issues addressed are integration, cultural aspects, crime reporting and religion.

Why is it important to conduct a media analysis of the portrayal of the Indian community in the UK? The Indian Diaspora is the largest ethnic group in the UK and the two countries have significant historical, economic and cultural links. An estimated 734,000 habitual residents in the UK were born in India (9.4% of the total non-UK born population resident in the UK), according to the Population by Country of Birth and Nationality Report of August 2014 (Van Hear *et al.* 2004). This makes India the most *common* non-UK country of birth of UK residents. By comparison, in 2004, 502,000 UK residents were born in India (9.6% of the total number of non-UK born residents in the UK). These statistics demonstrate that there has been a significant increase in Indian born residents in the UK between 2004 and 2013. Furthermore, most of the UK passports issued in 2012 were given to people from India (14.6%).

With a long history of their contribution to UK society, one way to ascertain the level of the integration of the Indian community is by analysing their representation in the media. This report attempts to do the same by establishing some of the main themes and issues identified in the press with regards to the Indian community.

1.1. Migration from India to UK: A Brief History

Indian migration to the UK has witnessed different stages, each influenced by the varying legal, social, political and economic contexts of the period. The first stage of migration from the Indian subcontinent (present day India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka) to the UK dates back to the early 1600s, when the English East India Company (EIC) used Indian *lascars* (sailors) on their trading ships. The harsh working conditions and poor pay led many lascars to jump ship and settle in British ports. They became the earliest Asian working class group in the country. During the same period, many *ayahs* (nannies) and servants also found their way to England (Visram 2002, Ali 2008 cited in Williams 2013: 1).

Over the next hundred years, numerous independent visitors, activists, writers, teachers and businessmen also moved to the UK (Ali 2008, Visram 2002, Bates 2007 cited in Williams 2013: 2). This second migration flow can be clearly observed after the Indian mutiny of 1857, when the British crown came to control vast swathes of the subcontinent and this later led to increasing levels of migration to the UK. For instance, many students went to the UK to obtain the qualifications necessary for a post in the bureaucracy of the British Empire, as well as in a variety of other domains such as medicine, engineering and law. Many of them stayed on and started working in the local economy.

The third stage came during the World Wars (1914-1918 and 1939-1945). Over a million individuals from the subcontinent were recruited during World War I as soldiers, sailors and workers, and some of them stayed in Britain after the war. By the 1930s it is estimated there were between 5000 and 10,000 South Asians in Britain (Williams 2013: 3). During World War II, the Indian army consisted of almost 2.5million soldiers, sailors and workers, some of whom ended up in Britain after the war (Visram 2002 cited in Williams 2013: 4).

Migration to the UK from the subcontinent increased dramatically at the beginning of the twentieth century. The post-war economic boom in Britain saw large number of migrants from the Indian subcontinent, specifically from the Punjab, Gujarat and Kashmir (Williams 2013: 5), move to the UK. Their wives and families soon came to join them. In the late 1960s and early 1970s another large wave of East African Asians, the so-called “twice migrants” (Bhachu 1985 cited in Williams 2013: 5) arrived from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda escaping government repression there. These Indians had previously participated in British indenture projects in the Caribbean islands, as well as in East and Southern Africa.

Finally, the late 1990s and 2000s has seen a new influx of Indian students and professionals entering the UK. These new Indian migrants participate in the UK’s highly-skilled service industries, while Indian students have often funded their degrees with part time work, later going into highly-skilled work or returning to India or going elsewhere for job opportunities.

1.2. Methodology

Content analysis usually focuses on identifying and enumerating the key features of a body of news items, such as positive or negative orientation, topics, settings and ideologies (Krippendorff and Bock 2008 cited in Hodgetts and Chamberlain 2014: 382). Analysing the media representation of a specific migrant community helps us understand how they are perceived in the host society. Furthermore, the analysis can highlight the kinds of issues the media links to the migrant community in question.

For the purpose of this report, media analyses of articles were carried out. The newspapers carrying these articles were: *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *The Daily Mail*, *The Sun*, *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Daily Star*.

These publications were selected to offer a broadly representative sample of some of the most popular national newspapers, from across the political spectrum. Please note that the choice of newspapers depended, too, on their high distribution figures and ease of access (print or online/ paid or free). It is interesting to note that in the UK, the newspapers that are anti-immigration seem to register the highest circulation. For example, according to the National Readership Survey, the average monthly print readership for *The Sun* in 2014 was 12,658,000, while *The Daily Mail* had an average monthly print readership of 10,636,000. These figures are significantly higher than those of *The Independent*, which had an average monthly print readership of only 2,140,000 in the same period.

Please note that some articles may be present in both the online and print editions while in other cases an article might be accessible in only one of the two platforms.

Research was conducted through online searches using the LexisNexis database, Google News and also looking at the various UK newspaper websites. Searches were carried out with different keywords and combinations such as “India”, “Indian”, “Indian origin”, “Indian immigrant”, “Indian Diaspora”, “British Asian”, “Sikh”, “Hindu”, “Muslim”, “temple”, “gurudwara”, etc. These keywords were used to search for relevant articles, and articles were categorized into eight themes: labour market, business/investment, religion, culture, gender, education, crime and integration.

Due to the brief nature of this report, the focus of the analysis is only on the primary content of the messages in the news reports, though some cases of political context have been explained in some examples. The analysis will not address the details of ‘agenda-setting’ or ‘framing issues’ in the media

and neither does it analyse the choice of sources used in individual news reports. Additionally, the examples of articles cited in this report are intended only as the illustrations of the qualitative findings and do not represent all topics highlighted in the media.

