

The Deaf Community – Does it have a Future As Well?

Miriam Levinger¹

Deaf communities, including the one in Israel, were always formed by the deaf themselves – in order to provide an adequate response to various emotional and social needs. They feel isolated in the hearing society, and came to the conclusion that only among other deaf people can they feel themselves free and equal. The community members tried to respond to emotional needs (sense of equality) as well as to social ones (sense of isolation). Today, in light of the fact that a high percentage of deaf children undergo the cochlear implant operation, the question arises whether those needs are still relevant, or is the fate of the deaf community doomed. Does the fact that the ears of the deaf people now hear better due to the cochlear implant imply a diminishing of the sense of solitude felt when among the hearing? Does better functioning in various fields of life mean self-esteem similar to that of hearing people?

This article will detail the emotional and social needs addressed up to today by the deaf community and will then consider the current relevancy of this community in light of technological developments in the field of auditory rehabilitation.

¹ School of Social Work, Sapir Academic College.