



Psychological Coping and Stress Resilience in Individuals Living with Multiple Sclerosis



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Based on expanded empirical research conducted across academic training and subsequent clinical practice data collection

Background

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a chronic neuroinflammatory disease that affects both neurological functioning and long-term psychological adaptation. Individuals living with MS often face uncertainty related to disease progression, fluctuating physical symptoms, and changes in social and professional roles. These conditions create a context of persistent stress that requires continuous psychological adjustment.

Previous research suggests that adaptation to chronic illness is influenced not only by medical factors but also by psychological resources, coping strategies, and social support. Coping strategies shape how individuals interpret stress, regulate emotional responses, and maintain psychological well-being. Psychological resilience reflects the capacity to sustain adaptive functioning in the presence of chronic stress and health-related challenges.

Although coping and resilience have been widely studied in stress research, the psychological mechanisms that support adaptation among individuals living with multiple sclerosis remain an important area of ongoing research. In particular, the relationship between coping strategies, psychological resources, social relationships, and stress resilience requires further investigation.

Research focus: The present study explores the relationship between coping strategies, psychological resources, social relationships, and stress resilience in individuals living with MS.

Methods

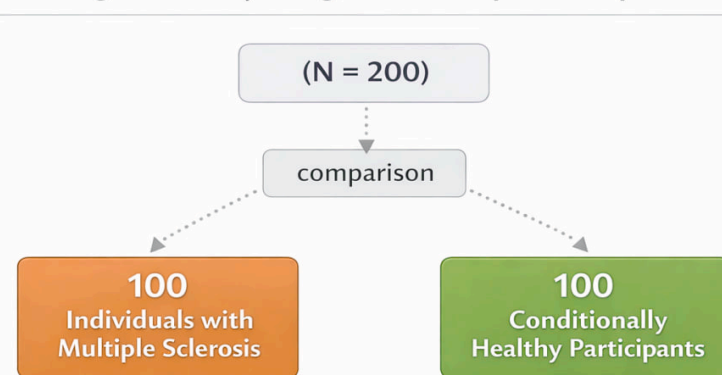
Participants
N = 200
100 individuals with multiple sclerosis
100 conditionally healthy controls

Measures
COPE Inventory
Perceived Stress Scale
Holmes–Rahe Stress Scale
Ryff Psychological Well-Being Scale
Rogers–Diamond Social Adaptation Scale
TIPI Personality Inventory

Aim

The aim of the present study was to examine psychological coping strategies and stress resilience among individuals living with multiple sclerosis compared with conditionally healthy individuals. **Research focus:** The present study explores the relationship between coping strategies, psychological resources, social relationships, and stress resilience in individuals living with MS.

Figure 1. Study Design and Participant Groups

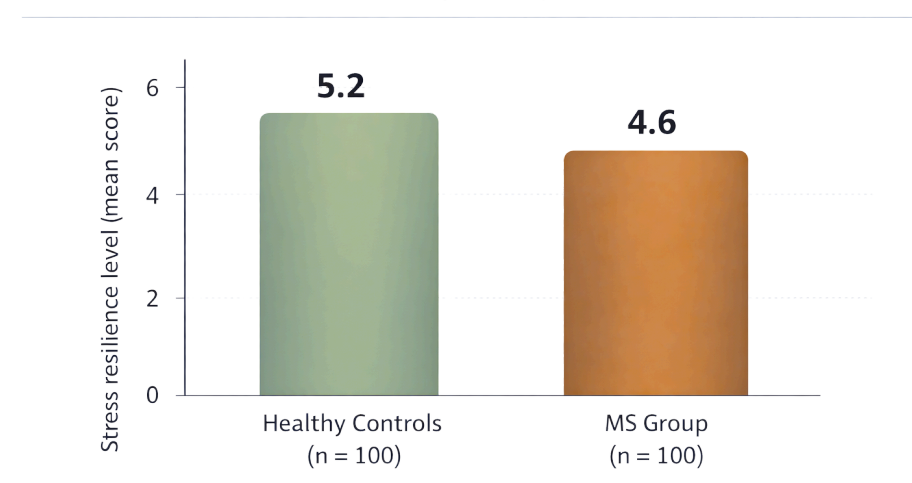


Study design: Comparative cross-sectional study examining relationships between coping strategies, psychological resources, stress resilience, psychological well-being, and socio-psychological adaptation.

Comparison of individuals living with multiple sclerosis and conditionally healthy participants.

Results

Figure 2. Stress Resilience Levels in Individuals with Multiple Sclerosis and Conditionally Healthy Controls



Comparative distribution of stress resilience levels across groups.

The results indicate that individuals living with multiple sclerosis did not significantly differ from conditionally healthy individuals in overall levels of stress resilience. However, lower resilience levels were observed more frequently within the MS group.

Social relationships emerged as an important protective factor. Satisfaction with friendships demonstrated a stronger positive association with stress resilience among individuals living with MS compared to the control group.

Across both groups, emotional stability and openness to experience were associated with higher stress resilience. Individuals with higher resilience also demonstrated greater psychological well-being and better socio-psychological adaptation.

These findings highlight the importance of relational and social resources as protective psychological factors in the context of chronic neurological illness.

Figure 3. Psychological Factors Associated with Stress Resilience



Role of emotional stability, openness to experience, social relationships, and psychological resources in supporting stress resilience.

Figure 4. Conceptual Model of Psychological Adaptation in Multiple Sclerosis



Relationship between coping strategies, psychological resources, stress resilience, psychological well-being, and socio-psychological adaptation.

Conclusions

The findings highlight the important role of coping processes and psychological resources in long-term adaptation to multiple sclerosis. Although individuals living with MS may demonstrate resilience levels comparable to those of healthy individuals, their resilience appears to be more strongly influenced by social relationships and psychological support.

These results suggest that psychological interventions aimed at strengthening adaptive coping strategies, supporting social relationships, and enhancing psychological resources may contribute to improved well-being and better psychosocial adaptation among individuals living with multiple sclerosis.

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