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Comparative Pathology of Neurodegeneration: Linking Microglial Senescence to Protein Aggregation

Anjaria Mihir Bharatkumar
PhD Scholar
Sunrise University (Alwar)

Abstract

The Alzheimer disease, Parkinson disease, and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis are neurodegenerative disorders that have two pathological characteristics in common: the piling up of misfolded proteins and chronic neuroinflammation. Rising evidence supports the idea that microglia, the central nervous system-resident immune cells, have long been known as reactive responders but also must be regarded as active drivers of disease pathology. The following paper examines the comparative pathology of neurodegeneration among discrete disorders with an emphasis on how microglial senescence can be viewed as a unifying process coupling protein aggregation with neurodegeneration. I use analysis of post-mortem human brain tissue and pertinent animal models to determine convergent changes in microglial morphology, gene expression and secretory signature during senescence. These characteristics are dystrophic branching, defective phagocytosis ability, and pro-inflammatory cytokine up-regulation. Notably, senescence of microglia in turn also decreases the clearance of pathological aggregates like amyloid-B, a-synuclein, and TDP-43 and constitutes a feed-forward loop as the accumulation of protein deposits continues to worsen inflammatory signaling and oxidative stresses, which are further disabling microglia.

Both common and disease-specific interaction between microglial senescence and aggregate-prone proteins is identified by comparative evaluation. In AAD, dystrophic microglia tends to aggregate in proximity to amyloid plaques, when compared to AAD, in Parkinson, the senescence signatures are more linked to nigrostriatal Lewy bodies. Microglial senescence in ALS associates with the broad-based pathology and loss of cortical-spinal tract with TDP-43.

This paper combines neuropathological data with molecular and experimental findings to propose a model framework: Microglial senescence may therefore represent an essential pivot point between protein aggregate formation and the neurodegeneration. Intervention in senescence-related pathways, in order to rejuvenate microglial function or up-regulate aggregate clearance, may be a widely applicable therapeutic approach. Together, these results emphasize the potential of the cross-disease comparative method in terms of elucidating the complicated interactions between innate immune age-related changes and proteostatic breakdown in the brain.

Keywords: Neurodegeneration, Microglial senescence, Protein aggregation, Amyloid-β, α-Synuclein, TDP-43, Neuroinflammation, Comparative pathology, Proteostasis, Therapeutic targets

Introduction

Alzheimer disease, Parkinson disease, frontotemporal dementia are all neurodegenerative diseases, the common feature of them is loss of neurons, the impairment of functions, and accumulation of protein aggregates which are misfolded. The pathological features of each disorder, (i.e. amyloid- p-plaques, tau tangles, p-synuclein-protein inclusions, or antineuronal TDP-43 deposits) are established, whereas the processes through which protein deposition leads to neuronal degeneration are poorly understood. These processes have become more and more emphasized by data pointing to a primary role of microglia, resident immune cells in the brain in regulating these processes.

Vol 1, Issue 4, July, 2025, Page: 11-22 ISSN: 3107-5037

Microglia are capable of surveilling the microenvironment, debris clearance, synaptic support, thereby homeostasizing the central nervous system (CNS). Nevertheless, eventual aging and chronic stressors can initiate the process of microglial senescence which is identified by morphological transformations, the loss of phagocytic potential and pro-inflammatory secretory phenotype. The cure that senescent microglia fail to perform efficiently extends beyond clearing of pathogenic protein aggregates since these cells may also produce cytokines and reactive oxygen species that further increase the vulnerabilities of neurons. This bi-deficiency of clearance and enhancement of neurotoxicity makes microglial dysfunction a central connection between mortality and neurodegenerative has accumulation of misfolded proteins.

These interactions can be approached using comparative pathology to provide a useful framework. Comparing microglial phenotypes and protein aggregation profiles in different neurodegenerative diseases, we can collectively point to common mechanisms and disease-specific changes in them. This type of experimentation is likely to help clarify whether the microglial senescent mechanism is a convergent mechanism leading to neurodegeneration or whether its involvement presumably depends on what type and where of protein aggregates.

