Received: 31 January 2023 | Revised: 9 October 2023 | Accepted: 11 October 2023

DOI: 10.1111/jopy.12893

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

WILEY

Individual differences in dissimilation: Do some people make more distinctions among targets' personalities than others?

Erika N. Carlson[1] | **Norhan Elsaadawy**[1] | **Victoria Pringle**[1] | **Richard Rau**[2,3]

[1]Psychology Department, University of Toronto Mississauga, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

[2]Health Department, Health and Medical University Potsdam, Potsdam, Germany

[3]Psychology Department, University of Münster, Münster, Germany

Correspondence
Erika N. Carlson, University of Toronto Mississauga, Mississauga, ON, Canada.
Email: erikan.carlson@utoronto.ca

Funding information
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

Abstract

Objective: People differ in how positively they tend to see others' traits, but people might also differ in how strongly they apply their perceptual styles. In two studies (*Ns* = 355, 303), the current research explores individual differences in how variable people's first impressions are across targets (i.e., within-person variability), how and why these differences emerge, and who varies more in their judgments of others.

Method: Participants described themselves on personality measures and rated 30 (Study 1) or 90 (Study 2) targets on Big Five traits.

Results: Using the extended Social Relations Model (eSRM), results suggest that within-person variability in impressions is consistent across trait ratings. People lower in extraversion, narcissism and self-esteem tended to make distinctions across targets' Big Five traits that were more consistent with other perceivers (sensitivity). Furthermore, some people more than others tended to consistently make unique distinctions among targets (differentiation), and preliminary evidence suggests these people might be higher in social anxiety and lower in self-esteem and emotional stability.

Conclusion: Overall then, a more complete account of person perception should consider individual differences in how variable people's impressions are of others.

KEYWORDS

extended Social Relations Model, individual differences, interpersonal perception, perceiver effects, within-person variability

1 | INTRODUCTION

When people report on their impressions of other individuals, a substantial part of their judgment is based on how they tend to see people more generally (Kenny, 2019). For example, if Pam perceives Tim positively on some trait, part of her perception can be attributed to her general tendency to see people in positive ways on that trait. These tendencies, called perceiver effects, essentially describe individual differences in people's average impressions of other people (Kenny, 2019), but perceivers might also differ in how much their impressions vary across targets (Kenny et al., 2023). Take the example of Pam and Polly who both see others in more positive ways on average than most people do on the trait intelligence. Perhaps Pam varies little from her average (e.g., she rates Tim as a 5, Tara

as a 6, and Tom as a 6 on a 1–7 scale) whereas Polly varies a lot around her average (e.g., she rates Tim as a 4, Tara as a 7, and Tom as a 6 on a 1–7 scale). These differences in variability might correspond to distinct interpersonal behavior (e.g., how friendly they are toward specific people), different preferences (e.g., who they choose to befriend), and different social outcomes (e.g., who wants to befriend them). Thus, a more complete account of person perception should consider individual differences in the average impression people form but also how variable their impressions are (Kenny et al., 2023). To that aim, the current research explores individual differences in how variable people's first impressions are, as well as how and why these differences emerge.

1.1 | Individual differences in how people perceive others

The idea that perceivers such as Pam and Polly tend to see people in more positive ways than others comes from work using the Social Relations Model (SRM; Kenny, 2019), which is a decomposition approach that quantifies how much of a given rating is due to people agreeing about a target (target variance), people's general tendencies to see others as higher or lower on that attribute (perceiver variance), and unique perceptions formed of a person that are not due to perceiver or target variance (dyadic variance). Overall, about 25% of the variance in personality impressions can be explained by perceiver effects (Kenny, 2019), meaning that much of person perception is due to people's tendency to see others as being the same (i.e., assimilate).

Crucially, SRM assumes that every perceiver assimilates to the same degree when rating others on a given trait (e.g., Pam and Polly's variability in perceptions across targets is the same), but a recent demonstration of the extended SRM (eSRM; Kenny et al., 2023) suggests that this assumption might be incorrect. Instead, when rating a trait such as interpersonal warmth, some perceivers might form more variable impressions than others do across targets. In eSRM, this within-person variance is called *dissimilation* and is indexed as the perceiver's standard deviation (*SD*) of a given rating across targets. Using 40 celebrities as targets, Kenny et al. (2023) found evidence that there was meaningful variation in dissimilation for the 20 traits they measured (e.g., intelligent, enthusiastic, warm), meaning that some people saw celebrities as more alike than other people did. Conceptually then, perceivers differ in terms of how positively they see others on a given trait overall, but they might also differ in terms of how much they see others as being like one another (e.g., Pam sees people more similarly than Polly does).

In the current work, we explore dissimilation at zero acquaintance to isolate the role of the perceiver. First, this controls for level of familiarity. If some perceivers are more familiar with targets than others, their ratings might be more nuanced due to their unique knowledge versus something specific about the perceiver. Second, zero-acquaintance perceiver effects are believed to reflect a general working model of what people are like whereas perceptions of known targets seem to reflect a group-specific stereotype based on social experiences (Rau, Carlson, et al., 2022; Srivastava et al., 2010). Thus, the degree to which people consistently assimilate at zero acquaintance might reveal something more fundamental about how people perceive their social world. Third, this approach controls for interpersonal dynamics driving eSRM components, such as perceivers evoking unique or similar responses across targets. Thus, we offer a strong test of individual differences in within-person variability in impressions by focusing on zero acquaintance.

We further build on the eSRM demonstration by testing if within-person variability in ratings of other people is a consistent individual difference across attributes. If some perceivers have rigid ways of seeing people whereas other perceivers are more discerning, their perceptual style should be observable in their judgments across a range of attributes (i.e., their dissimilation for one trait should be related to their dissimilation for another). For example, if Pam rates dozens of people on the traits "intelligent," "enthusiastic," and "warm," her SDs of perceptions for intelligent, enthusiastic, and warm should be consistently lower than other people's across these traits whereas Polly's SDs for these traits should be consistently higher than other people's. Evidence for this kind of perceptual style offers a new way of understanding the unique psychological experiences of perceivers.

1.2 | Sources of within-person variability in perceptions

Our goal is to capture within-person consistency in ratings across traits, but the eSRM suggests that dissimilation alone can be difficult to interpret for two reasons. First, within-person SDs might be confounded by methodological artifacts that are unrelated to how people make distinctions among targets (e.g., response styles). Second, each person's dissimilation likely comprises two distinct sources of substantive variability. Specifically, part of why people's impressions vary across targets is because targets tend to evoke different impressions in general (e.g., Tim tends to be seen as friendlier than Tara). Thus, part of why people vary in their impressions of targets might be due to their tendency to make distinctions among targets that other perceivers also make, which is called *sensitivity*.

People's impressions might also vary across targets because they see targets in unique ways from other perceivers, which is called *differentiation*. Given the ambiguity of dissimilation, we index how much of the within-person variance in impressions is due to these three sources.

1.3 | Confounding sources of within-person variability

When people rate targets on several traits, their within-person variability might be artificially exacerbated by their *extreme response style* (ERS), which reflects people's tendency to use the extreme ends of the scale (Baird et al., 2017; Kenny et al., 2023). This tendency should be consistent across traits, which would artificially inflate consistency in dissimilation across traits. Furthermore, the extremity of people's general tendency to see others in positive or negative ways on a trait (i.e., their perceiver effect; PE) can constrain within-person variability. People who see others as being extremely high or extremely low on traits more generally simply have less room to vary in their impressions across targets which would lead to artificially consistent within-person variability across traits (PE^2). Thus, we control for these confounding sources of within-person variability in all analyses (i.e., ERS, PE, PE^2).

