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Are There Too Many Fish in the Sea?

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Presentation title: Are there too many fish in the sea? Too many options within online dating leads to less commitment

Online dating requires users to choose from a large pool of potential partners. Having such a large pool of options leads to an increased cognitive load, which makes the user spend more time searching (Wu & Chiou, 2009). Choice overload can also decrease satisfaction of the decision and increase the desire to reverse the decision (D'Angelo & Toma, 2016). The large amount of options presented online can result in delayed commitment to a single partner and an initial lack of trust because users are simultaneously getting to know other potential partners online (Paul, 2014). The present study builds upon these findings, focusing on college-age students instead of older online daters looking to marry. Students were recruited from a college campus, most of these individuals were with a current partner or multiple partners. Those with partners filled out the entire survey, including a revised Commitment Inventory, while those that were single completed the demographics portion only. Expected results suggest that college-aged couples that meet online don't last as long, don't feel as committed to their current partner, and are more likely to have multiple partners at one time than couples that meet offline. Since it has been shown that college students are most likely using the see-and-screen apps, these findings support the theory that too many options lead to increased searching and desire to reverse decisions. In conclusion, if the goal is to have a long-term committed relationship, college students will most likely benefit from meeting potential partners offline.