

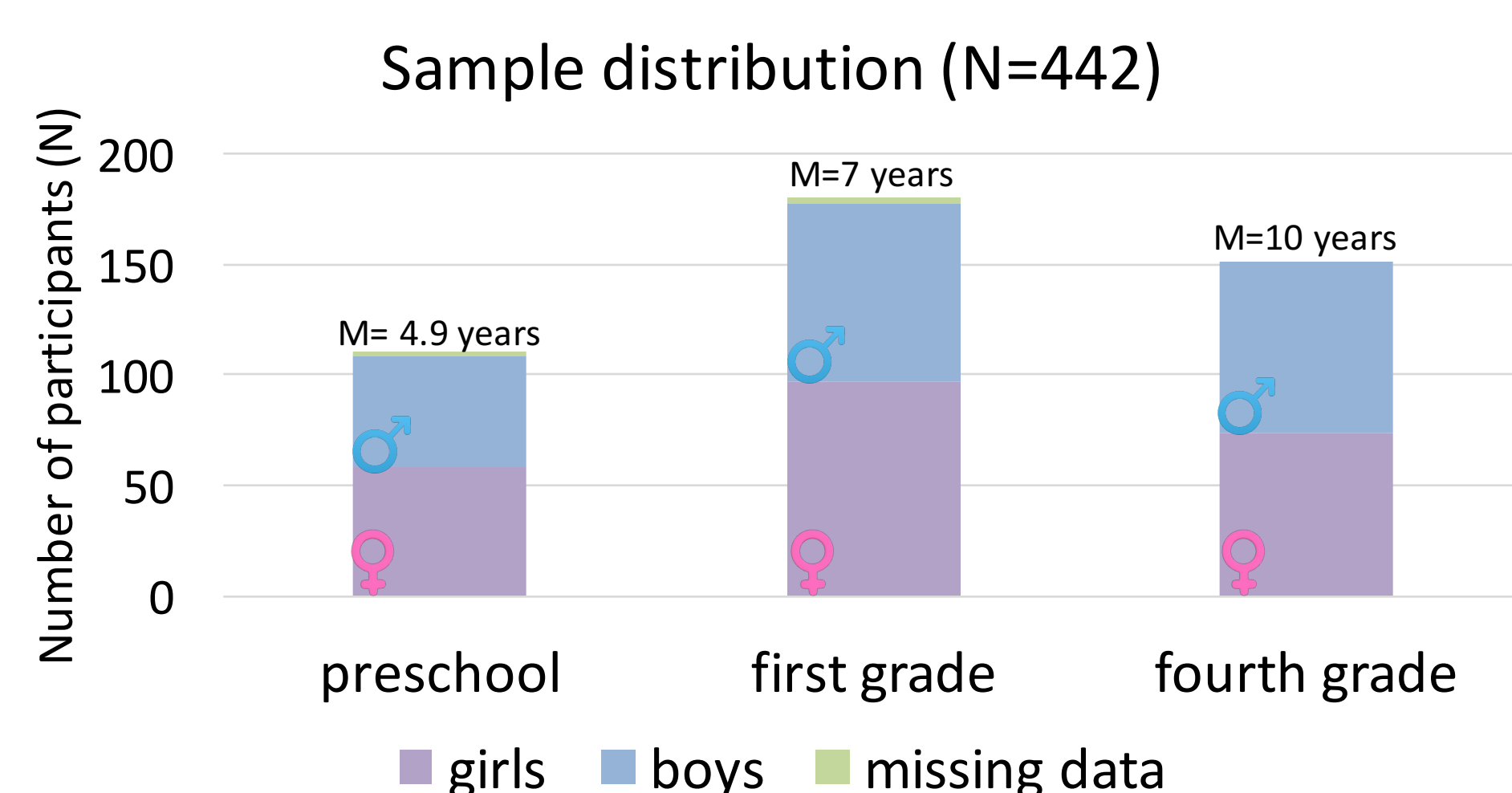
Introduction

- Children make decisions as consumers from a very young age, and are exposed to large sets of alternatives in supermarkets, toy stores etc.
- Studies have examined how assortment size affects choice satisfaction among adults, but not how it affects children
- Choice overload effects (lower satisfaction or choice avoidance when too many options are given) may relate to task's cognitive demands
- Children's cognitive system is inferior to adults' in both capacity and complexity and hence may be more vulnerable to the choice overload effect
- Our research examines whether, and to what extent, children would experience choice overload, and how it changes with age.
- The implications of such findings would have important marketing implications such as the optimal way to display children merchandise for different age groups and maximize choice satisfaction.