1.4 | Sensitivity

Sensitivity is the degree to which a perceiver's impressions across targets correspond to the impressions other perceivers made, on average, of those targets. As shown in Figure 1, sensitivity is the slope between how targets were seen on average (i.e., target effects) and a given perceiver's impressions of those targets. For example, on the trait friendly, Paul tends to form impressions that are somewhat in line with how others generally see targets (he sees Tim as friendlier than Tammy), but Polly forms impressions that more strongly align with how others generally see targets (i.e., her sensitivity is stronger). Sensitivity broadly reflects a perceiver's tendency to differentiate among targets like other perceivers do, but in a zero-acquaintance context, sensitivity likely indicates the degree to which a perceiver uses shared physical stereotypes (attractiveness) and perhaps norms about any observable behavior (smiling) (Kenny, 2004). For example, Tim might smile more than Tammy which is why people generally see Tim as friendlier than Tammy. If Polly is more sensitive to this shared norm (i.e., smiling people are friendly), her impression of Tim's friendliness will be higher than her impression about Tammy.

Is sensitivity a consistent individual difference across attributes? That is, if Polly has higher sensitivity than other people do for friendliness, does she have higher sensitivity on other traits as well? Such an example is shown in Figure 1, where Polly has higher sensitivity than others (e.g., Paul) on judgments of both friendliness and intelligence. Evidence for consistency in sensitivity across attributes would mean that some people use shared stereotypes or norms more than other people do across traits. Kenny et al. (2023) tested consistency across 20 traits with celebrity targets and found that the average correlation between traits was small (i.e., <0.20), suggesting sensitivity was not

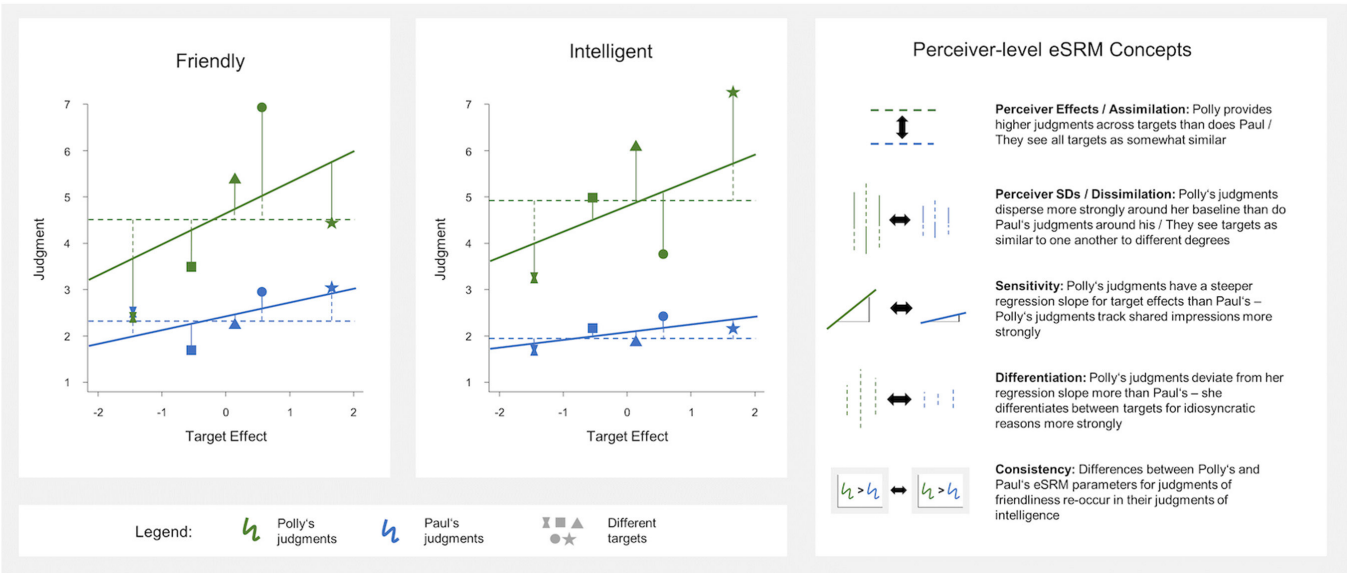

FIGURE 1 Within-person consistency across traits in sensitivity and differentiation.

an individual difference. However, sensitivity for celebrities was partially explained by familiarity (i.e., greater familiarity predicted greater sensitivity), which makes it difficult to know how much of sensitivity was due to the perceiver rather than their general familiarity with celebrities. A strong test of whether individual differences in sensitivity are due to perceivers requires a first impression context where perceivers have equal familiarity with targets.

Why would sensitivity be consistent across traits at zero acquaintance? Broadly speaking, consistent sensitivity means that some perceivers more than others tend to be attuned to and use the shared stereotypes or norms that other perceivers tend to use for a myriad of traits. However, a more general mechanism for consistent sensitivity across traits might be liking, such that some perceivers especially like targets that other perceivers especially like, which may partially explain why they make similar trait judgments as other perceivers across targets. Indeed, ratings of attributes (e.g., friendly) tend to be influenced by global attitudes, such as how desirable a perceiver thinks a target is and how much they like a target (Leising et al., 2015). Thus, targets who are especially liked will be seen as being higher on desirable traits. If consistent sensitivity is driven by positive attitudes toward targets, it would mean that some perceivers are not necessarily more attuned to shared stereotypes or norms than other perceivers are (e.g., stereotypes for extraversion, conscientiousness), but instead, that some perceivers have similar attitudes to other perceivers with respect to which targets are especially likeable.

Of course, it is possible that sensitivity is not consistent, or it is consistent across a subset of traits. For example, liking may only explain consistent sensitivity among evaluative traits, whereas other factors, such as trait observability, explain consistent sensitivity among other traits. To better understand whether, and why, sensitivity is consistent across traits, we explore the average correlation among perceivers' sensitivity scores across all combinations of traits before and after controlling for liking. If sensitivity is consistent before, but not after, controlling for liking, then consistency is explained by sharing others' attitudes toward targets. If sensitivity is consistent when controlling for liking, then the people who use shared stereotypes or norms more than others for one trait (e.g., smiling people are extraverted) tend to use them more for other traits as well (e.g., disheveled clothing signals low conscientiousness). That is, there are some people who utilize shared stereotypes or norms more than others across traits.

1.5 | Differentiation

Differentiation refers to the degree to which a perceiver makes unique distinctions across targets, which is ultimately akin to a relationship effect in SRM (Kenny, 2019). For example, unlike most people, Polly might see Tim as being friendlier than Tara. Or, like other people, she saw Tara as friendlier than Tammy, but her perception of Tara was much more positive than other people's and her impression of Tammy was much more negative. Differentiation is indexed as the SD of residuals for the sensitivity slope.[1] Thus, as shown in Figure 1, Polly's impressions deviated more from her sensitivity slope than did Paul, suggesting that she had more differentiation. Kenny et al. (2023) found that differentiation was associated across traits for celebrities (i.e., $r > 0.30$), but that differentiation was also associated with unique familiarity with celebrities (e.g., Pam's differentiation was higher because she knew more about the celebrities). Thus, testing the consistency of differentiation across traits when familiarity is held constant is a strong test of whether consistency is due to something about the perceiver.

Is differentiation a consistent individual difference across attributes such that the people who tend to see others in more unique ways on one trait tend to do so on other traits? If so, one of the most likely explanations is idiosyncratic liking. In a first impressions, liking judgments are largely dyadic (Kenny, 2019). Idiosyncratic liking might be a critical mechanism for consistent differentiation across traits because liked targets would be seen in more positive ways across more desirable traits. That is, Polly might have higher differentiation than other people do across traits because she (a) disliked targets other perceivers liked and liked targets others disliked, or (b) she had more extreme reactions to targets than other people did. To better understand whether, and why, differentiation is consistent across traits, we explore the average correlation among differentiation scores across traits before and after controlling for liking.