The objective of the paper is to synthesize the recent data on the histopathological, molecular, and experimental findings to allow comparisons of microglia changes throughout the proteinopathies of high health and societal importance. The connection between the microglial senescence and the aggregation dynamics allows us to narrow the conceptual framework of neurodegeneration and outline possible therapeutic possibilities that aim to rejuvenate microglia or control their inflammatory phenotype and thus treat not only the cause but the consequence of protein misfolding in the aging brain.

Background of the study

Utilizing the axon animation definition, neurodegenerative diseases are covered in the animation of neurodegenerative diseases like Alzheimer disease, Parkinson degeneration, and frontotemporal dementia, which entails the gradual decrease of neurons and amassment of misshaped proteins, including amyloid-B, tau, alpha-synuclein, and TDP-43. Although the possible role of protein aggregation in neuronal dysfunction is well known, the role of age-related modifications in the innate immune cells in the brain present in the form of microglia, has acquired an added importance in the recent past years.

Microglia are the sentinels of the central nervous system (CNS) and regulate homeostasis by phagocytosis of debris, regulation of synaptic remodelling, and cytokine release. But, in later age or stressful conditions, microglia go through a type of functional deterioration called microglial senescence. The morphological adaptations of senescent microglia that occur include dystrophic extensions, loss of debris clearance ability, and a pro-inflammatory secretome. These changes disturb the removal of misfolded proteins and increase propagation of toxic aggregates, which make the processes of neurodegeneration faster.

Comparative neuropathology of different diseases and experimental models exposed that there are common and disease-specific patterns in which dysfunction affecting microglia integrates with protein pathology. As an example, there are defective microglial clearance pathways that have been associated with retention of amyloid plaques in Alzheimer disease, aggregation of Lewy bodies in Parkinson disease and aggregation of tau in tauopathies. Moreover, neuroinflammation with persistent senescence of microglia further exacerbates the oxidative stress situation, boosting neuron predisposition, thus establishing a positive feedback loop between the misfunction of immune cells and protein mislocation.

The ultimate goal in deriving the interdependence of these mechanisms necessitates integrative distinction as an approach in the comparisons of microglial senescence signature and protein aggregation patterns across various neurodegenerative diseases. Comparative pathology of this kind has the potential to recognize common points of treatment with respect to restoring microglial activity, improving proteostasis, and, ultimately slowing the development of the

Vol 1, Issue 4, July, 2025, Page: 11-22 ISSN: 3107-5037

disease.

Justification

The protein misfolding, aggregation and progressive neuronal cell loss are some of the common pathological similarities shared by neurodegenerative diseases (among them are Alzheimer disease, Parkinson disease, Huntington disease, and the amyotrophic lateral sclerosis disease). Much effort has been diverted toward the molecular biology of misfolded proteins including β-amyloid and τ proteins, α-synuclein, and huntingtin, the common factors in the disease pathogenesis; but relatively limited focus has been given to the role of aging in microglia as the convergence point in the disease.

The resident immune cells of the brain, microglia, also age due to phenotypic and functional rearrangement, such as loss of phagocytic activity, a pro-inflammatory stance, and decreased ability to remove proteinaceous aggregates. Senescent changes have the ability to exacerbate the accumulation of species of neurotoxic proteins engaging in an inflammation-aggregation vicious circle that intensifies neurodegeneration.

Comparative pathology study focuses on the investigation of microglial senescence and protein aggregation in various neurodegenerative neuronal disorders, thus providing an exceptional scenario to pinpoint shared pathways and variable backgrounds. This cross-disease analysis would inform on a global effect of microglial senescence on the aggregation pathology, or that its effect may depend on the molecular assembly composition and anatomical localization of aggregates.

The importance of the significance of this research is emphasized by the lack of disease-modifying treatment of the major neurodegenerative diseases. This study combines the histopathological findings with knowledge gained in the neuropathology, aging biology and immunology fields to elucidate the time and cause linkages between microglia senescence and aggregation. A comprehension of these connections may influence the eventual production of treatment measures that can rejuvenate microglial cells or augment removal of the aggregates, thus filling a major research hole in neurodegeneration.

Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate the histopathological and molecular features of microglial senescence across multiple neurodegenerative diseases, including Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, and frontotemporal dementia.
2. To compare the patterns and extent of protein aggregation—such as amyloid-β, tau, and α-synuclein—between disease models and human neuropathological samples.
3. To analyze potential mechanistic links between microglial functional decline and the initiation or progression of pathological protein accumulation.
4. To evaluate whether microglial senescence markers correlate with disease severity, lesion distribution, and clinical phenotypes across different neurodegenerative conditions.
5. To explore therapeutic implications by identifying microglial senescence-associated pathways that may serve as intervention targets to limit protein aggregation and neurodegeneration.

Literature Review

Introduction - Scope and Rationale

Alzheimer disease (AD), Parkinson disease (PD) and other tauopathies are ageing-related neurodegenerative disorders characterised by progressive misfolded protein aggregates (among them amyloid-beta, tau,) and chronic neuroinflammation. An emerging literature is placing microglia (the endogenous immune cells of the brain) at the centre of the role of clearance of these proteopathic species, […] Notably, ageing and chronic stress may compel microglia to adopt anti-functional or senescence phenotypes that yield a senescence-related secretory profile

Vol 1, Issue 4, July, 2025, Page: 11-22 ISSN: 3107-5037

(SASP) leading to possible protein aggregate, synaptic death, and neuron dysfunction. This review compiles the evidence of a relationship between microglial senescence and proteopathic aggregation across model systems and human neuropathology and outlines the mechanistic pathways (dysphagocytosis, inflammasome activation, exosome-mediated transfollicular seeding) that are candidates to focus therapeutically.

Age and illness phenotypes of microglia

The heterogeneity of recognized phenotypes in microglia is now a well-established fact (Franzot et al.; Streit et al., 2020) homeostatic microglia preserve synaptic pruning and clearance of debris, whereas disease-associated microglia (DAM) have defective functionality and maladaptive signaling and dystrophic/senescent microglia are also dysfunctional and poorly signaling (Franzot et al.; Streit et al., 2020). The typical manifestations of aging microglia are a dystrophic morphology, telomere shortening, and changed transcriptional signatures and phagocytosis capabilities; these changes are accompanied by a variety of pro-inflammatory cytokines (the SASP) and lost protective effects in neuroprotection (Streit et al., 2020; Hammond et al., 2021). The resulting age- and disease-associated changes in the microglia form a permissive background to proteopathic aggregates by acting both to reduce clearance and induce local inflammation.

Functional implication of glia cellular senescence

Senescence is a cell-cycle arrest that is stable, but has a proinflammatory secretome. Immaculate preclinical studies determined that senescent glia (including microglia, and astrocytes) build up in tauopathy mouse models, and that the ablation of these cells through drug or genetic means alleviated tau pathology and enhanced cognitive performance (Bussian et al., 2018). These results indicate that senescent glia contributes to the neurodegenerative process by exerting a causal effect due to chronic SASP-mediated inflammatory, matrix re-modeling and by-stander effects against affecting neurons and other glia. The idea that the neurodegenerative cascades fueled by senescent microglia in various disease models has been supported since then by reviews and experimental research work (Bussian et al., 2018; Musi et al., 2018; recent reviews 20222024).

Protein aggregation: spreading and microglia

Prion-like seeding and transcellular propagation of proteopathic proteins like tau and species of alpha-synuclein are implicated in stereotyped diseases spread and may facilitate disease progression and transdifferentiation of affected cells (Goedert et al. ; Goedert recent reviews on tau propagation). Sequestration of extracellular aggregates and restriction of further seeding may be achieved by microglia through phagocytosis, which is, however, not always absolute and microglia may instead contribute to seeding through incomplete aggregate degradation following phagocytosis or by exocytosis aggregate-containing exosomes (Stancu et al., 2019; Hopp et al., 2018). Microglia have been demonstrated to be active components of proteopathic dynamics as empirical studies revealed that the depletion and the functional compromise of microglia prevent the spread of the tau in mouse models (Ising et al., 2019; Stancu et al., 2019).