Hypotheses: Set size would affect children's post-choice satisfaction, but will be negatively moderated by age (older children showing smaller overload effects)

Methods

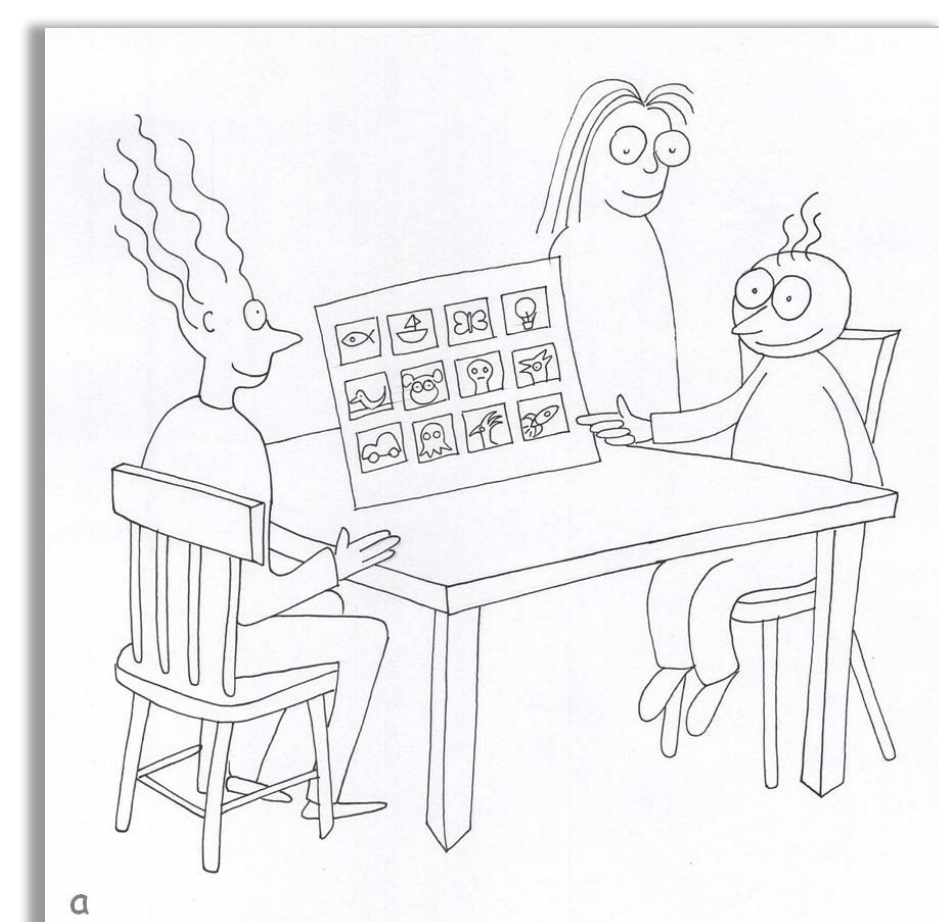
Sample:



