



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

## *News Release*

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### **Like it or not, Friends' holiday snaps makes us blue, study shows**

Seeing other people's holiday snaps online makes us sad, research suggests.

A survey of Facebook users shows 90 percent of people are likely to feel low when they see friends travel posts.

These negative emotions prompt differing reactions among photo browsers according to their age, researchers say.

Older users – those born before 1980 – say that travel envy motivates them to book a holiday, the study shows.

The younger browsers – born after 1980 – are more likely to go on a digital detox and cut down on their Facebook use.

The younger users also report feeling motivated to do other things to make them happy, such as shopping online or revisiting their own snaps from previous holidays.

Researchers from the Universities of Edinburgh, Exeter and Falmouth, and Stockholm School of Economics analysed data from people between 18 and 70 years old.

More than 800 Facebook users reported their reactions to Facebook friends' holiday posts in anonymous online surveys and telephone interviews.

Female users are more likely to feel down because posts made them envious of friends spending time with partners or families, researchers say.

Older users are more likely to report feeling sad because they feel they are missing out on adventure and time with loved ones.

Researchers say the findings show an unwelcome side effect of people comparing their own lives to others on social media.

Lead Researcher Dr Ben Marder, at the University of Edinburgh Business School, said: "These findings help us understand the emotional and behavioural outcomes of viewing travel posts. They show how those somewhat idyllic posts by friends on social media are likely to make us feel sad in our own lives and take measures to make us feel happier."

The study is published in the Journal of Travel Research. Link to paper - <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287518786465>

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