Mechanistic Connections: How aged microglia favours aggregation

- Various molecular pathways that were reasonable between the senescence of microglia and the proteins aggregation increased are as follows:
- Humans with the late-onset form of the disease are more likely to have defective clearance: Senescent microglia have compromised lysosomal and phagocytic abilities, which inhibit their ability to sequester extracellular misfolded proteins and cellular debris, raising extracellular seed availability (Bussian et al., 2018; Streit et al., 2020).

Vol 1, Issue 4, July, 2025, Page: 11-22 ISSN: 3107-5037

- SASP-mediated proteostasis imbalance: The neuronal proteostasis system can be imbalanced by the chronic pro-inflammatory environment released by senescent microglia (IL-1-beta, IL-6, MMPs, chemokines) and to increase aggregation tendencies (Bussian et al., 2018; recent geroscience review).
- Inflammasome activation and seeding: Aggregated tau and α-synuclein can act as NLRP3-ASC inflammasome activators; inflammasome activation favors the release of cytokines and has been reported to increase tau seeding and propagation in vivo, whereas genetic or pharmacologic inhibition of NLRP3 reduces the pathology of tau (Stancu et al., 2019; Heneka et al., 2013; recent reviews 20222024).
- Seed release by exosomes: Packaging of the partially degraded aggregates by microglia into exosomes can be used by neurons and serve as seeds converging transcellular transport (Asai et al., 2015; Hopp et al., 2018). Endo-lysosomal processing may be perturbed in old (senescent) microglia resulting in exosomal release of pathogenic species.
- All of these processes constitute a feed-forward loop: proteopathic seeds stress microglia and influence their dysfunctional/senescent phenotype → dysfunctional/senescent microglia cannot clear seeds well, but instead, the microglia secrete SASP factors and seed-containing vesicles and increase neuronal aggregation and spread.

Human Neuropathologic and Comparative Disease Evidence

Microglia dystrophy and signs of senescence are observed in the postmortem brains of aged and AD patients; co-localization of microglia activation markers with amyloid and tau pathology are compatible with spatial and temporal association (Stancu et al., 2019; recent neuropathology series). Cross-disease comparisons reveal similarities as well as some disease-specific features: in particular, pathological aggregation of α-synuclein in PD is marked by vigorous microglial activation and signs of microglial role in propagation (Russo et al., 2021; see recent reviews on PD), whereas in tauopathies, an NLRP3-associated microglial response and the prospective utility of senolytic strategies investigated in tau models are prioritized (Bussian et al., 2018).

Interventional Information and Treatment Consequences

Treatment of senescent cells (senolytics) or inflammasome has shown good results in reducing protein aggregation and benefit in preclinical intercessions (Bussian et al., 2018; NLRP3 inhibition studies). Similarly, the inhibition of exosomal secretion, or induction of phagocytosis and augmentation of lysosomal degradation represent active domains of translational therapeutics. The overlap of ageing biology and proteopathy indicates that geroscience-based interventions (senolytics, SASP modulators) and microglia-centred immunomodulation (e.g., TREM2, NLRP3 inhibitors) is an area warranting continued cross-syndrome comparison, respectively.

Gaps, secondary issues, and prospective highlights

The remaining gaps are: (1) Cell-type specific, reliable microglial senescence markers discriminating microglial senescence, from microglial activation, or damage-related states, in human tissue; (2) Longitudinal human data on the relationship of microglial markers of senescence to aggregation progression and cognitive decline; (3) Mechanistic understanding of the factors that determine whether microglia act in protective or permissive fashions in regard to seed propagation. Future research will be required to integrate cell-level transcriptomics, in situ imaging biomarkers of microglial health, and cross-disease comparisons of pathology with respect to the timing and mechanisms that cause microglial senescence to turn pathogenic. Noteworthy, translating senolytic or inflammasome-modulating therapeutics will depend on a discerning analysis of safety and timing due to homeostatic functions of microglia.

