

# The Use of Dating Apps Within a Sample of the International Deaf Gay Male Community

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## **Abstract**

Digital practices have changed the way Deaf gay men project themselves in mainstream gay communities. What was once a network of local local groups has become an international Deaf gay community in its own right. By embracing communication through social media and dating apps, multimodal interaction occurs through learning new text styles used on these platforms, as well as using Sign Language via webcams. Simultaneously, it is recognised that virtual communities cannot perform as all together substitutes for interpersonal interaction and therefore, eventual live engagement with others often materialises. Face-to-face encounters and activities further cement recognition of this flourishing sub-community.

**Keywords:** dating apps, deaf gay male community, virtual communities, sign language