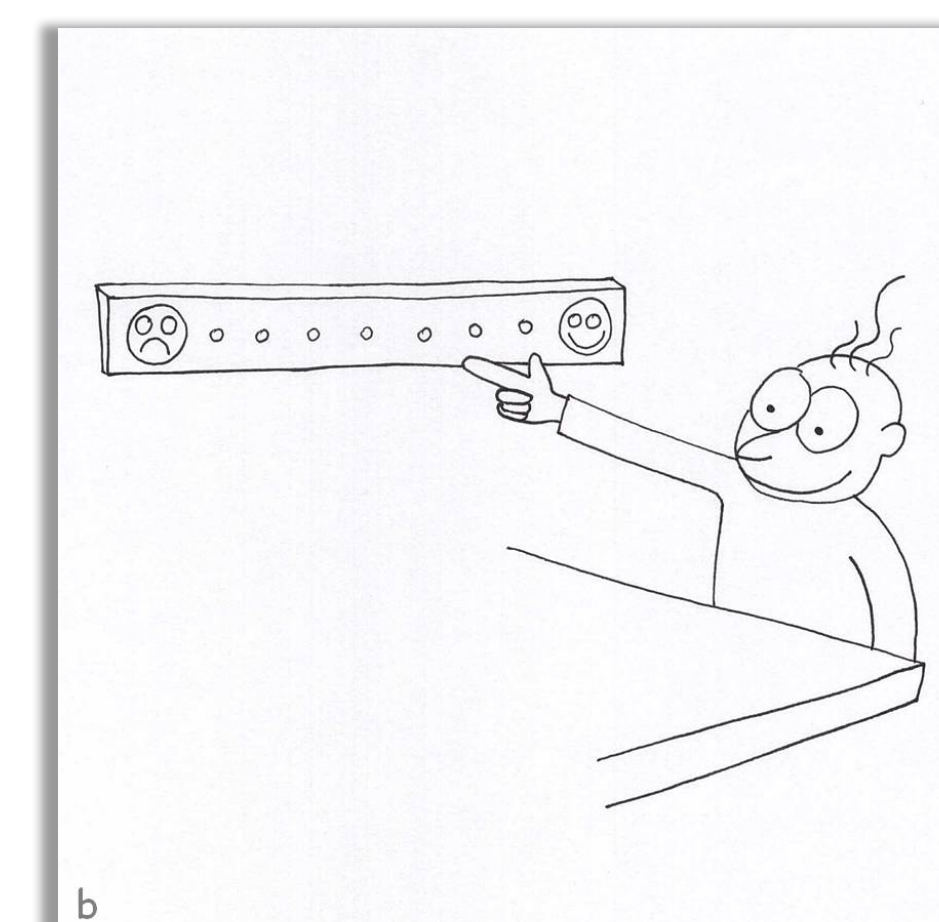
Measures:

- Visual analogue scale for satisfaction
- Willingness to exchange
- Cognitive ability (Inhibition) test:
 - Preschool: "Simon says"
 - School: Computerized Stroop-like task for school kids)