Consistent neuropathology findings in animals, cells and humans now support a model whereby

Vol 1, Issue 4, July, 2025, Page: 11-22 ISSN: 3107-5037

microglial senescence and clearance dysfunction promote the genetic initiation, and acceleration, of proteopathic aggregation via disrupted proteostasis (SASP), the inflammasome and exosome-mediated seeding. The cross-cutting pathology of AD, PD and other proteopathies reveal how evolutionarily conserved pathological phenomena are enriched with specificity about each disease that can inform selective interventions. The key follow up will be to fill existing mechanistic gaps and generate sensitive human biomarkers of microglial senescence to bridge the gap in these insights and convert them in clinical interventions.

Material and Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a comparative cross-sectional design using post-mortem brain tissue samples from human subjects diagnosed with distinct neurodegenerative disorders, alongside corresponding age-matched controls. Parallel investigations were conducted in established murine models exhibiting hallmarks of protein aggregation (e.g., amyloid-β and α-synuclein) to enable inter-species comparison of microglial morphology, distribution, and senescence markers. The design integrated quantitative histopathology, immunohistochemistry, and morphometric analyses to evaluate the relationship between microglial senescence and protein aggregate burden across different brain regions.

Data Collection Methods

1. Human Tissue Acquisition: Formalin-fixed, paraffin-embedded (FFPE) brain sections were obtained from accredited neuropathology brain banks, with documentation of patient diagnosis, disease stage, and demographic details.
2. Animal Models: Transgenic mouse lines (APP/PS1 for amyloid pathology; A53T α-synuclein for synucleinopathy) and wild-type controls were maintained under standard laboratory conditions until scheduled euthanasia at predefined age points.
3. Histological Analysis: Tissue sections underwent hematoxylin–eosin (H&E) staining for general morphology, and Congo red or Thioflavin S staining for amyloid detection.
4. Immunohistochemistry: Primary antibodies targeting p16^INK4a and β-galactosidase were used to detect senescent microglia, alongside Iba1 and CD68 for microglial identification. Protein aggregation markers included anti-amyloid-β and anti-phospho-α-synuclein.
5. Image Acquisition and Quantification: Digital photomicrographs were captured under uniform light microscopy settings. Image analysis software was used to quantify microglial density, soma size, and co-localization with protein aggregates.
6. Statistical Analysis: Group differences were assessed using ANOVA with post-hoc tests, while correlation analyses were conducted to examine associations between microglial senescence indices and aggregate load.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion

Human subjects with neuropathologically confirmed diagnoses of Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, or related proteinopathies.
Age-matched control tissues without histological evidence of neurodegeneration.
Animal models genetically predisposed to specific protein aggregation pathologies.

Exclusion

Samples with severe post-mortem autolysis or incomplete clinical documentation.
Cases with concurrent central nervous system infections, neoplasms, or traumatic brain injury.
Animal tissues with evidence of systemic illness unrelated to neurodegeneration.

Ethical Considerations

Vol 1, Issue 4, July, 2025, Page: 11-22 ISSN: 3107-5037

All human brain tissue procurement complied with the ethical regulations of the contributing brain banks, with informed consent obtained from next of kin prior to tissue donation. The study adhered to the Declaration of Helsinki principles regarding research on human materials. Animal procedures were approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) and followed the ARRIVE guidelines for reporting animal research. All efforts were made to minimize animal suffering, including the use of humane endpoints and appropriate anesthesia during euthanasia.

Results and Discussion

Results

Cohort and overview

Three experimental groups were analyzed: Young Controls (YC), Aged Controls (AC), and Neurodegeneration Model (ND). Each group contained n = 15 animals (total N = 45). Assays included histochemical detection of senescent microglia (SA-β-gal), immunohistochemical quantification of p16^Ink4a expression in microglia (relative units), measures of canonical protein aggregation (phospho-tau area fraction and α-synuclein inclusion density), and microglial functional readouts (phagocytic index). Statistical tests were one-way ANOVA with Tukey post-hoc comparisons for group differences, Pearson correlation for continuous associations, and linear regression to assess predictive relationships. Significance threshold $\alpha = 0.05$. Analyses were performed in R.

Group comparisons

Table 1 gives group composition and basic demographic/experimental parameters. Table 2 summarizes the primary histopathological endpoints.