1.3 Results of the Analysis: Percentages of articles and thematic coverage

Out of a selected database of 300 articles, the analysis demonstrates that stories related to culture, religion, integration and business issues pertaining to the Indian community in UK are the ones receiving most news coverage. Figure 1 below provides the details regarding the percentage of articles in each category.

Figure 1: Percentages of articles in each category

S.No.	Thematic Issue	Percentage (%) of articles
1.	Labour market	9
2.	Business/Investment	25
3.	Religion	26
4.	Culture	35
5.	Gender	10
6.	Education	9
7.	Crime	13
8.	Integration	26

Please note that these percentage representations give only a general idea and do not accurately measure thematic coverage, as many articles cover two or three themes together in one story.

2. Labour Market

There was a 7.5% drop in the number of Indian nationals in the labour market in September 2013 from the previous year, leaving 194,000.¹ A new policy, announced in 2012, stated that non-EU migrants who have spent more than five years working in the country will be required to earn £35,000 per year or else face deportation (the policy comes into effect in April 2016). According to the OECD International Migration Outlook 2013, 63,600 visas and extensions were issued for main applicants in 2012 under Tier 1 of the Points-Based System (PBS) for highly-skilled migrants (OECD 2013: 304). About two-thirds of principal applicants were post-study students, many of whom applied for this visa before the closure of the post-study work route in April 2012 (*ibidem*). In 2011, Tier 1 recipients were mainly from India (32% of 75200 visas and extensions) (*ibidem*).

In 2012, there were some changes made to Tier 2 rules, which is the employee-driven skilled migration stream. The changes include increased skill requirements, while relaxing advertising requirements for companies seeking to recruit highly paid and PhD-level workers. Other changes included higher funds requirements for those entering under all tiers, and curtailment of the duration of stay if a migrant fails to start, or ceases, work or study. In Tier 2, visas for main applicants totalled 56,300 in 2011 and 68,700 in 2012. Quota-exempt intra-corporate transferees accounted for nearly a third of certificates of sponsorship obtained by employers in 2011 (and 78% of Tier 2 out-of-country visas). Over half of all certificates of sponsorship in Tier 2 were for Indians.

The UK Media's portrayal of Indian immigrants in the labour market has been quite varied, ranging from a focus on the quality and quantity of incoming migrants, to comparisons with Romanian and Bulgarian migrants and blaming India for the loss of 'native' jobs.

¹ *The Guardian* [online], 14.11.2013: Arnett, G., India or eastern Europe? Cameron's immigration dilemma.

For example, in an article in *The Guardian*, titled *Net immigration surge squashes Tory targets, but shows Britain's got talent*, it is argued that the new immigrants are not the same as those who came in the 1970s.² That is the new migrants “are not poor, often large, families from Commonwealth countries such as India”. This kind of description has a negative outlook towards the Indian immigrants who moved to the UK in the 1970s. However, in the same article it is mentioned that those that are now entering Britain are going through the highly-skilled tier-two route or by way of “intra-company transfers”. The journalist responsible fails to mention that Indians make up a large portion of this Tier 2 category: in 2011, over half of all certificates of sponsorship in Tier 2 were for Indians.

Due to the growing debate over immigration from Romania and Bulgaria, the UK press has repeatedly compared the immigration from these Eastern European countries to those migrating from India. This is unfortunate, as the two types of immigration (EU free movement versus the entry of non-EU nationals) are governed by a different set of legislation and procedures. The debate is present in these news stories, for example, *The Telegraph's* article, titled *Immigration: David Cameron urges Indians to come to 'welcoming' Britain* discusses the contradictions visible in the UK government's policy in handling EU immigrants, versus their approach towards Indian immigrants.³ It was reported that whilst convincing Indian nationals that “there is ‘no limit’ on the number of Indian nationals who can come to Britain to study and work”, the UK Prime Minister was simultaneously trying to deter the arrival of people from countries like Bulgaria and Romania. Similarly, in the article published by *The Guardian (India or eastern Europe? Cameron's immigration dilemma)*, it is reported that the Prime Minister's message is mixed.⁴ He says one thing to prospective Indian arrivals in the UK and another about other immigrants, particularly those from Eastern Europe. It was suggested in the report that one of the reasons for this contradiction is the fact that the UK does not want to lose the investment that Indian students bring to the UK economy.

These reports demonstrate an interesting portrayal of Indian nationals working in the UK labour market, by automatically assuming a link between the UK higher education sector and the UK labour market. Firstly, such reports have a simplistic assumption that Indian nationals wish to study in the UK only so long as they can work there after graduating. Furthermore, it also assumes that Indian students stay in the UK after graduating rather than returning to India or working in another country. And thirdly, such reports fail to mention the cases where Indian nationals have been working in the UK without having studied in the UK and have entered the UK directly on a work visa or as an intra-corporate transferee.

Other notable issues regularly highlighted in the UK media was the issue of loss of jobs for the native population due to immigration and the hiring of supposed “low-quality” Indian nationals for highly-skilled UK jobs. These perspectives were normally visible only in the tabloid newspapers. For example, *The Daily Star* reported in its article (*Now banks give away our jobs*) the case of UK banks, such as Lloyds and RBS, moving 300 posts off-shore to India. It reports that “taxpayer-funded banks” are “slashing 1,700 jobs and moving 300 posts to India”.⁵ Though it does not directly attack the UK Indian community, the language used in this article is negative about Indians in general. On the other end of the spectrum, there were articles about how Indian nationals moving to UK for work could benefit India in the long run, even though it was a case of ‘brain drain’ for India. For example, in *The Guardian's* article, entitled *NHS hiring drive hurts Hungary but India can cope with doctor exodus*,

² *The Guardian* [online], 27.11.2014: Travis, A., Net immigration surge squashes Tory targets, but shows Britain's got talent.

