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## DEVELOPING THE AUTONOMOUS SENSORY MERIDIAN RESPONSE EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

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**Background:** Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response (ASMR) is an atypical sensory experience, which is characterised by tingling sensations in response to visual and auditory stimuli. In addition to these tingling sensations from ASMR stimuli, the ASMR-Responder (ASMR-R) also reports an elation of mood and relaxation, thus showing a cross-modal modulation of affect. To date, the majority of studies examining ASMR have separated groups according to self-reports of individuals on a single question of whether they experience ASMR or not- while this has proved to classify individuals for some research purposes, it is limited because the cut-off score on the screening procedures is arbitrary: hence, the participant groupings themselves are not independently derived.

**Aims:** We have developed a new web-based psychometric tool, the ASMR-Experience Questionnaire (AEQ) to assess ASMR by using a data-driven approach (a k-means cluster analysis), which ensures that the diagnostic cut-off and the groupings (e.g., ASMR-Responder, non-Responder) reflect individual differences inherent in the data rather than being set by the experimenter.

**Method:** We presented participants with five video clips depicting an assortment of ASMR inducers. Participants were then asked whether they experience any ASMR responses and, upon an affirmative answer, they were asked questions about its nature. This included question on location of tactile sensations, quality (where participants were asked to select which descriptors best describe their experience), and intensity (using a 1-10 Likert Scale).

**Preliminary results:** A k-means cluster analysis was conducted to determine different groups based on AEQ responses. Five clear groupings of responders have been identified and labelled: ASMR-S (strong responders), ASMR-W (weak responders), ASMR-A (affective-only responders; i.e., an absence of tingling tactile sensations, but increased scores of self-report levels of calm); Controls (non-responders, classified by negative reactions to videos) and False-Positives (typically experiencing negatively attributed tingling sensations that are unpleasant and decrease levels of calmness). These data highlight the utility AEQ to provide a data-driven approach to determine groupings based individual differences in ASMR experiences.

**Keywords:** ASMR; Clustering; Questionnaire; K-means; Psychometric

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