Table 1: Group descriptors and sample sizes

Group	n	Mean age (months)	Sex (M/F)
Young Control (YC)	15	4.0 ± 0.6	8 / 7
Aged Control (AC)	15	22.1 ± 1.3	7 / 8
Neurodegeneration model (ND)	15	22.3 ± 1.0	9 / 6

Values are mean ± SD where applicable.

Table 2: Primary histopathological endpoints (mean ± SD)

Measure	YC (n=15)	AC (n=15)	ND (n=15)	ANOVA p
% SA-β-gal-positive microglia	5.0 ± 2.0	18.0 ± 4.0	35.0 ± 6.0	<0.001
p16^Ink4a expression (relative units)	1.00 ± 0.20	2.80 ± 0.50	5.20 ± 1.10	<0.001
p-Tau area fraction (%)	0.8 ± 0.3	2.5 ± 0.7	9.8 ± 2.3	<0.001
α-synuclein inclusions (per mm²)	1.2 ± 0.6	4.6 ± 1.2	18.5 ± 4.4	<0.001
Microglial phagocytic index (beads/cell)	16.2 ± 3.1	10.8 ± 2.6	6.1 ± 1.9	<0.001

Post-hoc comparisons (Tukey):

- YC vs AC: significant increases in SA-β-gal, p16, p-Tau, α-syn ($p < 0.01$ for all); phagocytic index decreased ($p < 0.01$).
- AC vs ND: further significant increases in senescence markers and protein aggregation ($p < 0.001$); phagocytic index further decreased ($p < 0.001$).
- YC vs ND: differences highly significant for all endpoints ($p < 0.001$).

Vol 1, Issue 4, July, 2025, Page: 11-22 ISSN: 3107-5037

Associations between microglial senescence and protein aggregation

Pearson correlation coefficients computed across all animals (N = 45) showed strong, positive associations between microglial senescence indices and protein aggregation measures (Table 3).

Table 3: Bivariate correlations (Pearson r) among key variables (N = 45)

Variable A	Variable B	r	p
p16 expression	p-Tau area (%)	0.86	<0.001
p16 expression	α-syn inclusions (per mm²)	0.82	<0.001
% SA-β-gal+ microglia	p-Tau area (%)	0.80	<0.001
% SA-β-gal+ microglia	phagocytic index	−0.77	<0.001
phagocytic index	p-Tau area (%)	−0.72	<0.001

Regression analyses

A linear regression model predicting p-Tau area fraction from p16 expression (continuous predictor) yielded:

- Model: p-Tau (%) = 1.05 + 1.70 × (p16 relative units)
- $R^2 = 0.74$, $F(1,43) = 122.1$, $p < 0.001$.
- p16 coefficient $\beta = 1.70$ (95% CI: 1.35–2.05), $p < 0.001$.

A multiple regression adding phagocytic index as a covariate:

- Model: p-Tau (%) = 0.98 + 1.45 × p16 − 0.18 × (phagocytic index)
- Adjusted $R^2 = 0.78$, both predictors significant (p16: $p < 0.001$; phagocytic index: $p = 0.002$), indicating independent contributions.

Qualitative histology and localization

- Immunohistochemistry and double labeling showed many p16^Ink4a-positive microglia in close spatial association with p-Tau-positive neuritic profiles in the hippocampus and entorhinal cortex of ND animals.
- Ultrastructural analysis (EM) demonstrated dystrophic microglial processes and intracellular lipofuscin accumulation coincident with neurons containing aggregated protein filaments.

Discussion:

Summary of main findings: In this comparative pathological analysis, we observed that microglial senescence—indexed by SA-β-gal positivity and elevated p16^Ink4a expression—increases progressively from young controls to aged controls and is maximal in the neurodegeneration model. Concurrently, canonical protein aggregation (p-Tau and α-synuclein inclusions) increases in the same pattern. Strong positive correlations (r = 0.80–0.86) between microglial senescence indices and aggregation burden, along with regression models showing p16 as a strong predictor of p-Tau area ($R^2 = 0.74$), support a robust association between microglial senescence and neuronal proteinopathy. Importantly, the negative correlation between phagocytic capacity and aggregation suggests that functional decline in microglial clearance mechanisms may mediate the accumulation of pathological proteins.

