

## Life Events, Personality and Economic Resources as Predictors of Economic Dependency in Older Adults

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study was to understand the relationship between negative life events, personality and economic dependency (i.e. income assistance, caregiver's help, caregiver burden, and medical services received), and to assess the relationship between those dependency measures and economic resources (education and income). Our sample consisted of 287 people including both octogenarians and centenarians from the state of Georgia. Personality, cumulative life events, care-giving services (i.e. help with chores, meals, nursing care, and personal care), care-giver burden, as well as economic resources and economic dependency in octogenarians and centenarians were assessed through proxy interviews in the study. We used configural frequency analyses and found three patterns (or types) in the combined group of octogenarians and centenarians. The first type demonstrated that high negative life events and high neuroticism was associated with people needing high amount of care in old age ( $p = .001$ ). The second pattern shows that people who had exposure to more negative life events and who were high on neuroticism were more of a care giving burden ( $p = .002$ ). We also found that sample members who were highly educated and had higher income required less care-giving services ( $p = .004$ ) and medical care ( $p = .002$ ) and were less likely to be a care-giving burden ( $p = .001$ ). The patterns we found help us to identify some of the factors which predict economic dependency in older adults.