However, it is possible that differentiation is not consistent across traits because liking affects ratings of more evaluative traits (Leising et al., 2015). For example, due to liking, consistency might be higher among similarly evaluative attributes and lower among differentially evaluative attributes. Other explanations for inconsistent differentiation across traits might be that perceivers use cues idiosyncratically for some attributes (e.g., intelligence) but normative cues for others (e.g., warmth), and differentiation is simply measurement error.

1.6 | The relationship between sensitivity and differentiation

Regardless of whether sensitivity and differentiation are consistent across traits, we test whether sensitivity and

differentiation of each attribute (e.g., warm) are related, such that people who tend to have higher differentiation also tend to have higher sensitivity. If people who form unique impressions also tend to track social norms (i.e., the link between differentiation and sensitivity is positive), then someone like Polly tends to make distinctions among targets that other people make (high sensitivity) but she is more extreme in how she differentiates (high differentiation). For example, most people might assume that someone who is not smiling is slightly disagreeable and that someone who is smiling is slightly agreeable, but Polly might see these individuals as extremely disagreeable and agreeable, respectively. Kenny et al. (2023) observed a positive association between sensitivity and differentiation but given that their ratings did not control for ERS, it is unclear if this link was conceptually meaningful or due to confounding variance. Given that we do control for ERS, a positive link would suggest that differentiation reflects exaggerated sensitivity.

If we observe a negative association, then there are perceivers whose impressions track social reality more precisely than others do (i.e., higher sensitivity and lower differentiation) and perceivers who fail to appreciate the distinctions others make among targets while also forming idiosyncratic impressions (i.e., lower sensitivity and higher differentiation). Of course, a null or weak association is also possible, which would mean that differentiation has no bearing on sensitivity. Conceptually, this might suggest that differentiation is a perceiver's random, unique reaction to various targets rather than a systematic tendency to either rate people in normative but extreme ways or to track others' distinctions more precisely.

1.7 | Nomological network of dissimilation, sensitivity, and differentiation

Who tends to make more distinctions than others do across targets? To shed light on the psychological meaning of these components, we explore the nomological network of the eSRM perceiver components by examining gender, the Big Five, narcissism (i.e., admiration and rivalry; Back et al., 2013), social anxiety, and self-esteem.

With respect to dissimilation, it is possible that some people have more rigid perceptions than others, arguably people higher in traits defined by perceptual styles. For example, agreeableness has been associated with seeing others in positive ways (e.g., Rau, Nestler, et al., 2021), in part because this trait is defined by seeing others as trustworthy. Perhaps people higher in agreeableness see others as being all good. Similarly, the rivalry facet of narcissism, which is defined by derogating others (Back et al., 2013), might be associated with seeing others as all negative on traits (i.e., lower dissimilation).

With respect to sensitivity, to the degree to which sensitivity reflects use of social norms, it is possible that individuals higher in social awareness or higher in a motivation to attend to social norms are also higher in sensitivity. If so, people higher in extraversion and agreeableness might have higher sensitivity because of a greater awareness of social cues or the appropriateness of behavior (Akert & Panter, 1988).

With respect to differentiation, people higher in differentiation might make more extreme or entirely opposite distinctions among targets because of deficits in social processing suggesting that people higher in differentiation might be lower in well-being (e.g., lower in self-esteem, higher in social anxiety). For example, people higher in social anxiety tend to form more extreme, negative impressions based on neutral or ambiguous information (Gutiérrez-García & Calvo, 2017).

1.8 | Research overview

When forming first impressions, do people have consistent ways of making distinctions among targets across traits, and if so, why and who makes more distinctions among targets? Using data from two zero-acquaintance studies, the current research aims to address these questions. First, we explore if people are consistent across traits in two types of within-person variability—sensitivity and differentiation. Second, we test if liking is a broad mechanism that explains consistency in sensitivity and differentiation across traits. Finally, to learn more about the psychological nature of these components, we explore the nomological network of each component. To our knowledge, ours is the first empirical test of eSRM beyond the initial demonstration paper and the first to offer a strong test of whether there are individual differences in within-person variability where level of familiarity is held constant. Taken together, this work will offer more insight into if and how people make consistent distinctions across targets in first impressions and will add to the growing body of work that suggests that a more complete model of person perception considers who is forming a given judgment.

2 | METHOD

We tested the consistency of sensitivity and differentiation across Big Five traits using ratings of targets in photographs. See the Open Science Framework page for a complete list of measures for each study as well as for the syntax and data (https://osf.io/xtc5v/?view_only=9bc33

722d85448b19efce0f55cdddc2c). Notably, none of the analyzed data were collected with this research question in mind, and as such, this research is exploratory.

2.1 | Participants

Study 1 participants (final $N = 323$; 60% female, 37% male, 3% self-identified or chose not to disclose; $M_{age} = 24.35$, $SD = 8.34$; 41% White, 11% Black, 10% East Asian, 20% South or Southeast Asian, 1% Latin American, 5% Middle Eastern or North African, 10% bi- or multi-ethnic, 2% chose to self-identify) were recruited through Mechanical Turk (MTurk) ($n = 133$) and from a Canadian university ($n = 190$). Only participants who were at least 18 years of age and who were residing in Canada or the USA were eligible to participate. Participants who were recruited through the university completed one survey in which they provided demographics and self-perceptions, as well as their impressions of each photograph, and were compensated 2 credit hours for their participation. On MTurk, participants completed three surveys over a few days in which they provided basic demographics and self-perceptions (survey 1), as well as their impressions of target photographs (surveys 1–3) for $18 USD.

Study 2 participants (final $N = 278$; 58% male, 41% female, 1% self-identified or chose not to disclose; $M_{age} = 41.64$ years, $SD = 12.31$ years; 73% White, 9% Black, 4% East Asian, 4% Latin American, 2% South or Southeast Asian, 2% Native American or Indigenous Canadian, 1% chose not to self-identify, and 5% chose not to disclose) were recruited from Cloud Research (Litman et al., 2017), an extension of MTurk. Participants completed four surveys over a few days in which they provided basic demographics and self-perceptions (survey 1), as well as their impressions of target photographs (surveys 2–4) for a total of $28 USD. See "Data cleaning procedures" section in Supplemental Materials for details on exclusion criteria in both studies.

2.2 | Target stimuli

Study 1 targets were 30 photographs taken from the Chicago Face Database (CFD; Ma et al., 2015). All photographs depict the target's shoulders and head, all targets wore the same gray shirt, and all targets' expressions were neutral. Study 2 targets were 90 photographs from three sources: 30 targets were from the Chicago Face Database (Ma et al., 2015), but unlike targets in Study 1, 10 had neutral expressions, 10 had open-mouth smiling expressions, and 10 had closed-mouth smiling expressions. The remaining 60 targets provided photographs as part of another study and consented to having their photographs used in future work. Of these 60 targets, 30 were undergraduate students whose photographs were taken in front of a white background at shoulder level with facial expressions and clothing varying naturally and 30 targets were cropped profile photos from dating profiles with expressions, clothing, and environments varying naturally, with some showing just the person's face and others showing more of their body.[2]

2.3 | Photo ratings

In Study 1, for each photograph, participants provided their impression of the target ("The person in this photo is someone who is...") on the Ten Item Personality Inventory (TIPI; Gosling et al., 2003) as well as 10 other traits not included in the current work (see the "Additional Information" section in Supplemental for list of traits). Participants also reported on their liking of each target by rating the item "I like this person". All ratings were completed on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *disagree strongly*, 7 = *agree strongly*).

In Study 2, participants rated the three sets of 30 targets in different rating sessions in a random order. For each target, they rated the target's traits ("The person in the photo is someone who is...") using the TIPI and rated how much they liked the target. They also rated each target on 17 other characteristics not included in the current work (see the "Additional Information" section in Supplemental for list of traits). Liking ratings were completed on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *disagree strongly*, 7 = *agree strongly*).

