

How do we harness others' opinions? An investigation on self-other discrepancies



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Background

• Today, we can harness others' opinions through the Internet



➤ However, how we use them remains unclear

High-variance (V-high) Low-variance (V-low)

Viewpoint

• We focused on...

1. Rating distributions

2. Purposes of purchase



Hypothesis

➤ People in decision for others avoid V-high more than self

✓ To relieve anxiety derived from uncertainty (e.g., Schlenker et al., 1982)

Methods

Task

1. Instructed purpose of choice

- Self or Other (stranger)

2. Binary-product-choice-task

- Product: Coffee maker

- Averages: 6.6 ~ 7.4

• Based on Amazon.com

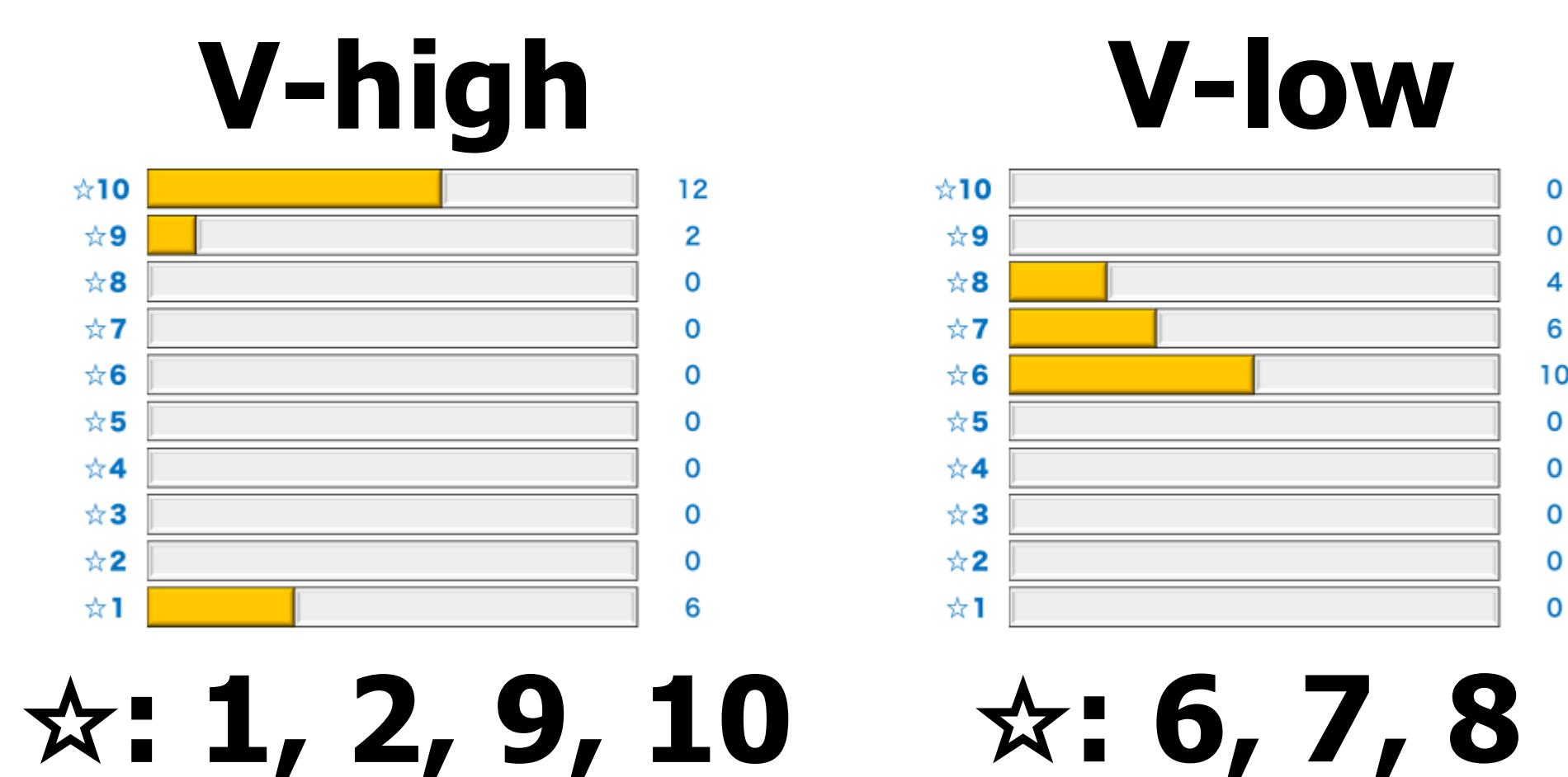
• Always V-high > V-low by 0.5

- Number of reviews: 20, 40 or 100

• Same within pairs

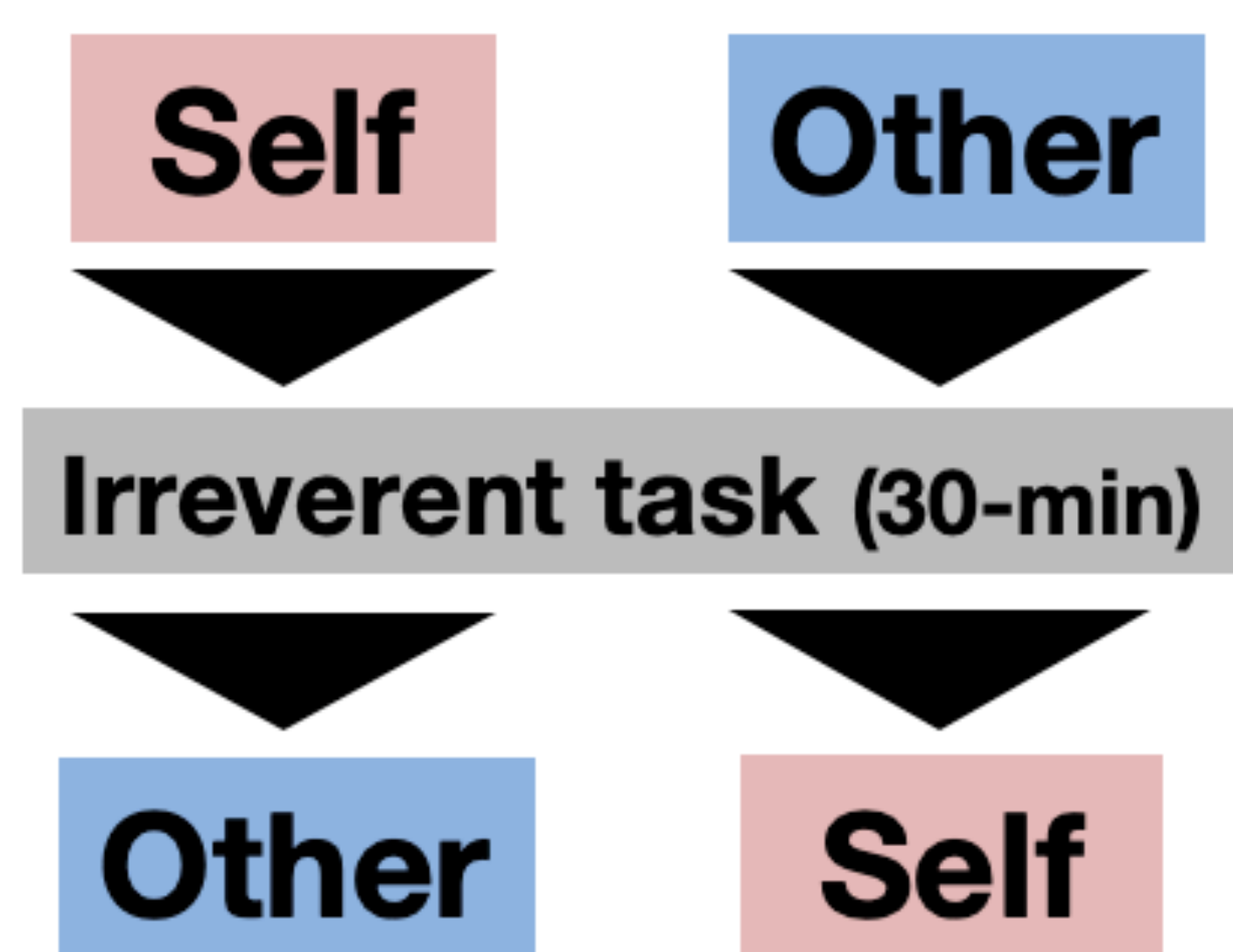
- Number of questions: 15

(= 5 pairs * 3 levels of number of reviews)