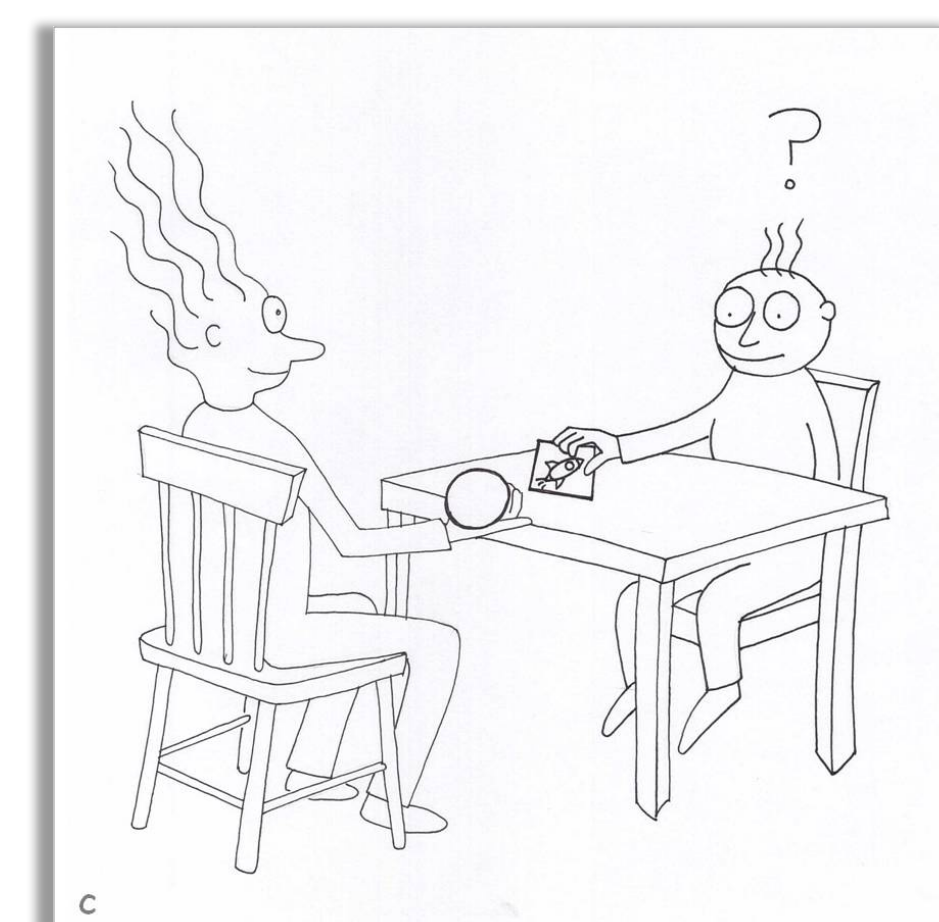
Procedure



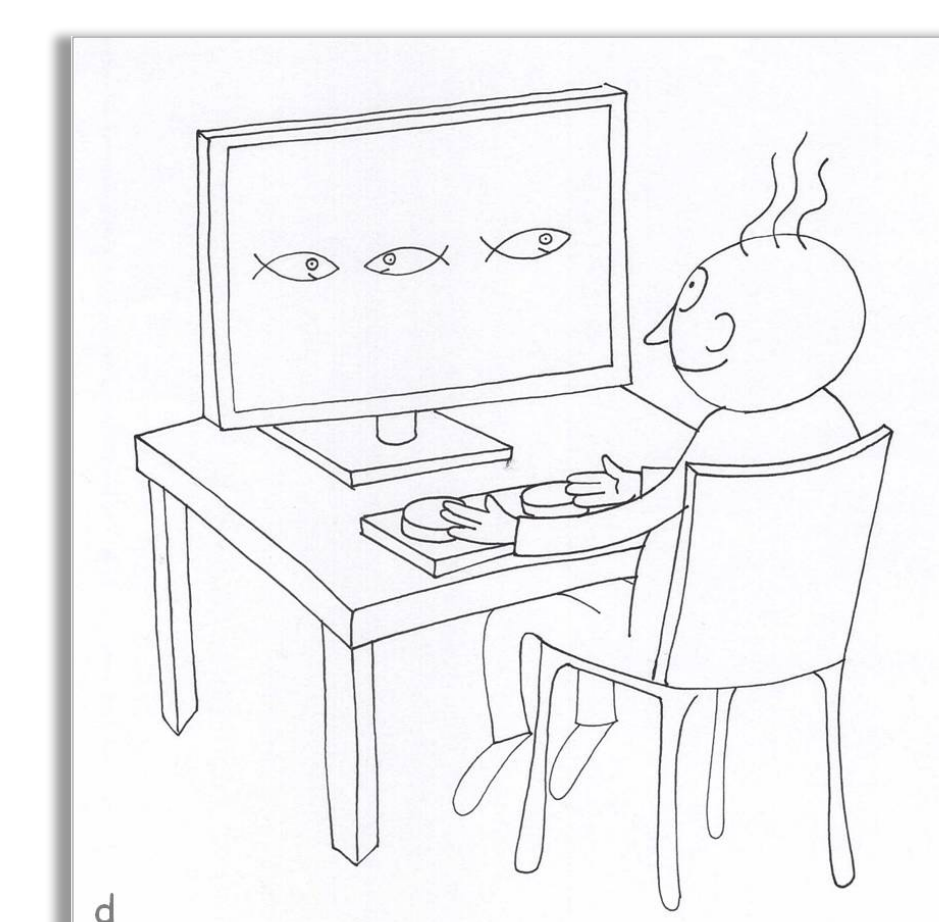
Choosing an item



Satisfaction rating



Willingness to exchange



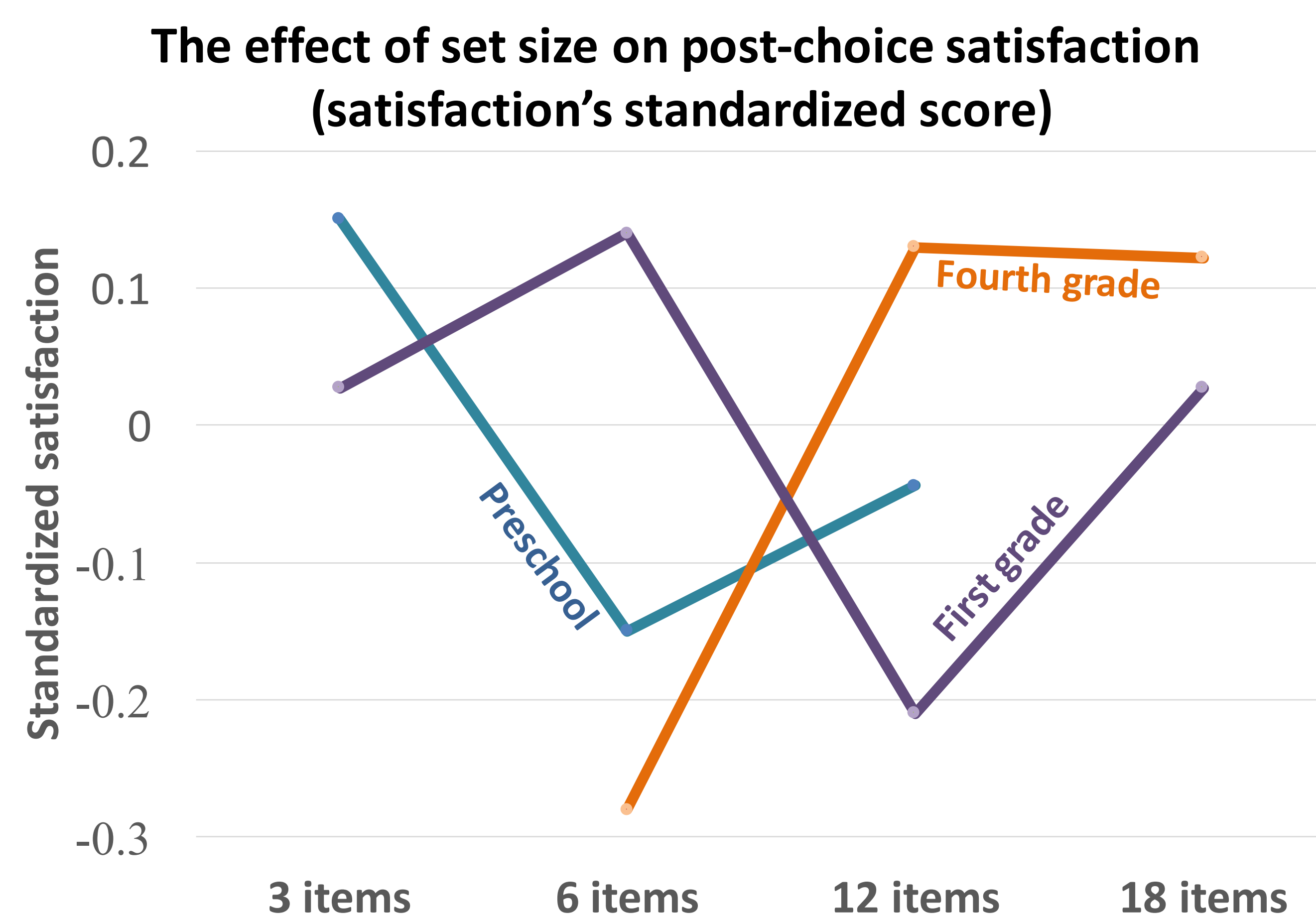
Cognitive ability test

Design

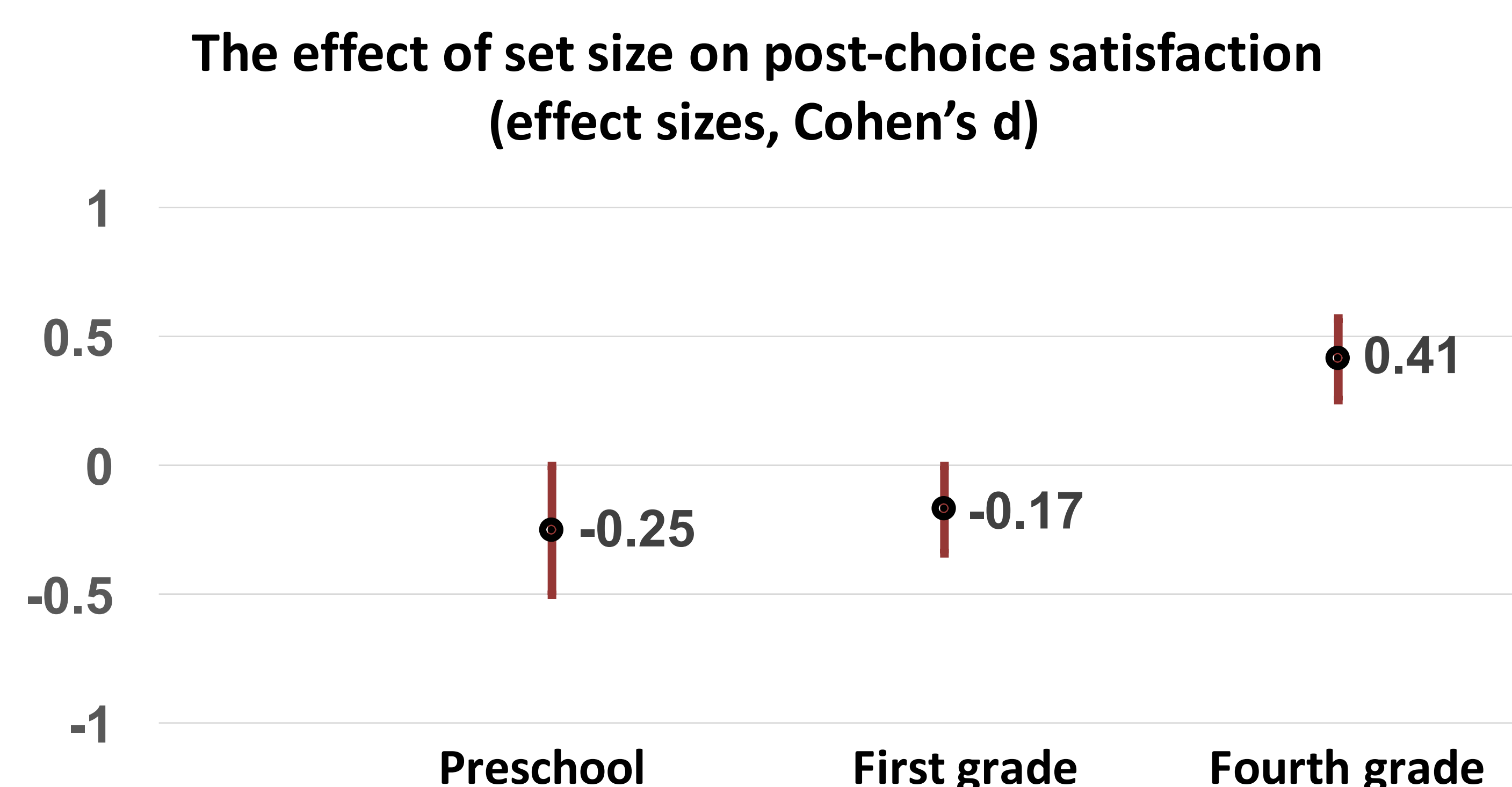
		Age group		
		Preschool	First grade	Fourth grade
Number of alternatives	3	✓	✓	
	6	✓	✓	✓
	12	✓	✓	✓
	18		✓	✓

Results

While preschoolers tended to be more satisfied when offered fewer (rather than many) items, 4th graders demonstrated the exact opposite trend and were happier when choosing from many options.



In terms of effect size, comparing extensive and narrow sets of items demonstrated a choice overload effect for the preschoolers (negative effect) and a "more is better" principle (positive effect) with fourth graders.



Discussion

- Preschoolers tended to be less satisfied with their choice as the assortment was extended, demonstrating a "choice overload" effect
- Fourth graders were more satisfied when choosing from the extensive (vs. narrow) assortment, indicating a "more is better" experience
- First graders showed mixed trends, which might be explained (mediated) by their cognitive ability
- Measuring several cognitive abilities (e.g.: inhibition, regret etc.) may give a better resolution to this transition from "choice overload" effect to a "more is better" experience
- A better understanding of this crucial shifting in children's experience may shed light on the more complex appearance of the choice overload effect in adulthood
- A longitudinal study may be designed to disprove alternative explanations of the differences between age groups

For any questions please contact me at: hillaab@gmail.com