

Student designers have similar perceptions of sustainability problems despite framing them with variations in psychological distance and empathy-invoking nature.

Feeling The Distance: Exploring Novice Designers' Perceptions of the Psychological Distance Towards and Empathy Induced by Problem Variations

Presenters: Jenna Herzog and Rebekah Fodale

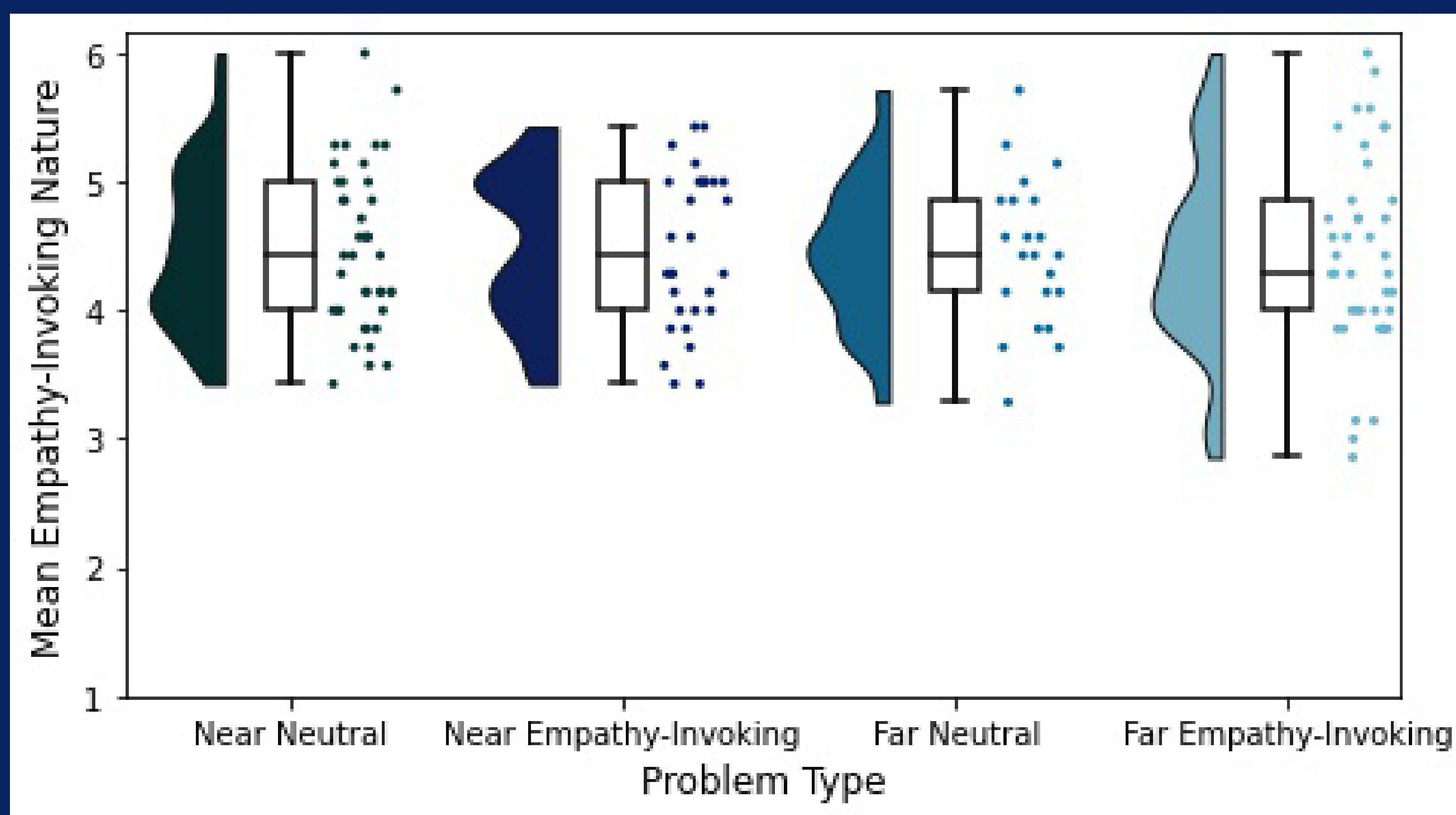
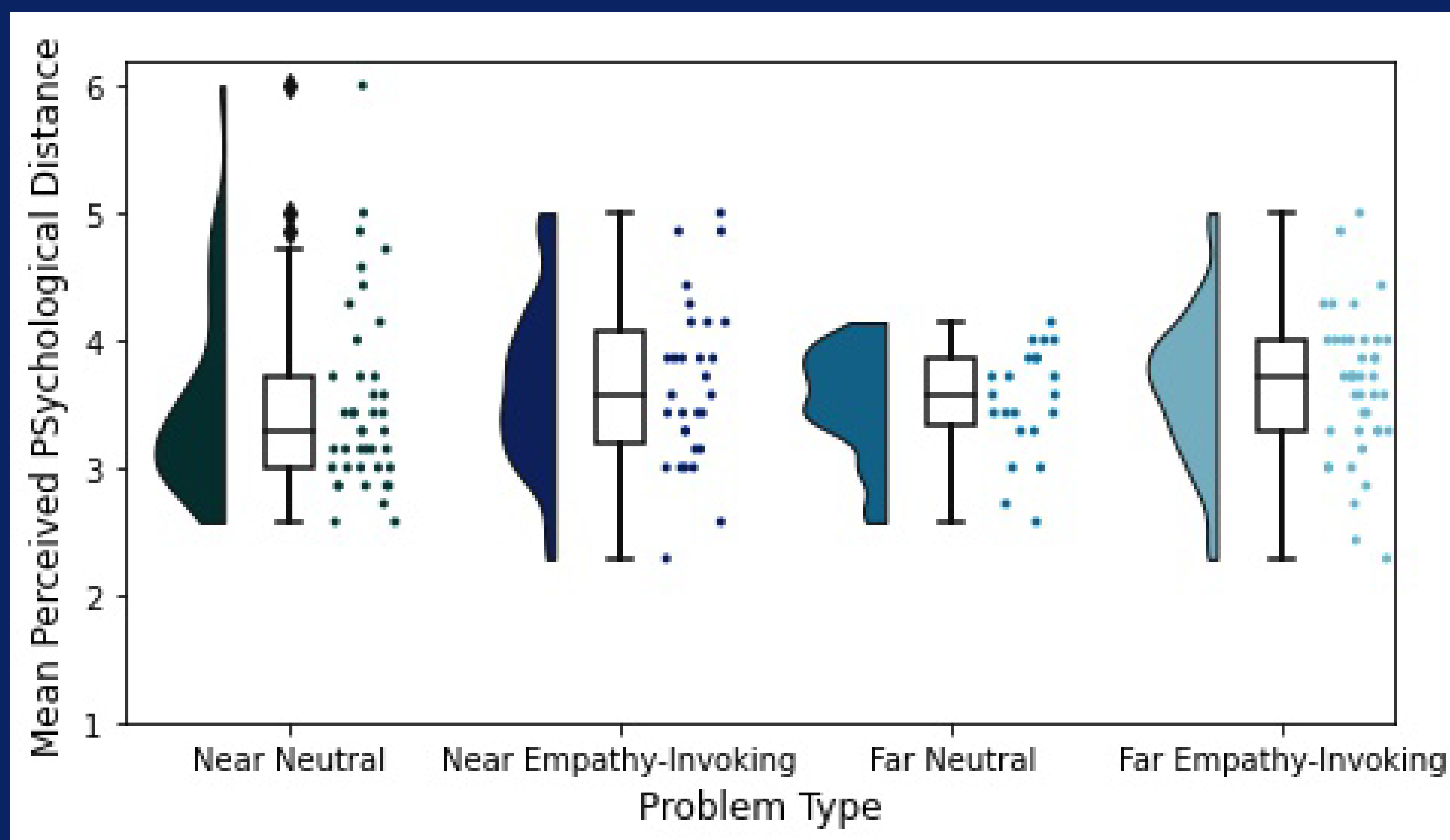
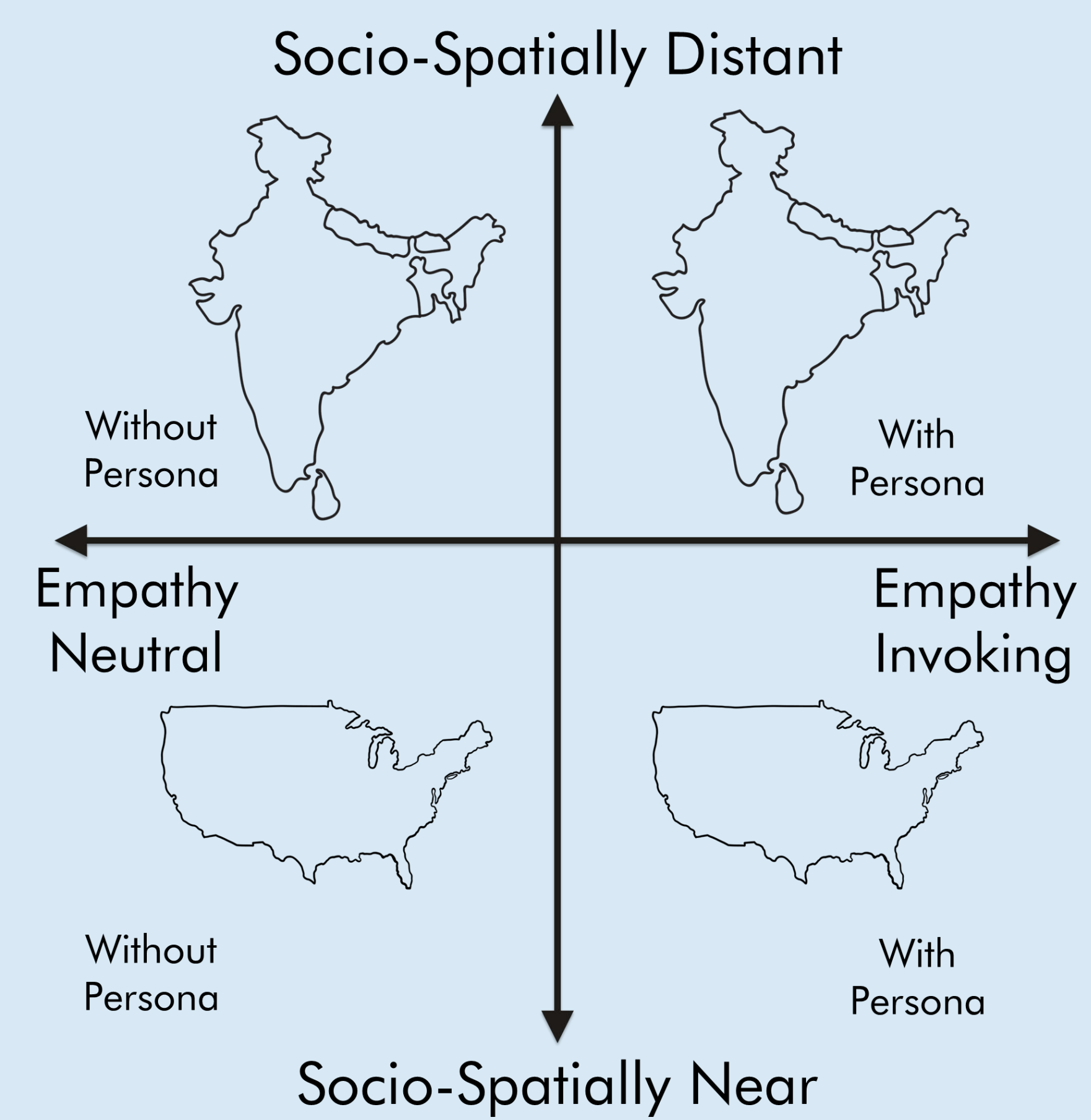
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Research Questions

- RQ1: How do the variations in the formulation of sustainable design problems relate to their perceived psychological distance?
- RQ2: How do the variations in the formulation of sustainable design problems relate to their perceived empathy-invoking nature?

Problem Variants and Hypotheses



Assessing Students' Perceptions

Psychological Distance²

- Temporal Distance
- Spatial Distance
- Social Distance
- Hypothetical Distance

Empathy¹

- Personal Distress
- Empathic Concern
- Personal Distress
- Fantasy

Why could students perceive the problems to be similar?

Aggregated assessment instead of component-wise assessment

Only varied socio-spatial distance and not other components of psychological distance

Focused on one issue related to environmental sustainability

Relationship between the perceptions of empathy-invoking nature and psychological distance



Collaborators

Dr. Elizabeth Starkey (Penn State University)

Dr. Mohammad Alsager Alzayed (Kuwait University)

[1] Liu, Q., Zhang, X., Huang, S., Zhang, L., and Zhao, Y., 2020, "Exploring Consumers' Buying Behavior in a Large Online Promotion Activity: The Role of Psychological Distance and Involvement".

[2] Davis, M. H., 1983, "Measuring Individual Differences in Empathy: Evidence for a Multidimensional Approach.",



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