Photos and ratings were presented on the same page with no time limit in both studies.

2.4 | Individual differences

In both studies, narcissism was measured using the Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Questionnaire (NARQ; Back et al., 2013) which measures admiration (i.e., charm, self-confidence, assertiveness, interpersonal success) and rivalry (i.e., hostility, aggression, social conflict). In both studies, social anxiety was measured using the Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (SIAS; Peters et al., 2012), but the short form of the SIAS was used in Study 1 (SIAS-6). In Study 2, Self-esteem was measured using the Single Item Self-Esteem Scale (Robins et al., 2001); specifically, participants rated the item "I have high self-esteem" on a scale of 1 (*not very true of me*) to 7 (*very true of me*).

2.5 | ERS

In both studies, we used participants' self-report ratings to generate ERS scores. In Study 1, participants provided

their self-perceptions ("I am someone who is...") on 21 items that included the TIPI and additional items (see the "Additional Information" section in Supplemental for list of items) using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *disagree strongly*, 7 = *agree strongly*). Participants also self-reported on the NARQ and SIAS. Their ERS score was the standard deviation across all of these self-reported items ($M = 1.95$, $SD = 0.37$). In Study 2, participants provided their self-perceptions ("I am someone who is...") on 25 items (i.e., the TIPI and additional items; see the "Additional Information" section in Supplemental for list of items) using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *disagree strongly*, 7 = *agree strongly*), as well as on the NARQ and SIAS, and ERS was calculated as the standard deviation across items ($M = 2.11$, $SD = 0.46$).

2.6 | Power

Given that our studies were collected without this research question in mind and the novelty of eSRM, we did not run an a priori power analysis. However, Kenny et al.'s (2023) validation paper included 160 perceivers and 40 targets. We assume that with double the number of perceivers, and in Study 2, nearly double the number of targets, we have adequate power to model eSRM components. That said, we assume Study 2, which included 90 targets, has more power than Study 1, which included 30. For correlates of eSRM, we had 97% power to detect an $r = 0.20$ in our smallest study, an effect that is close to the typical observed in social/personality (Funder & Ozer, 2019).

3 | ANALYSES

Following the eSRM guidelines (Kenny et al., 2023), for each item, we first computed target effects as the mean of all perceivers' ratings of a given target (e.g., the mean of all perceivers' ratings of Tim for the item *extraverted, enthusiastic*) and perceiver effects as a given perceiver's mean perception of an item across all targets (e.g., Pam's average perception of all targets on the item *extraverted, enthusiastic*). We also tested that the target variance is significant (i.e., people agreed on who was higher or lower on traits), which is a necessary step for decomposing dissimilation because without target variance, there can be no sensitivity. To calculate perceiver and target variance, we ran a model with random intercepts for perceivers and for targets using the *lme4* package in R (Bates et al., 2015) and used this model to calculate intraclass correlations (ICCs) that reflect the percentage of the total variance in a rating that is attributable to the perceiver or the target.

3.1 | Within-person variability

For each perceiver and for each attribute, we computed dissimilation as the standard deviation of ratings across targets (e.g., the SD of Pam's extraversion ratings across all targets). To compute sensitivity and differentiation, for each perceiver, we ran a regression model predicting the given perceiver's raw impression of targets from target effects and saved the slope and residuals. Sensitivity is the slope of this regression equation, and as such, each perceiver had one slope for each trait. Differentiation is the *SD* of the residuals multiplied by the square root of $(n_t - 1)(n_p/[(n_p - 2)(n_t - 2)])$ (Kenny et al., 2023).

To examine sensitivity and differentiation independent of confounding sources of variability, for each item, we ran a regression predicting sensitivity (or differentiation) from ERS scores, perceiver effects, and perceiver effects squared. The saved residuals from this model are sensitivity and differentiation scores corrected for confounding sources of variance.

After correcting for confounding sources of variance, we also tested how much of dissimilation was due to sensitivity versus differentiation for descriptive purposes by following Kenny et al.'s (2023) recommendation to predict dissimilation from sensitivity and differentiation. The relative beta weights of this model indicate how much of observed dissimilation was due to each component.

3.2 | Are sensitivity and differentiation consistent individual differences?

To provide an effect size estimate of within-person consistency, we computed the average correlation across all traits. To do so, we first tested the within-trait consistency of sensitivity and differentiation (e.g., the correlation among extraversion items) to confirm that items were reliable indicators of traits, and then we computed sensitivity and differentiation scale scores for each trait (e.g., sensitivity score for extraversion). Next, within-person consistency of sensitivity (and differentiation) across traits was indexed as the average correlation among all combinations of scores across traits. We used Fisher *r*-to-*z* transformed effects to compute the average correlation, which was transformed back into a correlation.

All effects controlled for confounding sources of variance, and we repeated analyses controlling for how much perceivers liked targets. Specifically, we saved the residuals from a multilevel model that predicted the item rating from liking and included a random effect for perceivers and a random effect for targets. We used these scores, which also controlled for confounding variance,

to explore if within-person consistency remained when controlling for liking.

3.3 | Correlates of perceiver effects, dissimilation, sensitivity, and differentiation

To explore the nomological net of dissimilation, sensitivity, and differentiation, we calculated the average of each component across traits (e.g., an average sensitivity score across traits). Importantly, we used indices of sensitivity and differentiation that controlled for confounding variance (i.e., ERS, perceiver effects, perceiver effects squared) and liking. We explored the correlations between the eSRM components and attributes on which participants self-reported in both studies which included the Big Five (TIPI; Gosling et al., 2003), narcissism (NARQ; Back et al., 2013), social anxiety (SIAS; Peters et al., 2012), and self-esteem (Single Item Self-esteem Scale; Robins et al., 2001); see Table S2 for descriptive statistics of these measures.

4 | RESULTS

Tables 1 and 2 show the grand mean as well as the perceiver and target variance for each item. As shown, there was sufficient target variance for calculating sensitivity and differentiation for all traits, although target variance for some traits (e.g., neuroticism) was lower than others (e.g., extraversion). Consistent with past work (Hehman et al., 2017), perceivers explained more variance in face perception than did targets.

4.1 | Sources of within-person variability in perceptions

Tables 1 and 2 show the mean and standard deviation of dissimilation, sensitivity, and differentiation scores for each study. Before testing how much of dissimilation was due to sensitivity and differentiation, we first explored the role of confounding variance, specifically ERS as well as perceiver effects. ERS explained some of the variance in sensitivity and differentiation (R^2s for sensitivity ranged from 0.01 to 0.16; R^2s for differentiation ranged from 0.01 to 0.12) while perceiver effects and perceiver effects squared explained trivial amounts of variance (R^2s ranged from 0.00 to 0.06; see Tables S3 and S4). However, we conservatively controlled for ERS, perceiver effects, and perceiver effects squared in all subsequent analyses by saving the residuals from this final model.

How influential was sensitivity and differentiation in dissimilation? As shown in Table S5, differentiation was more influential (average β's Study 1 $\beta = 0.94$; Study 2 $\beta = 0.89$) than sensitivity (average β's Study 1 $\beta = 0.16$; Study 2 $\beta = 0.33$), suggesting that people's impressions varied across targets for largely idiosyncratic reasons.

4.2 | Is sensitivity an individual difference?

As shown in Table 3, sensitivity was consistent for items within traits, and as such, we computed trait scores. Furthermore, as shown in Table 3, sensitivity was consistent across traits such that perceivers who tended to make distinctions among targets as other perceivers did on one trait

TABLE 1 Study 1 SRM and eSRM effects.