³ *The Telegraph*. [online], 13.2.2013: Kirkup, J., Immigration: David Cameron urges Indians to come to ‘welcoming’ Britain.

⁴ *The Guardian* [online], 14.11.2013: Arnett, G., India or eastern Europe? Cameron's immigration dilemma.

⁵ *The Daily Star* [online], 14.3.2012: Robins, P., Now banks give away our jobs.

the reporter quoted an Indian professor from Delhi University approving of the move.⁶ He stated that it is good for Indian doctors to go to the UK because when they “go overseas they can get additional training which helps us”. Skills-based news stories were often given a sensationalist touch with titles such as *Nigel Farage claims NHS almost killed him as he blames Indian doctor for losing testicle after it swelled to the size of a rock hard lemon (The Daily Mail)*.⁷ In this article, Nigel Farage blamed an Indian NHS doctor for failing to diagnose his cancer. The article appeared to focus entirely on the subject of the ‘Indian’ origin of the doctor without any reference to his medical training or the possibility that he could be a UK national (regardless of him being of Indian origin). On the other hand, *The Guardian* highlighted this discriminatory stance of Nigel Farage, and reported that “Farage pointedly goes on to refer to the race of the medic whom he appears to blame”.⁸

Finally, it is important to highlight the intense focus on statistics and the numbers of Indian immigrants in the UK press. Statements such as “India was the most common non-UK country of birth in 2012, with 729,000 residents of the UK born in India” (*The Daily Mail*) or “An estimated 734,000 people born in India were living permanently in the UK in 2013, a figure which has risen by 232,000 since 2004” (*The Daily Telegraph*) creates a negative visual of Indians engulfing UK society. This kind of media coverage also affects how Indian immigrants themselves feel about the most recent Indian arrivals, as demonstrated in an article by *The Guardian*.⁹ The article quoted an Indian immigrant saying that he was considering switching political allegiance and voting for UKIP (a right-wing party) because he had seen “on the TV, everyone wants to come to England now and we need to shut the door”. This statement reflects the attitudes of some of the older members of Indian community in UK, who might feel resentful towards the newly arrived migrants from their country of origin.

3. Business and Investment

India is one of the key partners of the UK in terms of business, trade and investment. The UK’s bilateral trade with India was worth between £15bn and £16bn as of 2013, but the UK Government is seeking to raise this to £22bn by 2015. The UK is the third biggest investor in India, with £3.2bn in trade during the financial year beginning in 2013, according to Bloomberg.

The UK press has covered this theme to a great extent, especially highlighting three issues: UK politicians visiting India to boost trade linkages; UK firms investing in India and Indian firms investing in the UK; and the controversy over the UK allegedly providing aid to India with the hope of convincing the Indian government to buy British military aircrafts.

The first issue was reported widely in the UK press, particularly for the visits of UK Prime Minister David Cameron, Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg, Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne and London’s Mayor Boris Johnson.

Cameron’s visit with a delegation of more than 100 executives to India was described as “an attempt to drum up business for UK companies in the fast-growing economy...particularly aimed at helping small and medium-sized British companies tap into the Indian market”.¹⁰ Similarly descriptions were also made for the visit of Nick Clegg (“the latest in a series of efforts by the UK to

⁶ *The Guardian* [online] 28.1.2015: Nolan, D., Burke, J. And Sahariah S., NHS hiring drive hurts Hungary but India can cope with doctor exodus.

⁷ *The Daily Mail* [online], 14.3.2015: Boyle, D., Nigel Farage claims NHS almost killed him as he blames Indian doctor for losing testicle after it swelled to the size of a rock hard lemon.

⁸ *The Guardian* [online], 14.3.2015: Johnston, C., Nigel Farage: NHS ‘negligence’ over testicular cancer almost killed me.

⁹ *The Guardian* [online], 26.2.2015: Taylor, M., Voters feel let down by main parties, with migration a key issue.

¹⁰ *The Daily Telegraph*, 16.2.2013: Thomas, N., Shell asks UK to help with Indian tax row.

try to boost trade with India”¹¹ and Boris Johnson (“has been travelling the subcontinent as part of an intensive trade mission promoting British business”).¹²

The Chancellor’s visit to India was well reported in the UK press with an emphasis on his announcements: such as Indian car manufacturer’s investment in the British economy, as well as a £250m deal for multinational group MBDA to supply defence equipment to the Indian Air Force which, he said, “would create hundreds of UK jobs”. The article also talked about Tesco’s deal with India’s Tata Group to open stores in India, as well as British retailer Marks & Spencer’s opening 36 stores in India, thereby becoming the chain’s second biggest market outside of the UK. His speech also created a positive impression about Indian business and skills, by stating that “Indian companies and Indian innovation and Indian technology (are) powering the economies of the world”.

However, not all news stories had gave such a positive spin in terms of Indian investment and Indian companies: this was particularly true of the tabloid press. For example, the takeover of Yorkshire-based Optare by an Indian company (Ashok Leyland) was described as a decision that “happens in tough times – astute buyers pick up distressed assets at a good price.....with the company falling into overseas hands”.¹³ The article writer also claimed that the 500 manufacturing jobs Optare provided in the North of England, will over the longer term leave the UK for lower cost locations once the firm is in Indian ownership.