☆: 1, 2, 9, 10 ☆: 6, 7, 8

Procedure



Participants

• 33 under / graduate students

- 16 females, 17 males

- $M = 19.8$, $SD = 1.4$

Results

➤ As hypothesized,

Proportion of V-high choice: Other < Self

($p < .001$, *Cohen's d* = .68)

※Value: Proportion of V-high choice

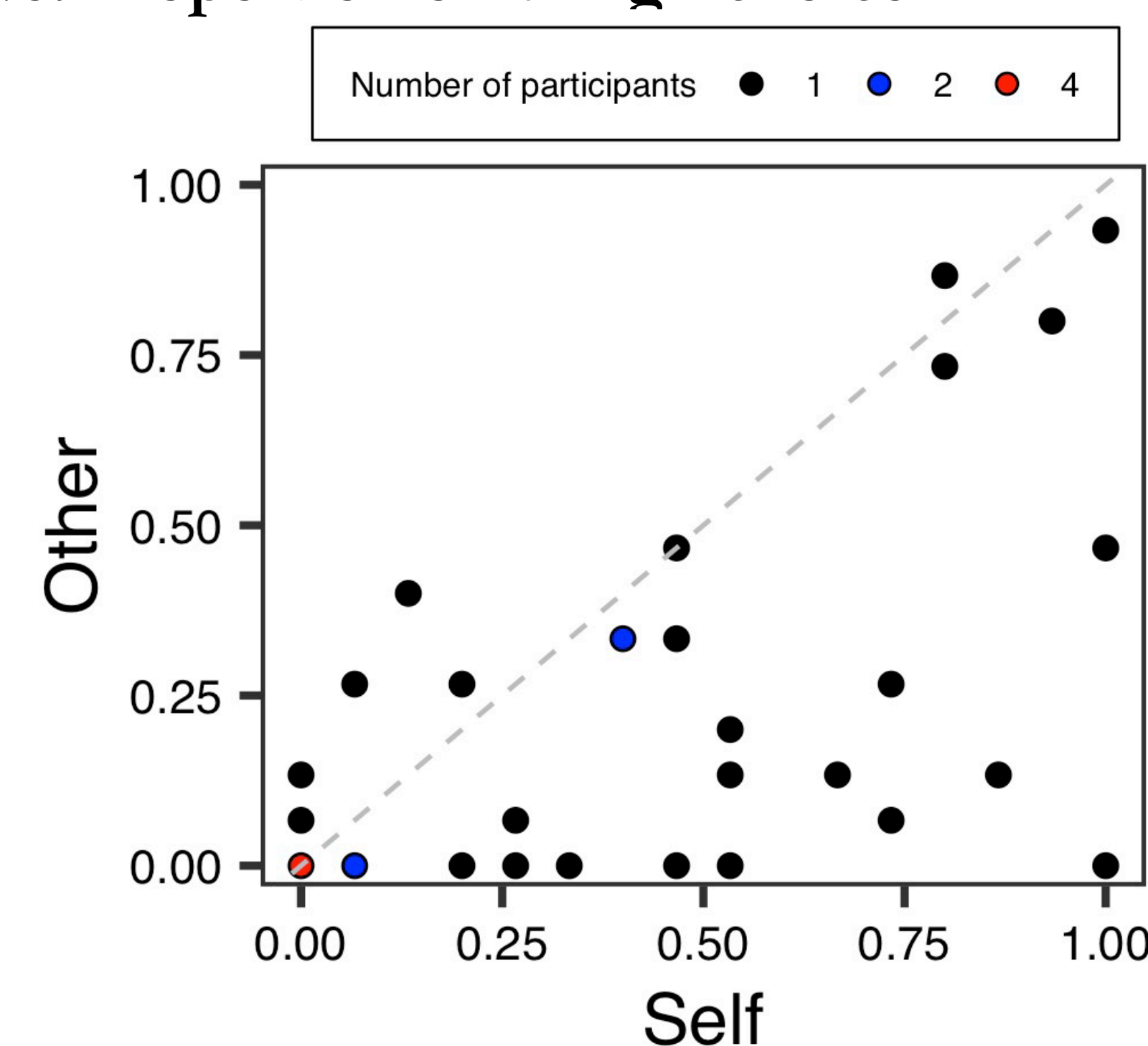


