



When and Why Do Attribute Ratings Change How Consumers Evaluate An Experience?

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Introduction

- There is variation in how companies ask consumers to rate experiences: Some ask for a single overall rating, whereas others also ask for specific attribute ratings.
- We find that consumers' rate subpar experiences more positively when when they are also asked to rate specific attributes of that experience.
- Why? Because consumers are less likely to incorporate negative aspects of an experience into their overall evaluation when they can directly rate those aspects.

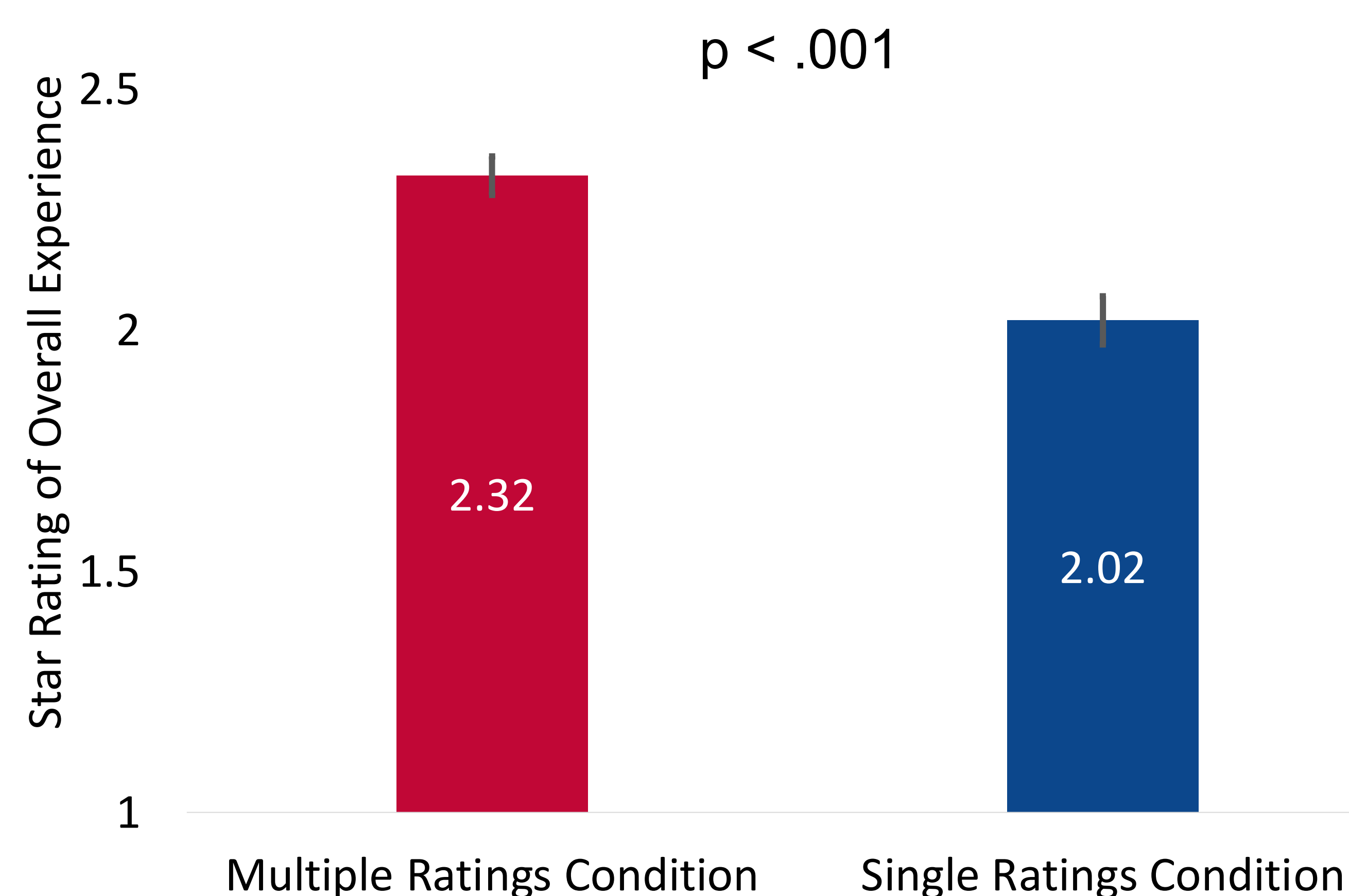
Multiple Rating Condition	Single Rating Condition
What rating would you provide?	What rating would you provide?
Overall ★★★★★	Overall ★★★★★
Accuracy ★★★★★	
Check-in ★★★★★	
Cleanliness ★★★★★	
Communication ★★★★★	
Location ★★★★★	
Value ★★★★★	
	Note: Our main dependent variable is the overall rating, which is collected in both conditions.