The final issue under discussion is the UK’s aid to India, which was reported repeatedly in the UK press. With articles such as *If aid is ‘peanuts’ and not required, why does Britain continue to give it to India?*¹⁴ and *Anger at India aid*,¹⁵ the growing criticism in the UK against aid to India was analysed. The left-leaning press had a more sympathetic view of the situation by justifying the aid as “despite the headlines about 7 per cent growth, the overwhelming majority in India live in grinding poverty”.¹⁶ On the other hand, sharp criticism arose in the tabloid press, which stated that “Government is opening plush offices in New Delhi, even though India says it does not “need or want” our aid”¹⁷. The aid programme is officially slowly being phased out and is supposed to end by the end of 2015.

4. Religion

There is intense UK coverage on religious issues concerning the Indian community. Press articles include discussions on Hinduism and Sikhism; however there is less reportage on Indian Muslim or Christians. Indian religious festivals, religious traditions and places of worship also regularly receive media coverage, though many times they are connected to stories reporting political news, judicial decisions or educational issues.

For example, in the article *David Cameron defends lack of apology for British massacre at Amritsar*¹⁸ by *The Guardian*, the Prime Minister’s visit to the Golden temple in India was highlighted. He was stated saying that he was “proud to be the first British prime minister to go and visit the Golden Temple and see what an extraordinary place it is – very moving, very serene, very spiritual”. He also emphasized the importance of seeking “a greater understanding of the Sikh religion”. The UK

¹¹ *The Independent*, 25.8.2014: Buncombe, A., Clegg in India for Modi trade talks.

¹² *The Daily Star* [online], 1.12.2012: Boris Johnson bullish in trip to India.

¹³ *The Daily Mail* [online], 29.12.2011: Sunderland, R., UK bus firm is forced to take the low road.

¹⁴ *The Independent*, 16.2.2012: If aid is ‘peanuts’ and not required, why does Britain continue to give it to India?.

¹⁵ *The Daily Star* [online], 18.9.2012: Anger at India aid.

¹⁶ *The Independent*, 16.2.2012: If aid is ‘peanuts’ and not required, why does Britain continue to give it to India?.

¹⁷ *The Daily Star* [online], 18.9.2012: Anger at India aid.

¹⁸ *The Guardian* [online], 20.2.2013: Watt, N., David Cameron defends lack of apology for British massacre at Amritsar.

government was also criticised by the Sikh community when foreign secretary William Hague confirmed that the UK had advised India on the 1984 Golden Temple attacks in Amritsar (India).¹⁹

The controversy regarding Sikhs carrying *kirpan* (a traditional dagger) or regarding Sikhs being targeted at airport security due to their turban was also under the spotlight. European rules say any Sikh who triggers a security scanner alert should remove their turban or have it searched by hand. However, in a news report,²⁰ former Transport Minister Theresa Villiers said “she would be writing to her counterparts in Europe to ask them to look at alternatives” since she believed that Sikhs found this offensive. “Our aim is to reach a solution which avoids public hand searching or removal of the turban,” she said. Similarly, the question of *kirpan* was also debated in the national press, for example, *The Daily Star* ran a news story reporting the criticism aimed at “Britain’s first Asian judge”.²¹ He was branded “irresponsible” by Mothers Against Violence after he stated that Sikh children should be able to bring the *kirpan* to school. Tabloids also gave vent to the anger of parents over schools that were closing on Muslim, Hindu and Sikh holy days to mark the Muslim festival of Eid-Ul-Fitr, the Hindu Festival Diwali or the Sikh founder Guru Nanak’s birthday.²²

In 2011, a three-year libel case – dubbed *His Holiness v Singh* – came under press scrutiny due to the end of a libel fight between freelance journalist Hardeep Singh and an Indian Sikh religious leader. Similarly, in 2012, Supreme Court was urged to rule on the same Sikh religious leader’s claim that he is a ‘holy saint’. Both these cases received significant press attention.²³

On a different note, positive examples of religious harmony did receive some attention in the press, for example, *The Daily Mail* reported on Bradford’s fantasy cup run, which was “helping unite the multicultural society”.²⁴ The joint-chairman was quoted as saying that “never mind Muslim, Sikh, Hindu or whatever, everyone is 100 per cent behind our city and our team. ... There are no barriers”.

5. Education

Since 2012, students have been subject to restricted work placements and permit with duration of five years maximum at degree-level institutions (OECD 2013: 304). Additionally, the post-study work route was closed in April 2012, a route which had previously allowed non-EU students to stay in UK and look for work for up to two years post-graduation.

According to the *Migration Statistics Quarterly Report* (February 2015), the number of study visas (excluding student visitors) granted to individuals applying from outside the UK continued to rise: there was though a slight decline in the number of Indian applicants (-828 or -6%). International Passenger Survey (IPS) estimate that the number of New Commonwealth citizens, which includes the Indian sub-continent, coming to the UK to study in the academic year ending June 2014 was 34,000. This is at its lowest level since 2002 and less than one-third of the peak of 108,000 in the year in June 2011.

¹⁹ *The Guardian* [online], 4.2.2014: Nicholas, W., UK advised India on 1984 Golden Temple attack, William Hague confirms.

²⁰ *The Daily Star* [online], 27.4.2011: Hands off turbans: The Government wants to stop airport security staff searching Sikhs’ turbans using their hands.

²¹ *The Daily Star*, 9.2.2010: Sikh kids can carry daggers at school.

²² *The Daily Star* [online], 19.10.2009: Hall, E., Heads attack PC meddlers.

²³ *The Guardian* [online], 11.9.2012: Bowcott, O., Supreme court urged to rule on Sikh leader’s claim he is a ‘holy saint’.

²⁴ *The Daily Mail* [online] 21.1.2013: Bradford’s fantasy cup run helping to unite multicultural society on the terraces.