	Grand mean	Perceiver	Target	Dissimilation	Sensitivity	Differentiation
	M (*SD*)	ICC	ICC	*M* (*SD*)	*M* (*SD*)	*M* (*SD*)
E1	3.99 (1.62)	0.13	0.15	1.42 (0.51)	1.00 (0.67)	1.25 (0.46)
E2	4.02 (1.58)	0.09	0.09	1.42 (0.50)	1.00 (0.83)	1.32 (0.47)
A1	4.27 (1.40)	0.15	0.11	1.21 (0.46)	1.00 (0.80)	1.09 (0.41)
A2	3.80 (1.55)	0.15	0.09	1.34 (0.50)	1.00 (0.85)	1.23 (0.47)
C1	4.53 (1.41)	0.17	0.11	1.20 (0.47)	1.00 (0.77)	1.09 (0.43)
C2	3.53 (1.47)	0.15	0.09	1.27 (0.48)	1.00 (0.86)	1.17 (0.44)
ES1	4.32 (1.40)	0.17	0.11	1.20 (0.45)	1.00 (0.78)	1.08 (0.41)
ES2	3.84 (1.49)	0.14	0.09	1.30 (0.46)	1.00 (0.81)	1.20 (0.43)
O1	4.26 (1.44)	0.15	0.10	1.24 (0.49)	1.00 (0.79)	1.13 (0.44)
O2	3.77 (1.42)	0.21	0.03	1.17 (0.48)	1.00 (1.31)	1.12 (0.46)
Liking	4.29 (1.41)	0.26	0.11	1.10 (0.51)	1.00 (0.70)	0.99 (0.45)

Note: Items rated on a 1 to 7 scale. Item 1 of each trait is positively keyed; item 2 is negatively keyed. Average sensitivity slopes are always 1.00 (see Kenny et al., 2023).

Abbreviations: eSRM, extended Social Relations Model; SRM, Social Relations Model.

TABLE 2 Study 2 SRM and eSRM effects.

	Grand mean	Perceiver	Target	Dissimilation	Sensitivity	Differentiation
	M (*SD*)	ICC	ICC	*M* (*SD*)	*M* (*SD*)	*M* (*SD*)
E1	4.39 (1.76)	0.12	0.36	1.58 (0.50)	1.00 (0.50)	1.11 (0.35)
E2	3.74 (1.81)	0.11	0.30	1.64 (0.50)	1.00 (0.57)	1.24 (0.38)
A1	3.13 (1.64)	0.21	0.17	1.37 (0.50)	1.00 (0.65)	1.14 (0.41)
A2	4.61 (1.55)	0.16	0.26	1.33 (0.49)	1.00 (0.60)	1.02 (0.37)
C1	4.84 (1.46)	0.21	0.10	1.20 (0.48)	1.00 (0.69)	1.09 (0.43)
C2	3.00 (1.54)	0.23	0.10	1.26 (0.50)	1.00 (0.68)	1.14 (0.44)
ES1	4.70 (1.46)	0.20	0.11	1.22 (0.47)	1.00 (0.72)	1.09 (0.42)
ES2	3.25 (1.55)	0.25	0.09	1.25 (0.48)	1.00 (0.81)	1.12 (0.42)
O1	4.55 (1.49)	0.17	0.18	1.28 (0.48)	1.00 (0.65)	1.07 (0.39)
O2	3.66 (1.56)	0.20	0.13	1.30 (0.50)	1.00 (0.82)	1.13 (0.42)
Liking	4.24 (1.55)	0.28	0.19	1.22 (0.50)	1.00 (0.63)	0.99 (0.39)

Note: Items rated on a 1 to 7 scale. Item 1 of each trait is positively keyed; item 2 is negatively keyed. Average sensitivity slopes are always 1.00 (see Kenny et al., 2023).

Abbreviations: eSRM, extended Social Relations Model; SRM, Social Relations Model.

TABLE 3 Consistency in within-person variability within each trait and across traits.

	Study 1			Study 2		
	Dissimilation	Sensitivity	Differentiation	Dissimilation	Sensitivity	Differentiation
	r	*r*	*r*	*r*	*r*	*r*
Extraversion	0.82	0.62	0.79	0.90	0.86	0.89
		0.61	*0.78*		*0.85*	*0.88*
Agreeableness	0.79	0.59	0.76	0.89	0.77	0.87
		0.44	*0.67*		*0.64*	*0.82*
Conscientiousness	0.85	0.61	0.81	0.91	0.80	0.91
		0.49	*0.77*		*0.75*	*0.89*
Emotional stability	0.85	0.62	0.83	0.91	0.87	0.91
		0.51	*0.78*		*0.84*	*0.89*
Openness	0.83	0.46	0.80	0.91	0.81	0.88
		0.30	*0.78*		*0.75*	*0.86*
Average *r* across traits	0.81 (0.13)	0.59 (0.14)	0.76 (0.11)	0.82 (0.19)	0.69 (0.14)	0.78 (0.24)
		0.49 (0.11)	*0.74 (0.09)*		*0.55 (0.14)*	*0.74 (0.19)*

Note: Sensitivity and differentiation scores control for ERS, PE, and PE^2. Correlations in italics also control for liking.

(e.g., extraversion) tended to do so for other traits as well (e.g., agreeableness). As shown in Figure 2, consistent sensitivity was descriptively lower after controlling for liking, suggesting that consistency was in part due to liking targets who were commonly liked. However, liking did not fully explain consistency, suggesting that some perceivers, more than others, consistently utilized shared trait stereotypes or norms.

4.3 | Is differentiation an individual difference?

As shown in Table 3, differentiation was consistent for items within traits, and as such, we computed differentiation trait scores. Table 3 also shows that the consistency in differentiation across traits was also strong, with effect sizes substantially stronger than sensitivity. Thus, the people who tended to form unique impressions across targets on one trait did so for other traits as well, other than for reasons related to response style. As shown in Figure 2, the consistency in differentiation changed little after correcting for liking, suggesting that the tendency to form unique impressions across traits was not explained by uniquely liking targets. This was surprising given that differentiation in liking was strongly associated with average differentiation across traits (Study 1 $r = 0.68$; Study 2 $r = 0.61$).

