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BK Pilot Report Summary

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Yagya Community Pilot Survey

A Clear Path Forward

Aim

The aim of the survey was to find out how brahmins are living, to learn about their relationships with other brahmins, with centres and with service, and to understand more about what supports them, and what causes obstacles for them. The survey questions were purposely broad and open-ended to guard against any bias. The results below are independent of the researchers (Tamasin and Patrizia).

Purpose

To discover themes that are emerging in brahmins' lives and in our organisation, and to support any positive changes that are occurring. To provide an information base for future decision making within the yagya.

Numbers

The survey was sent to a random cross-section of 50 BKs (including centre residents and non-residents) and received a remarkable 100% response rate. Five others requested to participate. So in total, 55 BKs responded: 26 from Australia, 27 from Germany. A number of different themes emerged: below is the key theme.

Centres	Centres:12 of the 55 respondents live in centres. More than 62% of centre residents were dissatisfied or saw room for improvement in their centres.
	Over 75% of brahmins range from never attending a centre to going a maximum of twice a week.
Murli	93% of respondents engage with the murli regularly.
	Over 30% participate in gatherings where murli is read outside of the centre.
	50% listen to the murli electronically.
	Over 75% read murli at home.

Almost all the participants continue to follow the maryadas and are interested in the murli and in continuing their spiritual practice. Although most do not regularly attend centres, the murli and the brahmin family (91% have close friends within the brahmin family) are still the cornerstones of their lives.

It appears that the administrative structure may no longer be satisfactorily serving the BK community, and that the current centre system is consequently becoming decentralised. The following paragraph is a summary of the data, drawing on quotes from brahmins that represent the majority of responses.

Results (quoted main themes emerging)

Active and committed BKs in Australia and Germany are moving away from a system they find *"fearful and dogmatic"* where activities seem like *"ritual, giving the illusion of security"*. Where they find a *"lack of creativity"* and conversations that *"are quite superficial"*. The centres *"don't provide a deeply spiritual and nurturing environment"* and are *"too rigid and religious... lacking spirituality and kindness."* BKs are wanting centres that are *"more friendly and less bureaucratic,"* where there is *"more inner happiness in those reading the murli and less feeling of routine and compulsion"* and where *"the murli is read with more life, with more understanding, and is more realistically connected with daily life in the west"*. Brahmins seek a way that is more relevant than *"the learning style of India in the 1930s"* and *"being in an endless school always in the first class"*.

Although the above formed the substantial majority of responses, one centre was cited as having *"(A) good sense of community, reasonable level of openness... Community, friendliness, openness, welcoming are high on the list of priorities."* Such centres may be examples of best practices.

Recommendation

These responses are from a small group in Germany and Australia. We recommend conducting a wider survey. This will determine if these emergent themes apply throughout our Double Foreign Brahmin community who live in developed and industrialised nations (Europe, UK, Australia, USA).

A report containing the full and complete data is available on request to tamasin.ramsay@au.brahmakumaris.org.