

NATIONAL CONGRESS

ITALIAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

CLINICAL AND DYNAMIC SECTION

Salerno – SEPTEMBER 2024



Proceedings

XXIV National Congress

Italian Psychological Association

Clinical and Dynamic Section

Salerno, 12nd – 15th September 2024



NATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Piero Porcelli (University “G. d’Annunzio” of Chieti-Pescara)

Renata Tambelli (Sapienza University of Rome)

Maria Di Blasi (University of Palermo)

Fabio Madeddu (University of Milano-Bicocca)

Alessandra Provera (University of Bologna)

Riccardo Williams (Sapienza University of Rome)

LOCAL SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Coordinators

Mauro Cozzolino (University of Salerno)

Components

Ruggiero Andrisano Ruggieri (University of Salerno)

Chiara Fioretti (University of Salerno)

Francesca Tessitore (University of Salerno)

Laura Girelli (University of Salerno)

Luigi Tinella (University of Salerno)



ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Coordinators

Mauro Cozzolino (University of Salerno)

Components

Ruggiero Andrisano Ruggieri (University of Salerno)

Chiara Fioretti (University of Salerno)

Francesca Tessitore (University of Salerno)

Laura Girelli (University of Salerno)

Luigi Tinella (University of Salerno)

Ivonne Carosi Arcangeli (University of Salerno)

Marco Naman Borgese (University of Salerno)

David Faggi (University of Salerno)

EDITORS

Mauro Cozzolino, Ruggiero Andrisano Ruggieri, Chiara Fioretti, Francesca Tessitore,
Laura Girelli, Luigi Tinella, Marco Naman Borgese, Ivonne Carosi Arcangeli, David

Faggi

(University of Salerno)



Friday, Day 13th September 2024

THEMATIC SESSION

**“CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY IN MEDICAL CONDITIONS:
ADVANCES AND PERSPECTIVES OF RESEARCH AND
INTERVENTIONS”**

Chair:

Caterina Grano

Sapienza University of Rome



Family Functioning and dyadic relationship in Multiple Sclerosis

*Perutelli Virginia*¹, *Streito Lidia Mislin*², *Clerico Marinella*², *Tesio Valentina*¹

¹ Department of Psychology, University of Turin, Turin

² Department of Clinical and Biological Sciences, University of Turin, Turin

Abstract

Introduction: Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a chronic inflammatory and neurodegenerative disease often associated with cognitive impairment and psychological distress. MS can negatively impact the family functioning (FF) of people with MS (PwMS) and their dyadic relationships. In addition, psychological distress, alexithymia and a lack of social support can affect the quality of relationships. The aim of the present study was to assess the FF and the quality of dyadic relationships of PwMS and their partners. In addition, the relationships between alexithymia, psychological distress (anxiety and depressive symptoms), perceived social support, dyadic relationships and FF were investigated.

Methods: The couples, consisting of PwMS and their respective partners, were recruited from the Italian MS centers involved in the project. The following questionnaires were completed via a dedicated online platform: (1) the Brief Family Assessment Measure III (FAM-III); (2) the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS); (3) the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS); (4) the Toronto Alexithymia Scale (TAS-20); (5) and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS).

Results: The final sample comprised 28 couples (16 women and 12 men with MS and their partners) with a mean age of approximately 46 years. The data showed no correlation between the FAM-III scores of the MS patients and the partner, while there was a statistically significant correlation between the DAS scores ($r=.496$, $p<.007$).

The FAM-III scores of the patients correlated significantly with the DAS ($r=-.643$, $p<.01$), MSPSS ($r=-.624$, $p<.01$) and TAS-20 scores ($r=.424$, $p<.025$) as well as with the HADS-Depression scores ($r=.493$, $p<.008$) and MPSS scores ($r=-.447$, $p<.017$) of the partners. The partner's FAM-III scores correlated significantly with his/her level of anxiety (HADS-Anxiety $r=.558$, $p<.002$) and depression scores (HADS-Depression $r=.844$, $p<.01$), with the TAS-20 ($r=.466$, $p<.012$), MSPSS ($r=-.562$, $p<.002$) and DAS scores ($r=-.451$, $p<.016$).

Discussion: The results of this study show that the couples agree on the quality of the dyadic relationship, while there is no correlation in terms of perceived FF. The partners' psychological distress seems to be a



crucial factor influencing both patients' and partners' perceptions of FF, suggesting that special attention should be paid to this aspect in clinical practice.