Study 3: Consumers do NOT rate subpar experiences more positively overall when they are also asked to rate only positive attributes of that experience

- **Research Question:** Does rating only negative attributes of an experience increase consumers' overall evaluations?
- **Sample:** N = 1,499 from Prolific
- **Method:** Participants imagined having a subpar Airbnb experience. They then rated their overall experience on a scale ranging from 1 star to 5 stars. In the *multiple ratings condition*, they also rated the Airbnb's accuracy, check-in, cleanliness, communication, location, and value. In the *positive ratings condition*, they rated the two attributes that were judged in prior studies to be most positive for a given scenario.
- **Results:** Participants rated their overall experience more highly in the multiple ratings condition but not in the positive ratings conditions. Thus, multiple ratings seem to increase overall evaluations because those evaluations are less likely to incorporate negative aspects of an experience when people can directly rate those aspects.

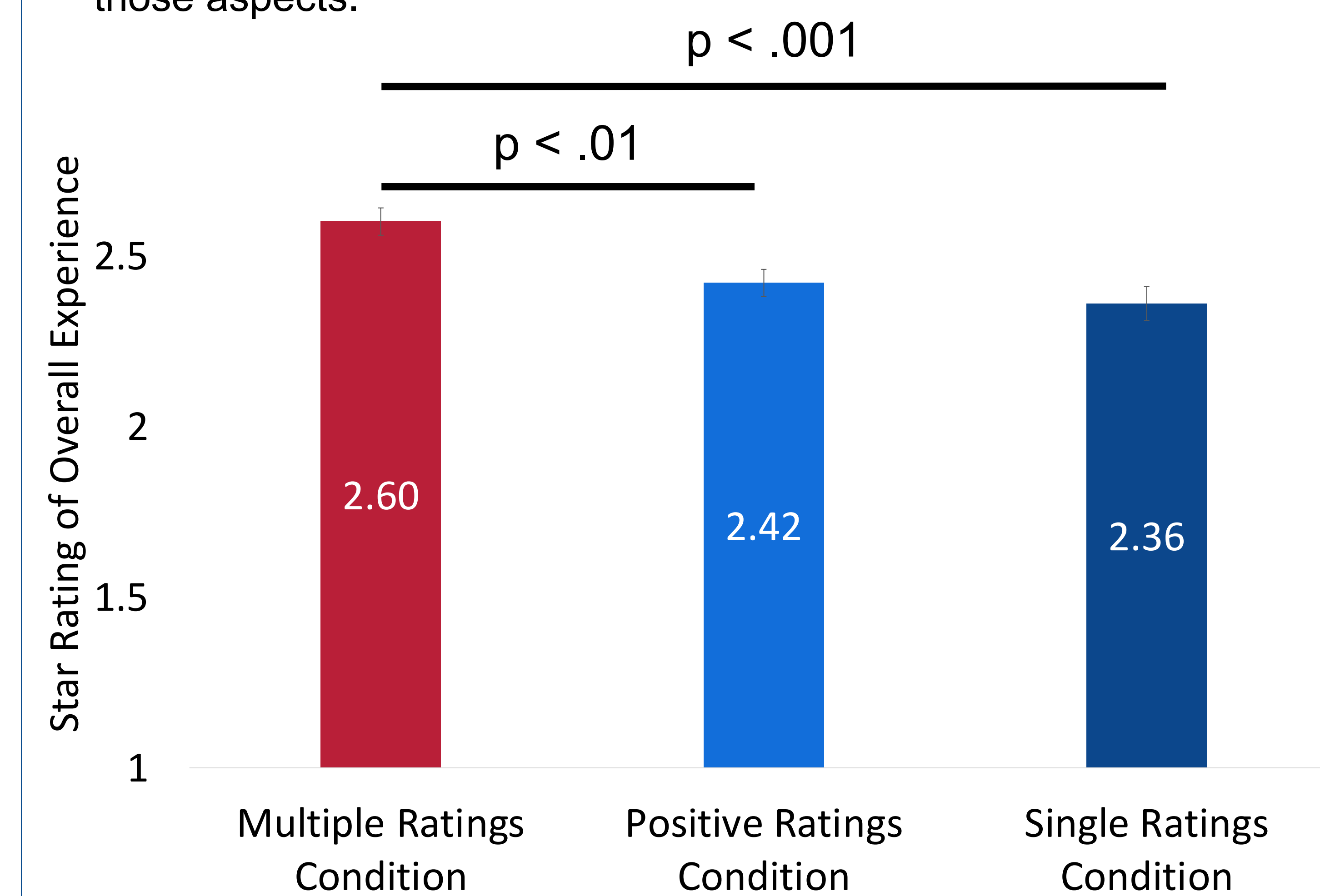
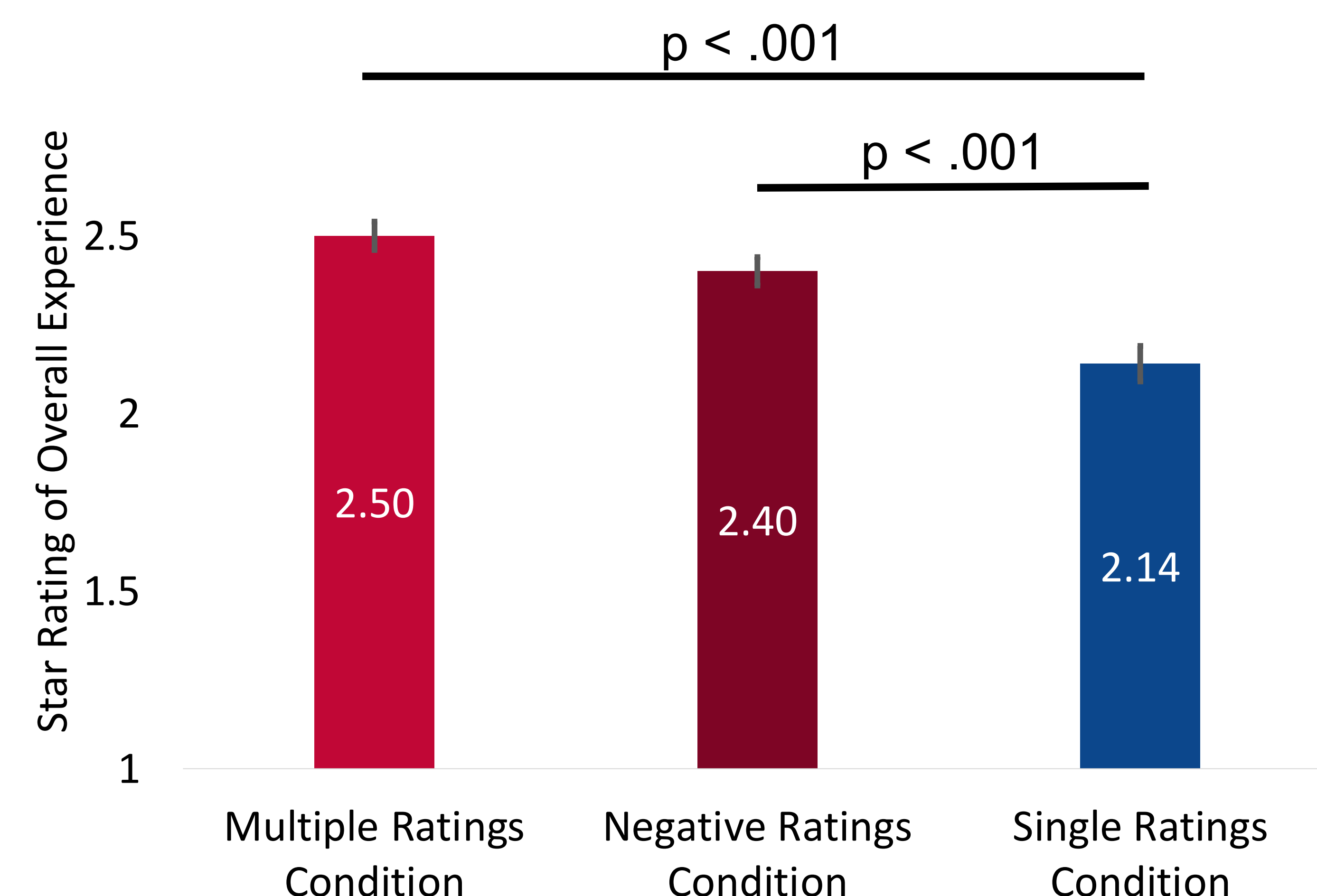
Study 1: Consumers rate subpar experiences more positively overall when they are also asked to rate attributes of that experience