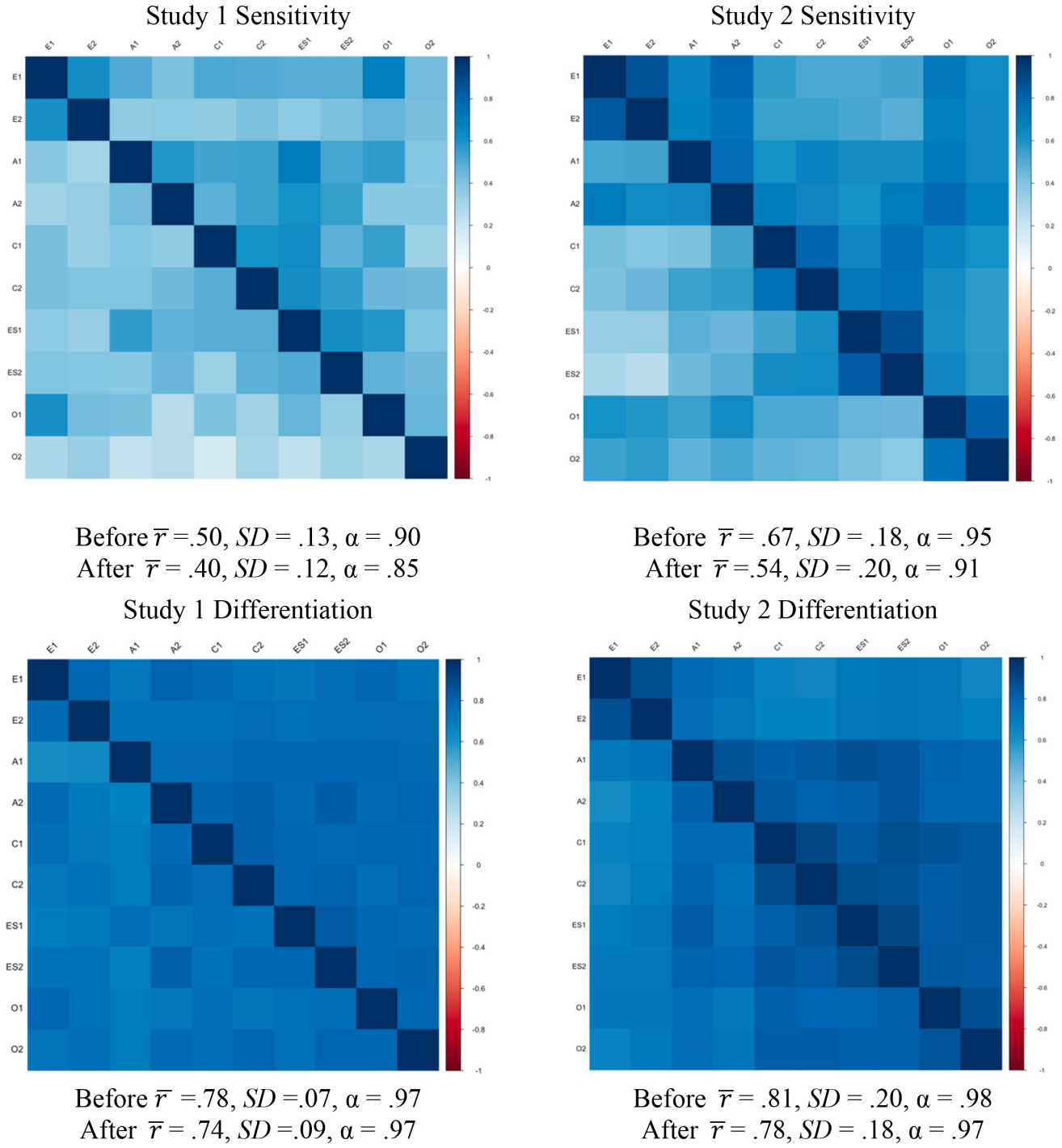

FIGURE 2 Sensitivity and differentiation consistency before and after controlling for liking. The *r*'s on the top of the matrix do not control for liking and *r*'s on the bottom control for liking. Sensitivity and differentiation are corrected for ERS, PE, and PE^2. ERS, extreme response style; PE, perceiver effect.

4.4 | The relationship between sensitivity and differentiation

To explore the relationship between sensitivity and differentiation, we correlated participants' scores for sensitivity and differentiation on each trait. The relationship between sensitivity and differentiation was moderate on average (Study 1: $\overline{r}$ = 0.29; Study 2: $\overline{r}$ = 0.38 (see Table S6 for trait-specific associations). This positive association suggests that part of differentiation reflects an exaggerated response to what others tend to perceive. Notably, this association varied across traits and studies in ways that might be related to cue availability. For example, the link was especially strong for extraversion and conscientiousness in both studies perhaps because cues

related to these traits are more relevant in physical appearance, and the links were stronger more generally in Study 2 perhaps because photographs in this study provided more personality cues for people to use more strongly (e.g., natural facial expressions, clothing choices).

4.5 | Correlates of perceiver effects, dissimilation, sensitivity, and differentiation

4.5.1 | Perceiver effects

In both studies, perceivers higher in agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness tended to see others as higher on our global index of the Big Five. Given that perceiver effects controlled for impressions of liking, people higher in the Big Five (except for extraversion) tended to see targets as higher in the trait-specific components of traits versus global positivity. Similarly, people higher in self-esteem (indexed only in Study 2) tended to see targets higher in the Big Five. In contrast, people higher in social anxiety in both studies and people higher in narcissism (and its facets) in Study 2 tended to see targets as lower in the Big Five.

4.5.2 | Dissimilation

As shown in Table 4, correlates of dissimilation were inconsistent. In Study 1, people higher in agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness saw others in more variable ways whereas in Study 2, people higher in narcissism saw others in less variable ways. Taken together with correlates of perceiver effects, Study 1 suggests that people higher in agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness tend to see targets as higher in the Big Five while make more distinctions among targets than others do whereas findings from Study 2 suggest that people higher in narcissism (and the facet of admiration) tend to more rigidly perceive others as lower in the Big Five. These findings provide little evidence for our assumption that individuals higher in traits defined by perceptual styles would see others as being more similar.[3]

TABLE 4 Correlates of perceiver effects, dissimilation, sensitivity, and differentiation.

	Perceiver effects		Dissimilation		Sensitivity		Differentiation	
	Study 1	Study 2	Study 1	Study 2	Study 1	Study 2	Study 1	Study 2
Gender	0.01	0.01	0.04	0.15*	0.00	0.10	0.06	0.05
	[−0.07, 0.15]	[−0.11, 0.13]	[−0.08, 0.16]	[0.03, 0.26]	[−0.12, 0.12]	[−0.03, 0.22]	[−0.06, 0.18]	[−0.07, 0.17]
Extraversion	0.04	0.21***	−0.02	0.00	−0.12*	−0.15*	−0.07	−0.10
	[−0.07, 0.14]	[0.10, 0.32]	[−0.13, 0.09]	[−0.12, 0.12]	[−0.23, −0.01]	[−0.27, −0.04]	[−0.18, 0.03]	[−0.21, 0.02]
Agreeableness	0.21***	0.33***	0.24***	0.12	0.18***	0.00	0.06	−0.05
	[0.10, 0.31]	[0.22, 0.43]	[0.14, 0.34]	[0.00, 0.23]	[0.07, 0.28]	[−0.12, 0.12]	[−0.05, 0.17]	[−0.17, 0.07]
Conscientiousness	0.18***	0.27***	0.24***	0.09	0.14*	−0.01	0.02	−0.09
	[0.08, 0.29]	[0.15, 0.37]	[0.14, 0.34]	[−0.03, 0.21]	[03, 0.24]	[−0.13, 0.11]	[−0.09, 0.13]	[−0.21, 0.02]
Emotional stability	0.22***	0.24***	0.02	0.01	−0.02	−0.13*	−0.16***	−0.15*
	[0.12, 0.32]	[0.13, 0.34]	[−0.09, 0.13]	[−0.11, 0.12]	[−0.12, 0.09]	[−0.24, −0.01]	[−0.26, −0.05]	[−0.26, −0.03]
Openness	0.20***	0.15*	0.21***	0.09	−0.01	−0.05	0.09	−0.01
	[0.09, 0.30]	[0.03, 0.26]	[0.11, 0.32]	[−0.03, 0.21]	[−0.11, 0.10]	[−0.17, 0.07]	[−0.02, 0.19]	[−0.12, 0.11]
Narcissism	−0.02	−0.23***	−0.03	−0.15*	−0.12*	−0.17**	0.05	0.11
	[−0.13, 0.09]	[−0.33, −0.11]	[−0.14, 0.08]	[−0.26, −0.03]	[−0.23, −0.01]	[−0.28, −0.05]	[−0.06, 0.16]	[−0.01, 0.22]
Admiration	0.02	−0.15*	0.04	−0.15*	−0.13*	−0.22***	−0.01	0.04
	[−0.09, 0.12]	[−0.26, −0.03]	[−0.07, 0.14]	[−0.26, −0.03]	[−0.24, −0.02]	[−0.33, −0.10]	[−0.12, 0.10]	[−0.08, 0.16]
Rivalry	−0.06	−0.27***	−0.09	−0.11	−0.05	−0.06	0.11	0.17**
	[−0.17, 0.05]	[−0.38, −0.16]	[−0.20, 0.02]	[−0.23, 0.00]	[−0.16, 0.06]	[−0.18, 0.06]	[0.00, 0.21]	[0.05, 0.28]
Social anxiety	−0.17***	−0.24***	−0.02	−0.01	0.00	0.16**	0.17***	0.21**
	[−0.27, −0.06]	[−0.35, −0.13]	[−0.13, 0.09]	[−0.13, 0.11]	[−0.11, 0.11]	[0.04, 0.27]	[0.06, 0.27]	[0.09, 0.32]
Self-esteem	–	0.20**	–	−0.11	–	−0.31***	–	−0.12*
		[0.08, 0.31]		[−0.23, 0.01]		[−0.41, −0.20]		[−0.24, −0.01]

Note: Perceiver effect correlations controlled for liking. Sensitivity and differentiation scores are corrected for ERS, PE, PE^2, and liking. For gender (female = 0 and male = 1), Cohen's *d* was converted into *r* for ease of comparison.

