



Relationships between those who have left ultra-Orthodox society (Yotzim) and their families

Research summary

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For the first time: Representative data about family relationships among Yotzim, in comparison to Haredi Jews and Jews who are not Haredi.

The issue of the connection of those who leave Haredi society – Yotzim - with their families frequently arises in public discourse, but very few studies have examined this topic to date, and most have been conducted using qualitative methods or through surveys distributed in groups of those who have left ultra-Orthodox society (hereinafter “Yotzim”), which are not representative of all those who leave. In this study, for the first time, the topic of family connections among Yotzim is examined by comparing current ultra-Orthodox Jews raised as such and Jews who are not ultra-Orthodox, on the basis of representative data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS).

In general, Yotzim are satisfied with their family relationships, but to a lesser extent than ultra-Orthodox Jews and Jews who are not ultra-Orthodox.

According to the (CBS) survey data, Yotzim are satisfied with their family relationships, but to a lesser extent than ultra-Orthodox Jews and Jews who are not ultra-Orthodox: the percentage of all those who are satisfied (very satisfied or satisfied) with their family relationships is high in all groups, 91% among Yotzim and 97% among Jews who are not ultra-Orthodox and among ultra-Orthodox Jews. However, the percentage of very satisfied with family relationships among Yotzim was 51% versus 71% among Jews who are not ultra-Orthodox and 85% among ultra-Orthodox Jews. A similar picture also emerges from comparison of the level of esteem that in their opinion their family feels toward them.

About a quarter of Yotzim reported complete estrangement from their parents in the first year, but most of them renewed the relationship over time.

A complementary analysis was conducted using the Family Relationships survey distributed from 2016-2019 by Out for Change. It should be noted that this survey, like other surveys distributed in Yotzim groups, is not representative of the entire Yotzim population, but only of those who come in contact with these groups.¹

The data show that about 27% of the respondents reported total estrangement from their parents during the first year of leaving, while 25% reported a good relationship; at the time

¹ To illustrate, in this survey 82% of the Yotzim categorized themselves as secular and 9% as traditional, compared to the social survey in which 21% categorized themselves as traditional-not so religious and 21% categorized themselves as secular.



of survey response – 3 years or more after learning – the percentage who were completely estranged fell to 11%, while the percentage of those with good relationships increased to 47%. The data also show that currently, complete estrangement of Yotzim from their parents is less common than in the past.

Most Yotzim were invited to family events, but only a minority received financial support from their families.

In the Family Relationships survey, a majority of respondents reported that they are invited to family events (85%) and that they are invited and hosted for Shabbat and holidays (77%). However, the majority reported that they are not financially supported by their families (85%), and the leading reason for the lack of financial support is their leaving the society (reasons given for lack of support: leaving the society – 38%; parents' financial difficulties – 31%; have no need of support – 13%; are not interested in support from parents – 18%).

Is there a difference in the level of connection with family between religious Yotzim and Yotzim who are not religious?

The CBS Societal Survey found that religious Yotzim are more satisfied with family relationships in comparison with Yotzim who are not religious, and it was also found that the level of esteem by family, as reported by respondents, was higher in comparison to Yotzim who are not religious. However, in the Family Relationships survey, no significant difference was found between the two groups in the level of connection. The difference between the sources can be attributed to the fact that the Family Relationships survey distributed in Yotzim groups is more representative of the members of these groups. It is reasonable to assume that Yotzim who maintain good relationships with their families (and among them many of the religious Yotzim) are less present in Yotzim groups, which are, for many, a substitute for fuller family relationships.