

Informal Learning in a Museum Settings Among Young Children

By Koryn Dillard

Purpose

- Museums face a number of challenges including: lack of funding, a rapidly changing society, and constant changes in technology (Everett & Barrett, 2009).
- Now museums are viewed as a place where children can develop a deeper understanding of culture and history, but are put in competition with outside cultural activities (Hall & Bannon, 2006).
- Being able to accurately evaluate the experiences the larger range of experiences participants encounter is lacking in research (Everett & Barrett, 2009).

1

Importance

By looking at the broader context of the visitor experience, it is more that can be evaluated about how child museum participants:

- build confidence in their learning abilities
- apply basic skills in math and reading
- communicate their ideas
- become skilled in scientific inquiry
- use problem solving processes

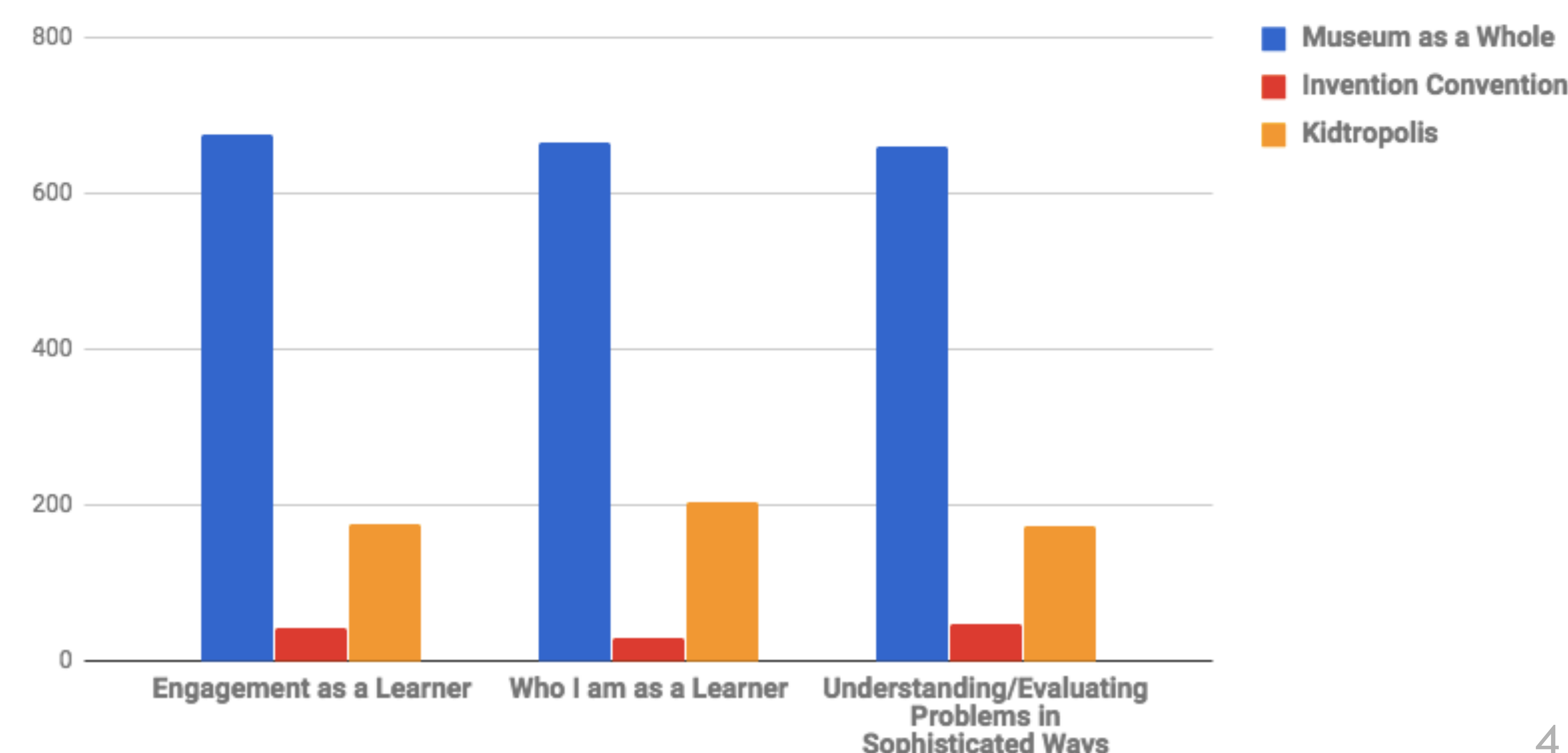
2

Methodology

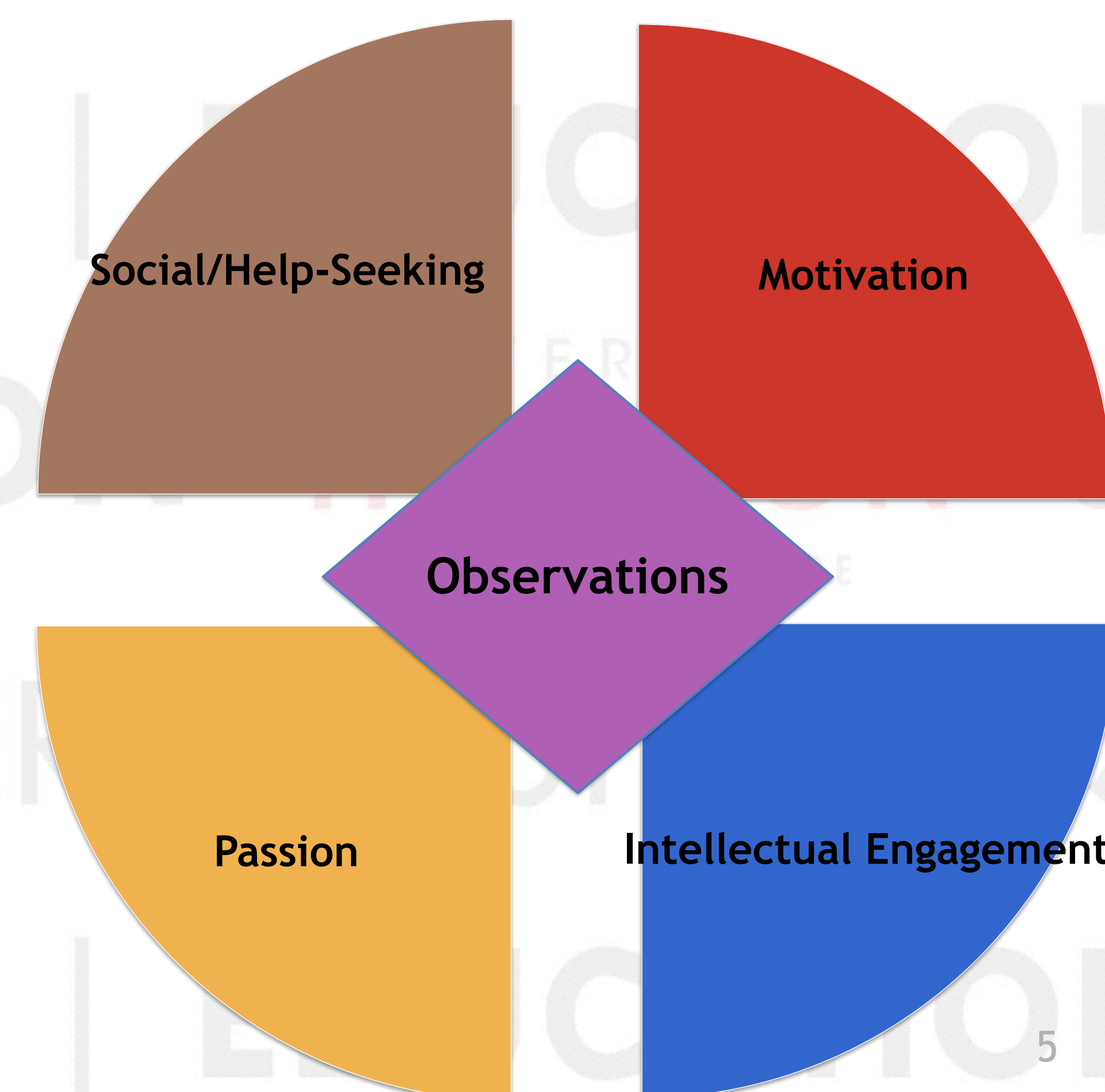
- **Sample:** There were 2,675 for all three of the scales of this study, 780 boys and 728 girls. Eighteen observations on families. Age range from 1 to 12 years old.
- **Data Collection Procedure:** The randomized collection using the three scales obtained from families took place from June 2016 - January 2017.
- **Analyses:** These scales were expected to evaluate parent perceptions of their children's learning experiences in the museum. A factor analysis was run on the surveys, factorial ANOVA was used to analyze the data, and grounded theory for the observations.

