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Parity is associated with increased waist circumference and other anthropometric indices of obesity.

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Source

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Abstract

BACKGROUND:

There is growing interest in the effect of childbearing on the development of chronic medical conditions. In the present study we aim at seeing whether parity is associated with increased waist circumference (WC) and other anthropometric indices of obesity, or not, in a sample of Iraqi women.

METHODS:

This was a cross sectional study conducted during the period from January 2006 to the end of December 2007. Subjects were women attending two primary health care centers in a rural district population in Basrah (Abu-Al-khasib district), Iraq.

RESULTS:

A total of 9135 women with a mean age of 46.4+/-15.5 years were included in the study. The mean weight was 69.9+/-16.9 kg and the mean WC was 92.7+/-15.0 cm with 78.9% of women having WC >or=80 cm. The mean and the standard deviation of other anthropometric variables were 27.0+/-6.25 for body mass index (BMI), 0.57+/-0.09 for waist-to-height ratio (WHtR) and 0.89+/-0.08 for waist-to-hip ratio (WHpR). Body weight, WC, BMI, WHpR, and WHtR progressively and significantly increased with increasing parity ($p<0.001$). Increasing age and higher number of births were associated with a consistent significant increase in the risk of increasing WC. While the reverse was true with respect to education, the risk of increased WC significantly decreased with the increase in education. The risk of increased WC was higher among housewives compared to employed women. On multiple logistic regression analyses of parity and risk of increasing WC, the number of births remained significantly and independently associated with increased WC after adjustment for a range of potential confounders (age, BMI, employment, education, and marital status). However, when parity was analyzed as a dichotomous variable (parous versus nulliparous), no significant association was found ($p>0.05$).

CONCLUSION:

Parity was associated with increased WC and other anthropometric indices of obesity in a sample of rural Iraqi women attending two primary health care centers.

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