This decline in applicants was one of the most widely reported topic in the UK newspapers, including both tabloid and broadsheet newspapers. For example, *The Daily Telegraph's* article, *Migration curbs deter Indian students* quoted UK's science minister saying that "ministers have been working 'flat out' to attract international candidates but Indian press coverage about reforms to reduce migration by 2015 has been 'surprisingly negative'".²⁵ In this way the Indian press was blamed for the decline in the number of Indian students in UK universities. The rhetoric against student immigration was also tackled by *The Guardian* in its article *Indian students want international recognition, not UK working visas*,²⁶ detailing the different possible reasons for the decline in Indian students in UK. This included, as the two most important obstacles, the high cost of studies and the lack of scholarships.

The second important news story were those related to the official trips of the UK Prime Minister (David Cameron) and London's Mayor (Boris Johnson) to India. Different newspapers covered the topic from different perspectives. For example, *The Express's* article was entitled *PM opens flood gates to India and announces there will be 'no limit' to those allowed in*.²⁷ The article focused on Prime Minister's agenda of placating Indian government, businesses and students regarding the UK's 'welcoming' immigration policy. The use of phrases such as "opens flood gates" and "no limit" gives a negative impression to readers and creates an exaggerated image that Britain will be 'flooded' by Indian immigrants. *The Daily Telegraph*, meanwhile, had a positive image quoting university leaders and business groups saying that "the Coalition's tough rhetoric on immigration is harming Britain's international competitiveness".²⁸ Similarly Boris Johnson's visit, as mentioned in *The Independent*, was largely positive towards Indian students stating that the Mayor was in India to "confront the problems of the UK visa system that is limiting Indian students coming to British universities".²⁹

Other notable issues raised in the press were related to school education, such as the education of children of immigrants, with examples of young students of Indian origin,³⁰ or stories related to the growing number of children of Indian origin enrolling in British schools.³¹ Normally such stories had a negative orientation and were highlighted in the tabloid newspapers. They focused on the 'deprived' background of Indian children, their lack of English speaking skills or that some schools had "no white children on their rolls – including children of white migrants".

6. Equalities Legislation and Integration

The UK has one of the most established Indian communities, which has a long history of integrating well in UK society. The Indian community exerts a strong influence in every sphere of UK life, including politics, business, religion, cinema and education. Though earlier groups of Indian immigrants faced a lot of discrimination and racism, the situation has greatly improved in the last decades. Racial discrimination was outlawed through the Race Relations Act of 1976. In more recent times, the Equality Act 2010, outlawed discrimination in access to education, public services, private goods and services or premises in addition to employment (UK Government Equalities Office 2013).

²⁵ *The Daily Telegraph*, 26.2.2014: Migration curbs deter Indian students.

²⁶ *The Guardian* [online] 23.1.2014: Everitt, R., Indian students want international recognition, not UK working visas.

²⁷ *The Express* [online], 18.2.2013: Fox, E., PM opens flood gates to India and announces there will be 'no limit' to those allowed in.

²⁸ *The Daily Telegraph* [online], 13.2.2013: Kirkup, J., Immigration: David Cameron urges Indians to come to 'welcoming' Britain.

²⁹ *The Independent*, 26.11.2012: Is it the King of England? Is it Boris Becker? No, it's that guy on the zip line!.

³⁰ *The Sun* [online], 29.3.2014: Hendry, S., The Eton of the East End: London school gives kids a brighter future.

³¹ *The Daily Mail* [online], 11.5.2013: Petre, J., Shock as 84 schools have NO white British pupils at all... double the number of five years ago.

This followed three major European Union Directives, and was supplemented by other Acts like the Protection from Harassment Act 1997.

In terms of the visa regime, legislation governing the entry of family members of UK-based Indians and family reunification have become increasingly difficult and complicated. From October 2013, all applicants for settlement, unless otherwise exempt, must pass the “Life in the United Kingdom” test and demonstrate at least B1 level (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) English-language speaking and listening qualification (OECD 2013: 304).

Integration concerns have re-emerged over the past few years, especially with the growing rhetoric on Bulgarian and Romanian migrants. It has created a negative discourse in the UK media about possible damages to social cohesion. In this context, it is interesting to see the comparisons made between the recent immigration of eastern Europeans and Indian immigrants. For example, *The Daily Telegraph*'s article, ‘Pride and prejudice: is European immigration good for Britain?’³² compared European migration to historical migration from the Indian subcontinent, Uganda and Caribbean. After having conducted a poll, which found that “71 per cent of people who don’t know any immigrants well want “drastic action” to cut immigration”, the newspaper asserted that:

Plainly, Britain is unhappy about the arrival of so many newcomers... In living memory, the country has seen the arrival of people from India and Pakistan, from Uganda and from the Caribbean. None of those groups was as large as the new European population, but each changed the country profoundly, by becoming part of it...

This kind of reporting represents growing fears in the face of changing demographics in UK society. This has led to an urgent need for UK citizens to distinguish themselves as British, but without a clear understanding of what it means. Furthermore, tabloid newspapers also stoke fears of *ghettoization*, in terms of Indian immigrants only living in specific regions or studying in supposedly ‘non-white’ educational institutions.³³

Identity worries have been another key topic discussed in news stories, such as a *Financial Times* letter to an editor,³⁴ which argued that the “thing that characterises India and the Indian diaspora [is] its diversity. Being Indian is something that every Indian thinks he is not”. Other stories highlight the concerns of the British Asian community and their worries about the identity issues of their children.³⁵

The Indian community’s influence in UK politics is also clearly visible in the local press. For example, the prime minister’s visit to the Golden Temple (considered the holiest Sikh gurdwara) during his official trip to India was widely covered and it was argued that his religious visit was with an “an eye on the Sikh vote in Britain”.³⁶ He also spoke about the Sikh community’s integration in UK society and highlighted how Britain must “celebrate the immense contribution that people from the Punjab play”.³⁷

The Sikh community also came under the spotlight due to cases of racist attacks and discrimination. Such incidents against the Sikhs have risen especially since 9/11 and the London bombings and it was reported in the press that it has become “a common thing... to walk through an

³² *The Daily Telegraph* [online], 12.5.2014: Kirkup, J., Pride and prejudice: is European immigration good for Britain?.