- **Research Question:** Does making specific attribute ratings affect consumers' overall evaluations?
- **Sample:** N = 1,001 from Prolific
- **Method:** Participants imagined having a subpar experience at a restaurant. They then rated their overall experience on a scale ranging from 1 star to 5 stars. In the *multiple ratings condition*, they also rated the restaurant's food, service, ambiance, and value.
- **Results:** Participants rated their overall experience more positively when they were also asked to rate the restaurant's food, service, ambiance, and value.



Study 2: Consumers rate subpar experiences more positively overall when they are also asked to rate only negative attributes of that experience

- **Research Question:** Does rating only negative attributes of an experience increase consumers' overall evaluations?
- **Sample:** N = 1,499 from Prolific
- **Method:** Participants imagined having a subpar Airbnb experience. They then rated their overall experience on a scale ranging from 1 star to 5 stars. In the *multiple ratings condition*, they also rated the Airbnb's accuracy, check-in, cleanliness, communication, location, and value. In the *negative ratings condition*, they rated the two attributes that were judged in prior studies to be most negative for a given scenario.
- **Results:** Participants rated their overall experience more highly in both the multiple ratings and negative ratings conditions. Thus, multiple ratings seem not to increase overall ratings by making positive aspects of those experiences more salient. Even when just negative aspects are rated, overall evaluations increase.



Conclusion

- Consumers rate subpar experiences more positively overall when they are also asked to rate negative aspects of those experiences, because rating those aspects makes consumers less likely to incorporate them into their overall evaluations.
- In our studies (not reported here), we do not find any effects of providing multiple ratings on people's overall evaluations of purely positive experiences.
- In our paper, we discuss how our effects are distinct from those found in recent research (Schneider et al., 2020), and are different from response substitution (Gal & Rucker, 2011). People in our studies are not substituting one response for another, but are giving less weight to negative experiences when they are asked to rate them.

References

- Gal, D., & Rucker, D. D. (2011). Answering the Unasked Question: Response Substitution in Consumer Surveys. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 48(1), 185–195.
- Schneider, C., Weinmann, M., Mohr, P., & vom Brocke, J. (2020). When the Stars Shine Too Bright: The Influence of Multidimensional Ratings on Online Consumer Ratings. *Management Science*, *Forthcoming*.

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Questions?

Join me at the conference-specified office hours at this zoom link:

<https://upenn.zoom.us/j/93338412213?pwd=QTF2WWxoaTlqLzZxV1h0RGxiV2k1QT09>

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