Figure 1. Results of this study.

✓ Effect of number of reviews was not found
(Mixed-effect analysis: $F(1, 951) = 0.10$, $p = .75$)

Pre-Expt. (N = 221)

➤ We confirmed our hypothesis

1. Self Other

2. Friend 3. Stranger

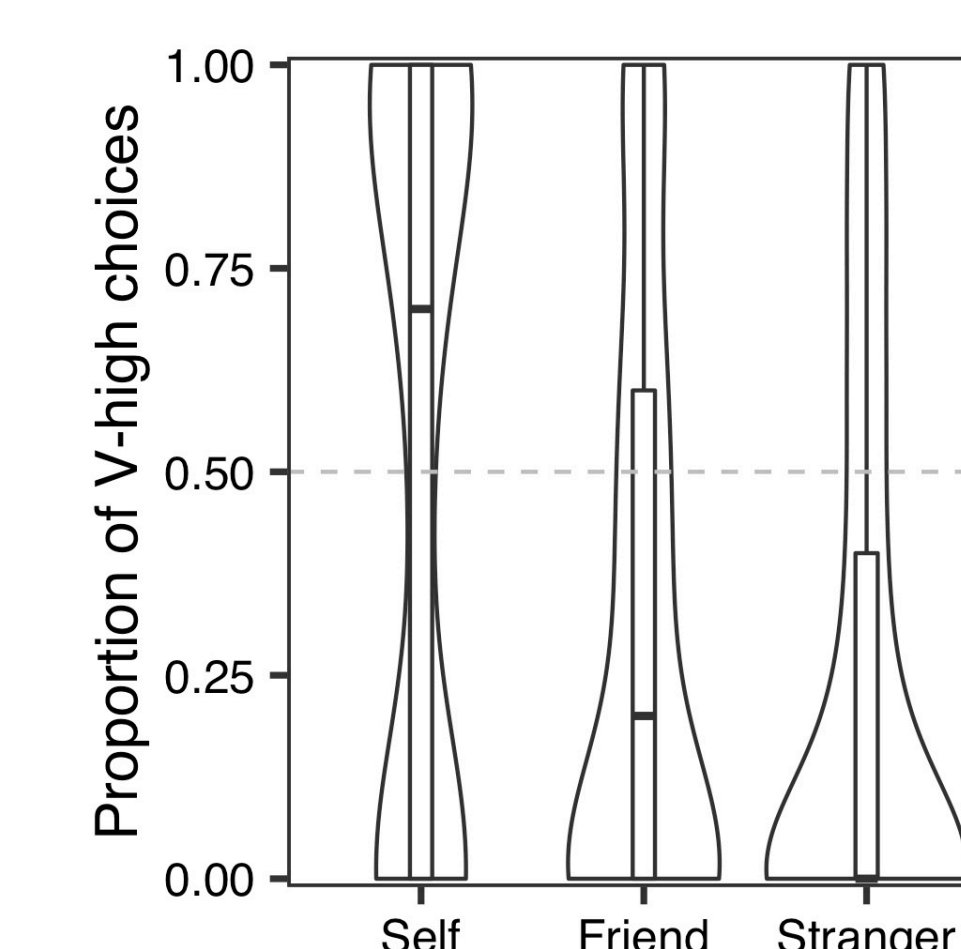


Figure 2. Results of pre-expt.

