

Messi vs Ronaldo: Your GOAT Choice Could Reveal Your Politics, Finds Major Study

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There's no denying that both Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo are some of the greatest players the sport of football has seen, ever since its inception on the world stage - the contesting term GOAT (greatest of all time) after all, doesn't come easy. The fact that both - despite being consistently and aggressively pitted against each other by their deeply passionate fandoms - still have the utmost respect and regard for each other, further fortifies the stature they have achieved in their respective careers.

It's more likely than not that your algorithm will affirm your choice of GOAT by putting you in a digital echo-chamber. But from a neutral standpoint, the GOAT debate genuinely has no conclusive answer. If this is a football aficionado reading, you could very well publish a trilogy on why your choice in the never-ending Messi versus Ronaldo debate is the correct one. But really - the only thing we'll be seeing, is it spilling the beans on your political leanings. And it's not vibes - it's a concrete study!



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Ronaldo is 'Right' Because Messi is 'Left'

The Nanyang Technological University in Singapore (NTU Singapore) conducted an online, international survey, comprising of more than 10,000 respondents across 26 countries, drawing a correlation between people's choice of GOAT and their corresponding political

leanings. It would be easy to dismiss the hypothesis because these two factors seem to have no overlap - except that they overwhelmingly do. The study found two clear cut parallel trends: Left-leaning and liberal people love Messi, while the right-wing and conservative lot will defend [Ronaldo](#) to death. And the reasoning has definitely got to do with much more than just football. Associate Professor Saifuddin Ahmed of NTU's Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, who led the study, explained, "Messi and Ronaldo project markedly different public personas. Messi is commonly associated with a quieter, team-oriented image, while Ronaldo is known for openly expressing his ambition and celebrating individual achievement. People may be more drawn to the player whose public image aligns with their broader values," adding, "They offer a starting point for examining how political identity may increasingly intersect with popular culture and everyday choices in different societies."



In Frame: Cristiano Ronaldo (Credit: AFP Photo)

Comparing Notes

The 26 countries included in the study, were Australia, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Philippines, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, United Kingdom and the United States. Of these, Ronaldo supporters, and the corresponding conservative association, lit up across 11 countries - particularly North Africa, the Middle East and Southeast Asia. On the other hand, [Messi](#) and the liberal lot maintained stronghold over 8 countries with a strong preference being registered across Argentina, several Western European countries, the United States, Canada and South Korea.



In Frame: Lionel Messi (Credit: AFP Photo)

One thing common to both sets of supporters was that the correlations found, applied more directly to the younger respondents as opposed to seasoned football fans. This checks out with what Professor Saifuddin pointed out about popular culture - more superimposed on the youth - informing political leanings.