³³ *The Daily Mail* [online], 11.5.2013: Petre, J., Shock as 84 schools have NO white British pupils at all... double the number of five years ago.

³⁴ *Financial Times*, 4.5.2012: Indian resilience will show way through tax maze.

³⁵ See the opinion article *The Guardian* [online], 15.9.2014: Ramaswamy, C., I’m Indian, English and live in Scotland. Will my son’s identity be as borderless after the referendum?.

³⁶ *The Guardian* [online], 20.2.2013: Watt, N., David Cameron defends lack of apology for British massacre at Amritsar.

³⁷ *Ibidem*.

estate in [some parts of east London] and young boys throw stones and shout ‘Taliban’ at you’.³⁸ Reports have highlighted how racism, due to physical appearance (e.g. beards) or religious symbols (e.g. turbans), has affected the Sikh community in the UK, particularly.

7. Crime

Crime stories on Indian nationals or UK nationals of Indian origin have focused on three main issues: visa-related crime stories such as sham marriages or visa abuse conducted by Indian nationals; hate crimes against members of the Indian community; and, abuse of the UK’s judicial and asylum system by Indian nationals who are wanted in India on charges of terrorism.

Though not receiving very high coverage (13%), news stories on crimes committed by Indian nationals or those of Indian origin usually focus on the nationality or ethnic origin of the accused. This kind of reporting is different from how crimes committed by non-immigrants are reported. For example, in the case of sham marriages, *The Telegraph* highlighted in their article that more than one sham marriage takes place each hour and that Indians were among the “four main non-European nationalities involved” in such crimes.³⁹ However, some newspapers, such as *The Guardian*, also reflected the viewpoints of Indian immigrants who were wrongly accused of sham marriages and were detained unlawfully.⁴⁰

Hate crimes have been more frequently reported in the UK press. For example, the death of Indian student, Anuj Bidve, received significant press coverage over several days.⁴¹ Racist attacks against Sikhs have also been reported,⁴² most recently the case of a Sikh man attacked in Birmingham city centre.⁴³

Other notable cases highlighted in the UK press have been the life (and eventual death) of Indian national Iqbal Memon, who was wanted in India for acts of terrorism but who had “holed up in his east London mansion, defying attempts by the Indian authorities to put him on trial”.⁴⁴ Another case highlighted was about Tiger Hanif, who was also wanted in India for acts of terrorism. However, the article focussed more on how the “British taxpayer has had to fork out £10,000 to help fight his extradition”⁴⁵ and how he was able to stay in Britain despite having his asylum claim rejected, and how he later received a British citizenship.

8. Culture

News stories referring to Indian cultural aspects, such as music, art, films or cuisine receive, on the basis of our analysis, the most attention in the UK press. The topics addressed in these reports are quite varied, ranging from Indian curries, Bollywood and dance, to stories on arranged marriages, Mahatma Gandhi and the Koh-I-Noor diamond. Since it is a vast subject, only certain cases have been highlighted for the purpose of this report.

³⁸ *The Guardian* [online], 8.8.2012: Saner, E., Why are Sikhs targeted by anti-Muslim extremists?.

³⁹ *The Daily Telegraph* [online], 19.2.2014: Edgar, J., More than one sham marriage takes place each hour.

⁴⁰ *The Guardian* [online], 13.3.2015. I was accused of having a sham marriage.

⁴¹ *The Daily Mail* [online], 8.1.2012: Gilani, N., Tears, flowers and emotional tributes: Grieving friends and relatives gather for the funeral of shot Indian student Anuj Bidve.

⁴² *The Guardian* [online], 8.8.2012: Saner, E., Why are Sikhs targeted by anti-Muslim extremists?.

⁴³ *The Daily Mail* [online], 31.3.2015: Williams, A., Sickening footage of Sikh man being beaten up in ‘race hate’ attack in Birmingham city centre.

⁴⁴ *The Independent* [online], 16.8.2013: Peachey, P., ‘Terrorist and drug dealer’ dies in east London exile.

⁴⁵ *The Daily Star* [online], 22.1.2012: Sorrell, L., Extradition battler gets legal aid.

First, Bollywood movies and music are very popular in the UK, and its popularity is not limited to the Indian community. News reports cater to an audience curious to know about Bollywood, and the latest Hindi movies and music. Hindi movies, with the UK as their filming locations, are also reported on in the UK press. For example, in *The Guardian's* article *The stunning locations cashing in on Britain's film and TV fame*⁴⁶ with an Indian dimension. The journalist noted how Scotland's national tourism organization had produced a map for Bollywood fans after seeing a rise in the numbers of Indian productions using Scottish castles and lochsides for their glamorous productions. Scotland's culture minister, Fiona Hyslop, said tourism from India was a "strong emerging market" as a result of the Bollywood explosion.

Other stories were related to Indian cuisine, which is one of the most popular cuisines in the UK. Some of the news story titles are given below as examples and such articles generally had a positive orientation towards Indian cuisine.