➤ Proportion of V-high choice:
Friend, Stranger < Self ($p_s < .05$)

(Between-participants design
Number of reviews: 100 at constant
5 questions)

Discussion

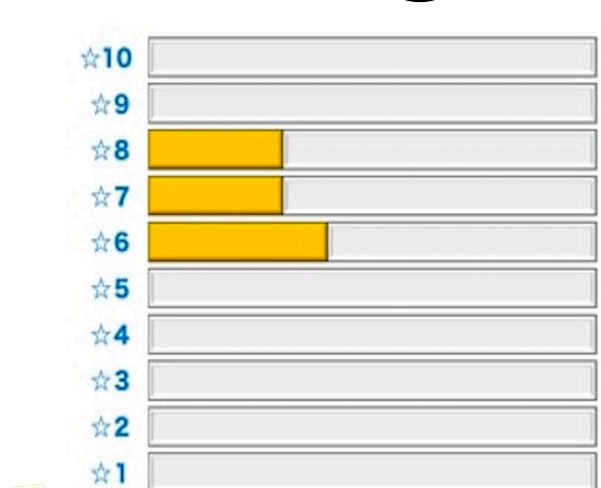
• Numerous studies reported self-other discrepancies (e.g., Polman, 2012)

➤ This is the first study focusing on a psychologically important issue:
How do we harness others' opinions?
(i.e., advice-taking, Bonaccio & Dalal, 2006)

✓ Our findings can contribute to online reviews
(Analytis et al., 2017)

E.g.,
Should recommend...

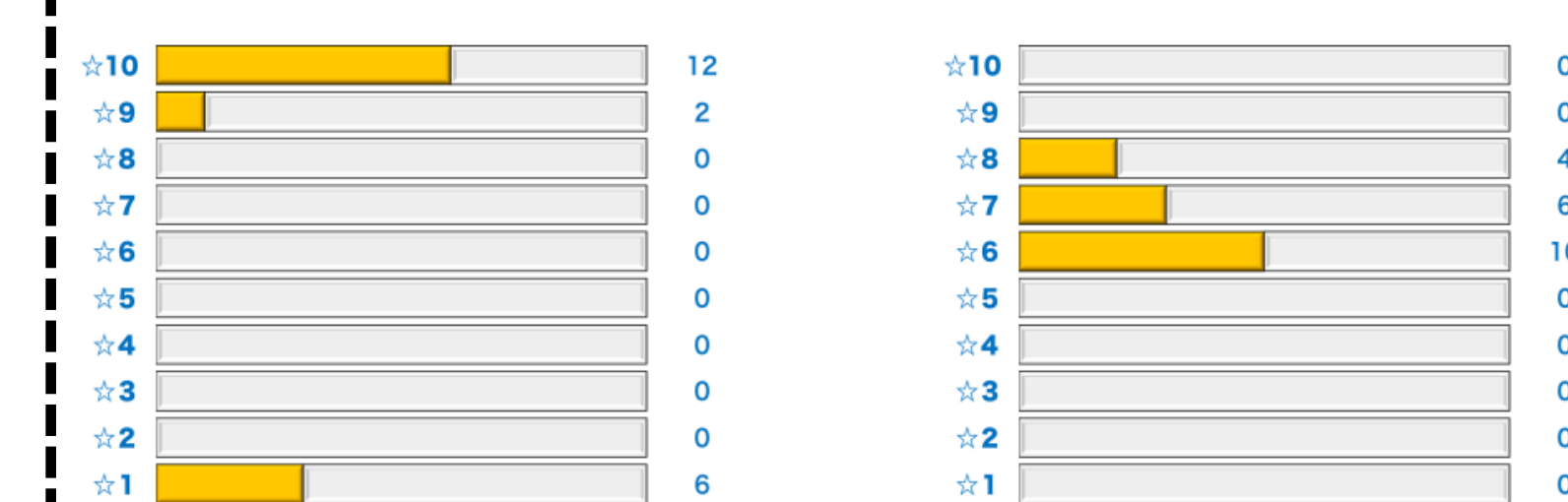
V-low



Products bought as a gift

Now writing...

✓ Effect of product types



Hedonic
(e.g., App for work)

Utilitarian
(e.g., App for entertainment)