

# PEOPLE WHO DO NOT CARE ABOUT POLITICS HAVE A SLIGHT ADVANTAGE IN LIFE SATISFACTION TO THOSE WHO DO

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## 1. SLAVOJ ZIZEK

Slavoj Zizek has many interesting views that are worth considering, but I will focus on only one small issue taken from his public debate with Jordan Peterson [1].

In daily life we pretend to desire things that we do not desire so that ultimately the worst thing that can happen is that we get what we officially desire. Human life of freedom and dignity does not consist of searching for happiness no matter how we spiritualise it or the effort to actualise an inner potential. We have to find some meaningful cause beyond the mere struggle for pleasurable survival.

## 2. OUR RESULTS

We consider simplification of two variables from World Values Survey, "Importance of Politics in Life" (Q4) and "Life Satisfaction" (Q49). We then find

$$(1) \quad P(S|Pni) = 78.8\%$$

and

$$(2) \quad P(S|Pni) = 76.44\%$$

In words, those who do not think politics is important in life have 2.36% higher probability of *life satisfaction* than those who do not.

## 3. INFERENCE IS COMPLICATED

Our goal is not to attempt to refute or support Mr. Slavoj Zizek's proposition but to put it in context of measured data. Our own feeling is that not 'happiness' but 'life satisfaction' is a more worthwhile target variable. Mr. Zizek's views are based of course on reasoning from enlightenment philosophy that have become established and argue for specific new concept that 'cause' is necessary and perhaps political cause. There are variations of the idea for more religious, which broadens cause to 'calling'. So these are issues of enormous interest to all people. Our finding here shows that those who make politics important in their life – at all – have slightly lower life satisfaction. This does not of course measure whether they also have political issues as their own cause, so it does not directly respond to Mr. Zizek's proposition.

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#### 4. PEOPLE'S IMPORTANCE OF POLITICS IN LIFE

Around 48.7% of world's people think politics is important in their lives, and the rest do not. This is a division that is not trivial at all. We can infer that at least for Life Satisfaction, considering politics as important in life is not necessary, but it can be popular. If one is to make a rational decision to whether to make it important given an impossible 'blank slate' situation, the decision produces a cost in Life Satisfaction, so rationally the decision should be considered carefully. For me, entry into Socialist politics in 2003 in San Francisco was worthwhile because of other reasons than interest in the ideologies, i.e. my Conscience needed to respond to reaction to massacres and destruction in Iraq.

#### 5. THOUGHTS ABOUT YOUR PASSIONS

If your passions are in political thought, then you should know that those who will join will lose 2.34% probability of life satisfaction, but that you will be have potential interest of 48.7% of the world and roughly four billion people, regardless of whether they will agree with you or not. On the other hand, if your passions are appealing to only a thousand people, you should completely avoid public speech and consider an intimate elitist social circle and avoid the vast public arena altogether. If this is not political, you should not even worry about it because you'll still be in the slight majority 52.3% of the world who don't consider politics an important part of their life.

#### 6. ARE WE UNDERPRIVILEGING THOSE UNINTERESTED IN POLITICS

The political ideas and systems that we think about and implement, democracy or whatever other thing, assumes that all people are interested in considering politics important to their lives. We must strive therefore to ensure that whatever political system we create does not disadvantage and underprivilege or create un-necessary intrusions and demands on those who have no interest whatsoever in politics in their lives, and appreciate that this is part of human nature too, and they are not deficient people for their lack of interest in politics. This is not sufficiently understood by passionate political thinkers in right, left, and every other stripe today. The optimal political arrangement, whatever it might be, cannot allow the oppression and denigration of the politically uninterested. It is wrong to use derogatory characterisations of these half of world's population as 'apathetic'. They have higher life satisfaction, so they are not doing anything wrong.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qsHJ3LvUWs&t=793s>
- [2] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fixation\\_index](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fixation_index)