- *Why Indian food is so delicious: Scientists say our love of curry is down to a lack of overlapping flavours (The Daily Mail)*⁴⁷
- *Why vada, chipirones and bappa doi are my new Indian must-eats (The Independent)*⁴⁸
- *Brit Chefs Sell Curry to Indians (The Daily Star)*⁴⁹
- *What's hot to like? Celebrate National Curry Week with our recipes (The Sun)*⁵⁰

The third issue to be discussed was arranged marriages in the Indian community. The news reports addressing this topic underlined the fact that it is a cultural aspect or tradition of the Indian society, but it generally had a negative connotation associated with it. For example, *The Daily Telegraph* (in its blog) criticized the government's proposed legislation of £25,700 income requirement for British citizens who want to marry somebody born overseas, as they argued that such rules were targeting "young Asians" who "enter into arranged marriages at a young age with spouses from India, Bangladesh and Pakistan".⁵¹ The author opines that there should be a debate about the prevalence of arranged marriages in British Asian society (British Asian societies, according to him are "unbalanced and misogynistic"). He goes on to say that the government is not addressing the issue, and instead that they are creating policies which are unfair and discriminatory ("This policy isn't designed to stop them bringing in spouses who will claim welfare. It is designed to stop them bringing in spouses at all").

Similarly, in the relationship advice column of *The Sun*, the issue of an arranged marriage of a Sikh girl was raised. The columnist wrote that "it is very hard to go against deep-seated religious and cultural beliefs... grown up expecting an arranged marriage, you can't make her change her mind".⁵²

⁴⁶ *The Guardian* [online], 8.3.2015: McVeigh, T., The stunning locations cashing in on Britain's film and TV fame.

⁴⁷ *The Daily Mail* [online], 4.3.2015: Zolfagharifard, E., Why Indian food is so delicious: Scientists say our love of curry is down to a lack of overlapping flavours.

⁴⁸ *The Independent* [online], 9.5.2014: Why vada, chipirones and bappa doi are my new Indian must-eats.

⁴⁹ *The Daily Star*, 18.7.2013: Brit Chefs Sell Curry to Indians.

⁵⁰ *The Sun* [online], 15.10.2014: What's hot to like? Celebrate National Curry Week with our recipes.

⁵¹ *The Daily Telegraph* [online], 2.2.2012: Knowles, D., If you want to stop South Asian immigrants bringing in their wives, then say so.

⁵² *The Sun* [online], 20.2.2012: My Sikh girl is having an arranged marriage.

9. Gender

Articles focusing on the specific experiences of Indian men or Indian women from a gendered perspective have not been given much attention in the UK media. Most of the focus has been on violence against women, gender equality and abortion reforms.

Cases of violence against women in India have generated some discussion about gender equality in the UK. For example, an opinion article in *The Daily Mail* highlighted the latest BBC documentary made on the Indian rape case of a medical student.⁵³ The author, though, argued, “women remain the second sex even in rich countries. Like this one [i.e. Britain]”. The author further highlighted that “the low value placed on females and the privileging of males may be openly acknowledged in the Muslim world but it carries on unchecked in the West too”.

News reports on individual life stories were rare. One example worth highlighting was the life story of Indian suffragette Sophia Duleep Singh, daughter of an exiled Punjabi maharajah, who fought for women’s rights in the UK. In a book review published in *The Guardian*, the biography of this “society-girl-turned-revolutionary” and her father were discussed.⁵⁴

The third important concern was related to gender abortion reforms. This case arose when the Conservative MP, Fiona Bruce, sought an amendment of the Abortion Act of 1967. The proposed amendment, if approved, would criminalise gender-based abortion, i.e. abortion after the sex of the fetus is determined. On this issue, *The Daily Mail* news story highlighted how religious groups, representing Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs, were demanding an end to sex-selective abortions while the Trades Union Congress (TUC) argued that the amendment to make sex-selective abortions illegal would ‘divide communities’ for cultural reasons.⁵⁵ The report showcased the opinion of the TUC, who believed that there could be “‘compelling circumstances’ to allow abortion of female foetuses [...] for example, if a woman did not want a girl for ‘cultural’ reasons and could be abused by her husband if she kept the baby”. However, the representatives of the Sikh Council UK, the Hindu Council UK and National Council of Hindu Temples UK universally condemned the TUC, and gave their full support for gender-selective abortions to be criminalised. At the other end of the spectrum, *The Telegraph* criticized the MP for proposing such an amendment.⁵⁶ The author argued that the leaders of these communities were not being challenged by the government. The government should target “the communities in which such misogyny is not just tolerated but encouraged”, instead of attacking doctors and pregnant women.

10. Conclusion

Generally, the Indian community has been represented in a positive manner in the UK press. However, this analysis also highlights the underlying bias and exaggerated reportage that is there in some news stories pertaining to the Indian community.

It should be noted that these results have not clarified as to why these issues are given more attention over other topics. Additionally, it is important to note that content analysis cannot explain what audiences make of news items or what meanings they take away from such texts (Hall 1997). Therefore, for a more nuanced understanding, further research should be conducted to better

⁵³ *The Daily Mail* [online], 8.3.2015: Johnson, R. Indian sexism is appalling – but Britain’s hardly a feminist’s dream.

⁵⁴ *The Guardian* [online], 11.1.2015: Sophia: Princess, Suffragette, Revolutionary review – a radical Indian royal in the heart of empire.

⁵⁵ *The Daily Mail* [online], 23.2.2015: Doughty, S., Do not make gender abortion a crime because ‘it would divide communities’, unions tells MPs.