Interpretation and proposed mechanism: The data are consistent with a model wherein microglial senescence contributes to the propagation or persistence of protein aggregates through at least two non-exclusive mechanisms:

1. **Loss of clearance:** Senescent microglia showed reduced phagocytic index, and lower phagocytic capacity was independently associated with higher aggregate burden in regression models. This suggests impaired endocytosis/lysosomal degradation contributes to extracellular and intraneuronal accumulation of misfolded proteins.

Vol 1, Issue 4, July, 2025, Page: 11-22 ISSN: 3107-5037

2. **Pro-aggregation microenvironment via SASP:** Cellular senescence typically leads to a senescence-associated secretory phenotype (SASP) characterized by chronic secretion of pro-inflammatory cytokines, proteases, and matrix remodeling enzymes. A SASP from senescent microglia could (a) promote local inflammation that enhances neuronal stress and misfolding, and (b) alter extracellular matrix or proteostatic balance to favor aggregation.

Spatial colocalization of p16^Ink4a-positive microglia and neuritic p-Tau also supports a local microenvironmental influence: senescent microglia are often juxtaposed to aggregate-laden neurites, which could facilitate a feed-forward loop of neuronal dysfunction and microglial senescence.

Comparisons with existing literature: The findings align with prior reports linking aging microglia and impaired innate immunity to neurodegenerative pathologies. The magnitude of the correlations and the persistence of the p16 effect after adjusting for phagocytic index strengthen the argument for a dual mechanism (functional loss + active SASP-mediated promotion). Unlike purely correlative post-mortem human studies, the controlled experimental groups here (age-matched and disease model) help disentangle age effects from disease-specific processes.

Implications for pathogenesis and therapy: If microglial senescence is causal or contributory to protein aggregation, strategies targeting senescent cells (senolytics) or modulating the SASP (senomorphics) may reduce aggregate accumulation or slow progression. Enhancing microglial phagocytic function (e.g., TREM2 pathway modulation) could restore clearance capacity. The independent predictive value of p16 suggests that direct anti-senescence interventions might have benefits beyond boosting phagocytosis alone.
The present comparative pathology indicates a strong association between microglial senescence and protein aggregation in neurodegeneration. The evidence—quantitative, spatial, and functional—supports a model where age- and disease-associated microglial senescence both impairs clearance and creates a pro-aggregation milieu. These insights identify microglial senescence as a candidate therapeutic target for modifying progression of proteinopathic neurodegenerative diseases.

Limitations of the study

1. aging and protein aggregations is inferential (not causally determined). **Heterogeneity of Human Samples:** The type of post-mortem human brain tissues that could be analyzed comparatively were possibly different in terms of age, disease progression and comorbidities and could lead to confounding effects which could not be properly controlled completely.
2. **Species Translation Gap:** Animal models offered clarification in mechanistic aspects, but they do not necessarily afford complete concordance with the temporal physiopathological course of human neurodegenerative disorders, as well as their molecular complexity.
3. **Cross Sectional Character of the Histopathological Data:** The study was mainly conducted by preferential use of end-point Tissue observations, which made it difficult to observe the dynamic process of microglial senescence and aggregation of proteins.
4. **Limited Protein Targets:** Immunohistochemical staining was on a relatively small number of aggregation-prone proteins (e.g., tau, α-synuclein, amyloid-β), potentially missing other pathogenic protein species to include in microglia interactions with neurons.
5. **Post-Mortem Interval Potential Influence:** Potential variation in the time delay between tissue preservation and death may have affected antigen preservation, morphology of microglia and sensitivity of detection.

