

Frequent travel could make you seven percent happier

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People dreaming of travel post-COVID-19 now have some scientific data to support their wanderlust.

A new study in the journal of *Tourism Analysis* shows frequent travelers are happier with their lives than people who don't [travel](#) at all.

Chun-Chu (Bamboo) Chen, an assistant professor in the School of Hospitality Business Management at Washington State University, conducted a survey to find out why some individuals travel more frequently than others and whether or not travel and tourism experiences have a prolonged effect on happiness and wellness.

The results of his analysis show individuals who pay more attention to tourism-related information and frequently discuss their travel plans with friends are more likely to go on regular vacations than those who aren't constantly thinking about their next trip.

Additionally, participants in the survey who reported regularly traveling at least 75 miles away from home also reported being about 7% happier

when asked about their overall well-being than those who reported traveling very rarely or not at all.

"While things like work, [family life](#) and friends play a bigger role in overall reports of well-being, the accumulation of travel experiences does appear to have a small yet noticeable effect on self-reported life satisfaction," Chen said. "It really illustrates the importance of being able to get out of your routine and experience new things."

Previous studies have examined the stress relief, health and wellness benefits of tourism experiences, but they have tended to examine the effect of a single trip or vacation. Chen's research takes these previous studies one step further by looking at the sustained benefits of travel over the course of a year.

Participants in the study were asked about the importance of travel in their lives, how much time they spent looking into and planning future vacations, and how many trips they went on over a year. They were also asked about their perceived life satisfaction. Out of the 500 survey participants, a little over half reported going on more than four pleasure trips a year. Only 7% of respondents did not take any vacations.

As [travel restrictions](#) due to COVID-19 begin to relax in the future, the research could have important implication for both tourists and the tourism industry. Based on the results of the study, Chen said travel companies, resorts and even airlines could launch social media campaigns, such as creating hashtags about the scientific benefits of vacation, to spark people's interest in discussing their opinions about travel.

"This research shows the more people talk about and plan vacations the more likely they are to take them," he said. "If you are like me and chomping at the bit to get out of dodge and see someplace new,

this research will hopefully be some additional good motivation to start planning your next [vacation](#)."

More information: Chun-Chu Chen et al, Would you be more satisfied with your life if you travel more frequently?, *Tourism Analysis* (2020). DOI: [10.3727/108354220X16072200013427](https://doi.org/10.3727/108354220X16072200013427)

Provided by Washington State University

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