***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$.

4.5.3 | Sensitivity

In contrast to our assumption that sensitivity would be higher among those with interpersonally sensitive attributes (extraversion, agreeableness), in both studies, people higher extraversion, narcissism (as well as its facet of admiration), and self-esteem (Study 2 only) tended to have lower sensitivity.

4.5.4 | Differentiation

In both studies, people higher in social anxiety tended to have higher differentiation whereas people higher in emotional stability and self-esteem (Study 2 only) tended to have lower differentiation. In a post hoc test, we explored whether the association between sensitivity and differentiation was stronger or weaker for these traits to determine whether differentiation here reflected a more extreme rating tendency or a tendency to differentiate among targets in different ways (e.g., seeing targets others see as more outgoing as less outgoing). Overall, we found weak evidence for moderation (see Table S10). This suggests that people who experience higher anxiety and lower self-worth tend to make unique distinctions that largely reflect exaggerated impressions (e.g., seeing targets that others see as more or less friendly as being especially more or less friendly) rather than entirely unique impressions (e.g., seeing targets others see as more friendly as being less friendly).

5 | DISCUSSION

Do people have a consistent tendency to assimilate across targets, and if so, what drives their assimilation? Preliminarily results from two studies suggest that people have a general tendency to distinguish among target faces in ways that others do (sensitivity) and a general tendency to form unique impressions (differentiation) across traits. This consistent within-person variability in sensitivity and differentiation seems to be driven by something other than confounding sources of variance such as ERSs or by perceivers' liking of targets. Overall then, a more complete framework of interpersonal perception should take these individual differences into account.

5.1 | Sensitivity

Part of why people were consistently sensitive across traits seemed to be due to liking. People with higher sensitivity across traits probably like the targets that other people like, and in turn, form more positive judgments across traits for those liked targets that align with others' judgments as well. That said, liking did not fully explain consistent sensitivity, suggesting that other mechanisms were at play. One possibility is that some people more than others consistently use trait-specific norms. That is, people might assume that someone who is smiling is warm, someone whose hair is well-groomed is conscientious, and someone with distinctive hair or clothing is open, and some perceivers more than others consistently use these cues as well. Another possibility is that people used broad prototypes of people when rating traits (e.g., a dominant-looking person has a different profile of traits than a submissive-looking person) and that some people more than others tended to use those shared prototypes. Either way, while there does not seem to be a consistent good judge of personality across traits (Hall et al., 2018), perhaps some judges are more able to consistently use norms more than others. Notably, most within-person variability in impressions stemmed from people's tendency to make idiosyncratic impressions across targets (differentiation) rather than from sensitivity. Thus, future work might explore if and when sensitivity explains more within-person variability, perhaps in contexts that provide more personality cues.

We assumed that people higher in sensitivity would possess traits related to interpersonal attunement, but instead we found that people higher in extraversion, narcissism, and self-esteem differentiate among targets less like the average person did. Perhaps these individuals can afford to be less attentive to norms given that people higher in these traits tend to attain social status, at least in early acquaintanceship (Grosz et al., 2020). Perhaps high sensitivity is a proxy for lower social status, a hypothesis future work might explicitly test experimentally or in other contexts (e.g., higher-status employees versus lower-status employees rating the same target set).

5.2 | Differentiation

Taken together with our finding that differentiation explained the lion's share of within-person variability, the fact that differentiation is strongly consistent across traits suggests that the tendency to form unique impressions is, itself, an interpersonal style that broadly filters people's perceptions across traits. Yet, this style does not seem to be driven by perceivers' unique liking of targets. Instead, it is possible that consistent differentiation reflects individual differences in how strongly people use cues given that differentiation and sensitivity were moderately correlated (i.e., people higher in differentiation made distinctions among targets in more exaggerated but normative ways). Some people use physical cues more strongly than others do when forming liking

judgments (e.g., smiling; Lönnqvist et al., 2021), and it is possible that some people systematically use physical or other cues more strongly for traits as well (Kenny, 2004). Future work might explore which cues drive differentiation for specific traits and/or if there are cues that are responsible for consistent differentiation more generally (e.g., differential reactions to smiling explain consistency across all traits).

Overall, results confirmed our expectation that people lower in well-being markers demonstrate higher differentiation such that people lower in emotional stability and self-esteem tended to make distinctions among targets that other people did not make. Notably, these individuals did not differentiate in entirely unique ways (e.g., they did not see targets who were generally seen as friendly as being unfriendly) but instead made more exaggerated, normative distinctions. Future work might explore if and when other individual differences are relevant to better understand the psychological nature of differentiation. For example, if differentiation reflects a hyper-attunement to cues, perhaps those higher in social anxiety have higher differentiation when they meet in person and individuals higher in insecure attachment have higher differentiation in dating contexts.

6 | LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

We were able to control for confounding sources of variance, but there might be other sources of confounding variance that our design was not able to account for. For example, in a zero-acquaintance context, people might differ in their motivation to make fine-grained distinctions among targets, which in turn might mean that individual differences in sensitivity and differentiation simply reflect individual differences in motivation to be in the study. Future work would ideally explore consistency in sensitivity and differentiation in contexts where motivation is higher, specifically when people might meet targets, such as in online dating. Likewise, we aimed to isolate substantive mechanisms for consistent sensitivity and differentiation, specifically by controlling for liking, but we were unable to fully explain either type of within-person variability. Perhaps future work might explore if perceivers' use of specific cues (e.g., smiling), combinations of cues (e.g., incongruent cues), and broad stereotypes based on demographics (e.g., gender, race) explains sensitivity or differentiation.

Perceiver effects seem to be a stable, individual difference across contexts (Rau, Lawless DesJardins, et al., 2022) and insensitive to environmental factors (Xie et al., 2022). Ideally, future work will test if within-person variability in impressions is also consistent across contexts. Likewise, it would be important to test consistency in sensitivity and differentiation over the acquaintanceship process, especially when people meet in real life. Perceiver effects seem to change over time in response to social experiences (Rau, Carlson, et al., 2022), and likewise, how broadly people apply their perceiver effects might also depend on social experiences. That said, thin-slice impressions (e.g., perceptions of faces) seem to have lasting effects in later interactions, suggesting that zero-acquaintance impressions do shape later social experiences (Gunaydin et al., 2017). Furthermore, perceivers' idiosyncratic impressions might shape their social behavior in ways that maintain or exacerbate their initial perceptions (e.g., Hughes et al., 2021).

Future work might also explore the social consequences of sensitivity and differentiation. We assume that these components of interpersonal perception likely matter in the many zero-acquaintance contexts people experience in daily life (e.g., which strangers to approach, who to date based on online profiles). For example, a hiring manager who varies their impressions of applicants in line with a corporate culture might make more successful hiring decisions than one who makes idiosyncratic judgments. Furthermore, these components might have immediate and cascading social consequences. For example, someone high in differentiation who initially sees targets in more extreme ways than others might in turn react to others in more extreme ways (e.g., they are more agitated by slightly irritating personalities) that in turn leads to more negative interactions in the future. Research exploring eSRM in real-life interactions might reveal the degree to which unique perceptual styles are related to behavior and social dynamics over time.