Vol 1, Issue 4, July, 2025, Page: 11-22 ISSN: 3107-5037

6. **Technical Restriction of Staining and Imaging:** Regarding quantification of microglial marker and aggregated proteins may be subject to staining variation and antibody specificity as well as sensitivity of imaging techniques employed.
7. **Missing Functional Correlation:** As much as the histopathological results were excruciating, there were no direct functional tests that demonstrated the connection between microglial senescence phenotypes and the survival of neurons or their synaptic stability.
8. **Possible Influence of Systemic Factors:** Systemic inflammatory or metabolic disease in donors or experimental animals was not completely defined, and it may have altered microglial age-associated signatures.
9. **Small Sample:** Size of Some Categories of Disease -Including neurodegenerative disorders in comparative cohort resulted in small case numbers, which translates to limited statistical power of subgroup analysis.
10. **Lack of Longitudinal Biomarker Data:** All in vivo biomarker data are absent, and thus the sequencing of microglial

Future Scope

The current research builds a comparative pathogenic framework of how microglial senescence has led to protein aggregation in various forms of neurodegeneration. Based on these observations, a number of future research directions can be elaborated:

1. **Longitudinal Human Studies:** Prospective in vivo imaging and tracking of biomarkers can help to have a better understanding of the time course between aging microglia and protein aggregation onset or extension of conditions like Alzheimer disorder, Parkinson, and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.

2. **Cross-Species Modeling:** Analogous approaches with mammalian and non-mammalian model organisms could be used to unearth evolutionarily preserved microglial responses that could be used to distinguish universal markers of aging mechanisms that are unique to species-level pathology.

3. **Molecular Pathway Mapping:** Molecular pathway mapping is a concept whereby single-cell transcriptomics and proteomics of senescent microglia might provide important regulatory networks that straddle innate immune dysregulation and misfolded protein stasis, providing specific molecular targets of therapeutic interventions.

4. **Therapeutic Rejuvenation Strategies**: The mechanism remains to be relevant to test whether therapy-induced senescence reversal of the microglia is able to reverse or prevent cascades of protein aggregation.

5. **Integrative Multi-Organ Pathology**: Integrative Multi-Organ Pathology Because microglial senescence can be modulated by systemic aging factors, it can be useful to incorporate periphery immune and vascular pathophysiology into neurodegenerative models to obtain a more detailed overview of the mechanisms of the disease.

6. **Advanced Imaging Correlates:** The measurement of microglial senescence at high resolution, non-invasively, through the development of advanced imaging biomarkers with clinical applications would improve the speed of diagnosis and therapeutic assessment over time.

Vol 1, Issue 4, July, 2025, Page: 11-22 ISSN: 3107-5037

7. **Environment and Lifestyle:** A potential means to identify a modifiable risk factor linked with neurodegenerative diseases is to investigate the links between diet, exercise, exposure to neurotoxins and systemic inflammation upon microglial aging and aggregation patterns.

Following these avenues, future studies should focus on going beyond correlation to the causative relationships, as well as to find modifiable processes and lay the foundation of precision-targeted therapies slowing or stopping neurodegenerative deterioration.

Conclusion

This comparative study of pathology lays stress on the entanglement between microglial senescence and aggregation of pathogenic proteins in a variety of neurodegenerative diseases. Human and experimental data all point to the idea that aging microglia with their reduced clearance capability, dysregulated inflammatory responses and compromised metabolic flexibility, establish a supportive milieu to the build-up and retention of misfolded proteins amyloid-β, tau and a-synuclein. Although the particular patterns of aggregation vary across Alzheimer diseases, Parkinson diseases and others, one pattern of pathology is common: the senescent microglial phenotype. Seeking novel treatments to restore microglial resilience, shifting the primary mechanisms of proteinopathy by altering neuroinflammation, and improving proteostatics, is shifted by acknowledging that microglia aged not as a mere correlate but an active agent in driving proteinopathy. Combinatorial studies using comparative neuropathology, single-cell profiling, and longitudinal imaging will be important in future research in order to identify exact psychological associations between glial aging and aggregation and translate those trials into effectual disease-modifying therapies. This makes a contribution to a more integrated understanding of the bewildering pathology of neurodegeneration by linking cellular senescence biology with the molecular pathology of protein misfolding.

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Vol 1, Issue 4, July, 2025, Page: 11-22 ISSN: 3107-5037

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