⁵⁶ *The Telegraph* [online], 23.2.2015: Gordon, B., Banning sex-selective abortion is a betrayal of women.

understand the influence of the local socio-political and economic contexts in play, as well how the choice of sources influence the outcome of the reportage.

This analysis of the UK media's portrayal of the Indian community shows that media has mostly focused on culture, religion, integration and business issues. On some topics, there is definitely a divide in treatment between broadsheet and tabloid newspapers. For instance, within the cultural theme, stories related to music, food or cinema are treated from a positive angle in the majority of articles (broadsheet and tabloid). But articles related to arranged marriages have a negative portrayal in the tabloid press. Similar differences can be seen within the stories on business and investment issues, where the broadsheet newspapers generally have a positive outlook towards enhancing trade links with India or with UK companies investing in India. But the same positive outlook is not present in the news stories highlighting Indian companies taking over their British counterparts, especially in the tabloid press, which stokes exaggerated fears of loss of jobs for UK nationals. In terms of news stories on religion or integration issues, both the broadsheet and tabloid newspapers have highlighted the positive aspects of multiculturalism, as well as the challenges encountered by the British-Indian communities. However, there are still many instances of tabloid press publishing articles with racist undertones and of them stoking unnecessary fears (amongst the general 'white' British population) regarding the country's changing demographics.

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Appendix 1. Brief description of media sources

BBC. The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) is the UK's public-service broadcaster. It was established under a Royal Charter and operates under Agreement with the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. For a worldwide audience, the BBC World Service provides news, current affairs and information in 28 languages, including English, and is available in over 150 capital cities. It is generally considered to have a liberal stance.

The Daily Mail. This is a British daily tabloid newspaper. It is considered 'middle-market, i.e. it caters to readers who want entertainment news along with a coverage of important news events. It usually follows a conservative line and has traditionally been a supporter of the Conservatives.

The Daily Star. This is a daily tabloid newspaper published in the United Kingdom. The paper focuses on stories about celebrities, sport, and gossip about popular television programmes. Though it has a more traditionalist and conservative approach, it does not explicitly support any political party or ideology.

The Daily Telegraph. This is a daily UK broadsheet newspaper, with a sister paper called *The Sunday Telegraph*. It is politically conservative and it has generally a right wing stance.

Financial Times. This is a British-based international daily newspaper with a special emphasis on international business and economic news. It is considered one of the most important business newspapers in the world. It generally advocates for free markets and supports globalisation.

The Guardian. This is a British daily newspaper. The Guardian claims that their combined print and online editions reach nearly nine million readers, as of October 2013. It has a liberal orientation towards news coverage and supported the Liberal Democrats during the 2010 UK elections.

The Independent. This is a British daily newspaper. It is regarded as having centre-left ideological orientation but tends to take a more pro-market stance on economic issues.

The Sun. This is a daily tabloid newspaper published in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Regional editions of the newspaper for Scotland and Northern Ireland are published in, respectively, Glasgow (The Scottish Sun) and Belfast (The Irish Sun). It has a right wing and conservative stance.

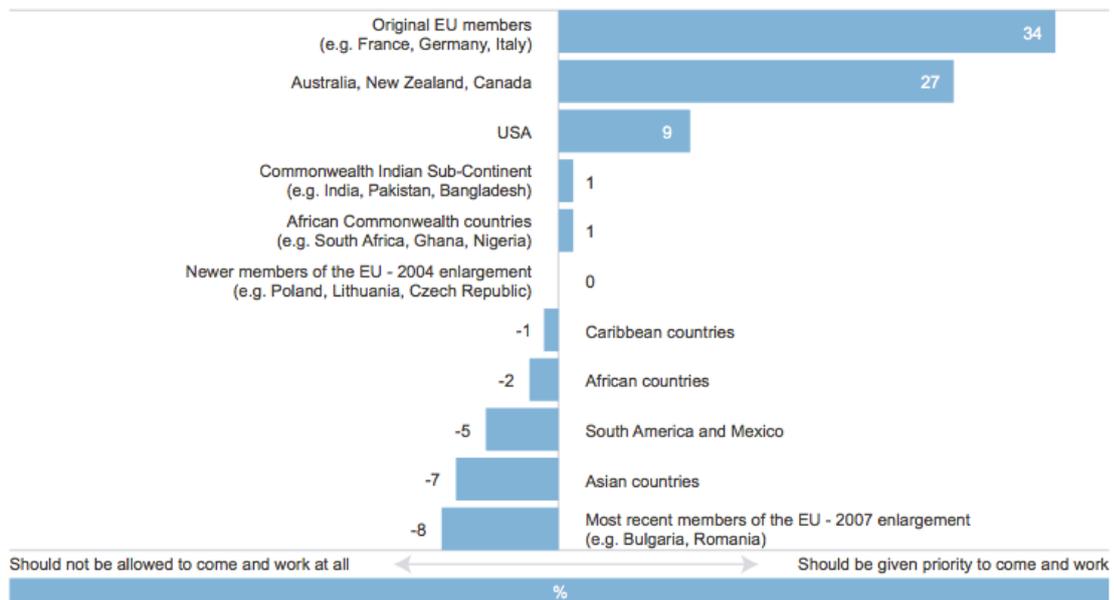
Appendix 2. View of immigration (comparison)

The Ipsos MORI's 2014 survey showed a more positive view of immigration from the Commonwealth Indian sub-continent than from other Asian countries.

The following graph represents the responses to the following questions:

- Which of these groups of people do you think should be given priority to come and work in Britain?
- And which of these groups, if any, do you think should not be allowed to come and work in Britain at all?

Figure. Attitudes towards migrants from different countries/regions of origin



Source: Ipsos-MORI 2014: 81.