6.1 | Limits on generality

Perceivers and targets were relatively demographically diverse; however, the target sets were nevertheless constrained in some ways. Targets were photographs, which limited cue availability and potentially the motivation of perceivers to process available cues. Additionally, our results may not apply to non-Western cultures.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Erika: conceptualization, writing; Norhan: analyses, data collection, editing; Victoria: data collection; Richard: conceptualization, editing, analyses.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

None.

FUNDING INFORMATION

Preparation of this manuscript was supported by funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council awarded to Erika N. Carlson (grants 435-2015-0611 and 435-2021-0280).

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

There were no conflicts of interest for any of the authors.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

All data reported in the current paper are available on OSF (https://osf.io/xtc5v/).

ETHICS STATEMENT

Both studies received ethics approval (Study 1 Protocol # 40549; Study 2 Protocol #41588).

ORCID

Norhan Elsaadawy https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2773-9601
Victoria Pringle https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6677-4493

ENDNOTES

[1] Differentiation is the SD of the residuals multiplied by the square root of $(n_t - 1)\,(n_p/[(n_p - 2)(n_t - 2)])$ (Kenny et al., 2023).

[2] Sensitivity and differentiation were consistent across the three target sets; see Table S1.

[3] See Tables S7–S9 for trait-specific eSRM component correlations.

REFERENCES

Akert, R. M., & Panter, A. T. (1988). Extraversion and the ability to decode nonverbal communication. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *9*(6), 965–972. https://doi.org/10.1016/0191-8869(88)90130-4

Back, M. D., Küfner, A. C. P., Dufner, M., Gerlach, T. M., Rauthmann, J. F., & Denissen, J. J. A. (2013). Narcissistic admiration and rivalry: Disentangling the bright and dark sides of narcissism. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *105*(6), 1013–1037. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0034431

Baird, B. M., Lucas, R. E., & Donnellan, M. B. (2017). The role of response styles in the assessment of intraindividual personality variability. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *69*, 170–179. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpr.2016.16.015

Bates, D., Machler, M., Bolker, B., & Walker, S. (2015). Fitting linear mixed-effects models using lme4. *Journal of Statistical Software*, *67*, 1–48. https://doi.org/10.18637/jss.v067.i01

Funder, D. C., & Ozer, D. J. (2019). Evaluating effect size in psychological research: Sense and nonsense. *Advances in Methods and Practices in Psychological Science*, *2*(2), 156–168. https://doi.org/10.1177/2515245919847202

Gosling, S. D., Rentfrow, P. J., & Swann, W. B., Jr. (2003). A very brief measure of the Big Five personality domains. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *37*(6), 504–528. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0092-6566(03)00046-1

Grosz, M. P., Leckelt, M., & Back, M. D. (2020). Personality predictors of social status. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, *33*, 52–56. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2019.07.023

Gunaydin, G., Selcuk, E., & Zayas, V. (2017). Impressions based on a portrait predict, 1-month later, impressions following a live interaction. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, *8*(1), 36–44. https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550616662123

Gutiérrez-García, A., & Calvo, M. G. (2017). Social anxiety and threat-related interpretation of dynamic facial expressions: Sensitivity and response bias. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *107*, 10–16. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2016.11.025

Hall, J. A., Back, M. D., Nestler, S., Frauendorfer, D., Schmid Mast, M., & Ruben, M. A. (2018). How do different ways of measuring individual differences in zero-acquaintance personality judgment accuracy correlate with each other? *Journal of Personality*, *86*(2), 220–232. https://doi.org/10.1111/jopy.12307

Hehman, E., Sutherland, C. A. M., Flake, J. K., & Slepian, M. L. (2017). The unique contributions of perceiver and target characteristics in person perception. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *113*, 513–529. https://doi.org/10.1037/pspa0000090

Hughes, B. T., Flournoy, J. C., & Srivastava, S. (2021). Is perceived similarity more than assumed similarity? An interpersonal path to seeing similarity between self and others. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *121*(1), 184–200. https://doi.org/10.1037/pspp0000369

Kenny, D. A. (2004). PERSON: A general model of interpersonal perception. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *8*(3), 265–280. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327957pspr0803_3

Kenny, D. A. (2019). *Interpersonal perception: The foundation of social relationships* (2nd ed.). Guilford Press.

Kenny, D. A., Goldring, M. R., & Jung, T. (2023). The extended social relations model: Understanding dissimilation and dissensus in the judgment of others. *European Journal of Personality*, *37*(1), 57–71. https://doi.org/10.1177/08902070211044552

Leising, D., Scherbaum, S., Locke, K., & Zimmermann, J. (2015). A model of "substance" and "evaluation" in person judgments. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *57*, 61–71. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2015.04.002

Litman, L., Robinson, J., & Abberbock, T. (2017). TurkPrime.com: A versatile crowdsourcing data acquisition platform for the behavioral sciences. *Behavior Research Methods*, *49*(2), 433–442. https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-016-0727-z

Lönnqvist, J. E., Ilmarinen, V. J., & Verkasalo, M. (2021). Who likes whom? The interaction between perceiver personality and target look. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *90*, 104044. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2020.104044

Ma, D. S., Correll, J., & Wittenbrink, B. (2015). The Chicago face database: A free stimulus set of faces and norming data. *Behavior Research Methods*, *47*, 1122–1135. https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-014-0532-5

Peters, L., Sunderland, M., Andrews, G., Rapee, R. M., & Mattick, R. P. (2012). Development of a short form social interaction anxiety (SIAS) and social phobia scale (SPS) using nonparametric item response theory: The SIAS-6 and the SPS-6. *Psychological Assessment*, *24*(1), 66–76. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0024544

Rau, R., Carlson, E. N., Back, M. D., Barranti, M., Gebauer, J. E., Human, L. J., Leising, D., & Nestler, S. (2021). What is the structure of perceiver effects? On the importance of global positivity and trait-specificity across personality domains and judgment

contexts. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *120*(3), 745–764. https://doi.org/10.1037/pspp0000278

Rau, R., Carlson, E. N., Dufner, M., Geukes, K., Kraft, L., Krause, S., Nikoleizig, L., Nestler, S., & Back, M. D. (2022). Positivity in peer perceptions over time: Personality explains variation at zero-acquaintance, popularity explains differential change. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *123*(2), 423–443. https://doi.org/10.1037/pspp0000407

Rau, R., Lawless DesJardins, N. M., Niemeyer, L. M., Back, M. D., Srivastava, S., & Nestler, S. (2022). Perceiver effects in first impressions reflect generalized stereotypes: Evidence of consistency across time, groups, and contexts. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, *13*(7), 1138–1150.

Rau, R., Nestler, W., Dufner, M., & Nestler, S. (2021). Seeing the best or worst in others: A measure of generalized other-perceptions. *Assessment*, *28*(8), 1897–1914. https://doi.org/10.1177/1073191120905015

Robins, R. W., Hendin, H. M., & Trzesniewski, K. H. (2001). Measuring global self-esteem: Construct validation of a single-item measure and the Rosenberg self-esteem scale. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *27*(2), 151–161. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167201272002

Srivastava, S., Guglielmo, S., & Beer, J. S. (2010). Perceiving others' personalities: Examining the dimensionality, assumed similarity to the self, and stability of perceiver effects. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *98*, 520–534. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0017057

Xie, S. Y., Thai, S., & Hehman, E. (2022). Everyday perceiver-context influences on impression formation: No evidence of consistent effects. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *49*(6), 955–968. https://doi.org/10.1177/01461672221085088

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information can be found online in the Supporting Information section at the end of this article.

How to cite this article: Carlson, E. N., Elsaadawy, N., Pringle, V., & Rau, R. (2024). Individual differences in dissimilation: Do some people make more distinctions among targets' personalities than others? *Journal of Personality*, *92*, 1341–1355. https://doi.org/10.1111/jopy.12893