3

Museum as a Whole, Invention Convention and Kidtropolis

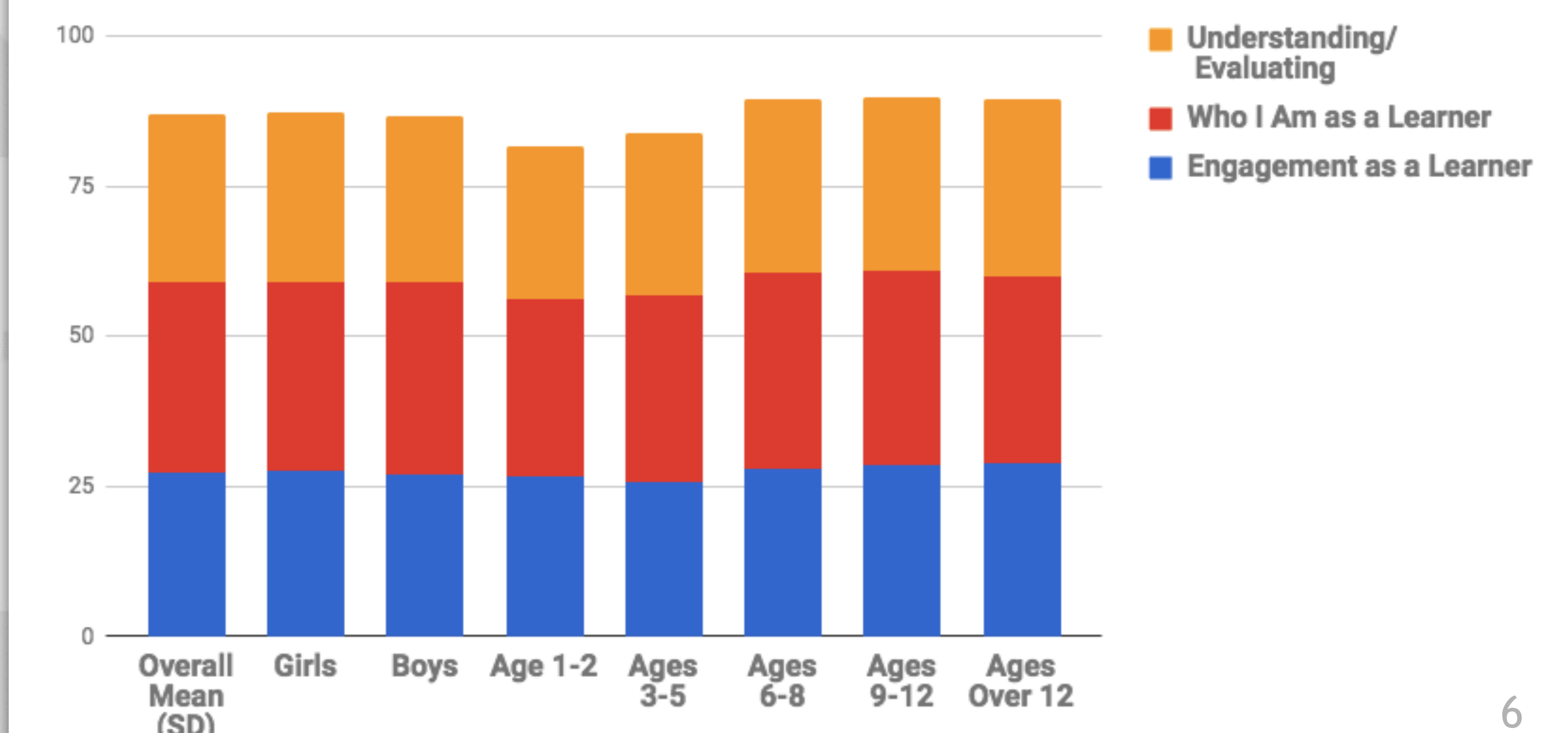


4



5

Engagement as a Learner, Who I Am as a Learner and Understanding/



6

Conclusion

Based on the results of this analysis, there were significant differences between the respondents of younger children ages 1-2 versus respondents with children 6-8. For all three constructs, age was a factor for how the participants responded for the museum as a whole. There were no significant differences in the responses for the gender of the children. This indicates that parents are responding relatively the same regardless of the gender of their children. The frequency of visits also contributed to the response differences. The more frequent the visits, the higher the responses to the three constructs. Based on this study, parents are having a harder time identifying how their children are understanding and evaluating problems in sophisticated ways so this is also an area that needs further attention.

7