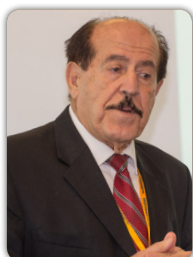


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# Allergy, Asthma & Clinical Immunology

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### The relationship between ethnicity and asthma among Iraqi immigrants

**Background:** Literatures indicate that asthma prevalence varies among different ethnic groups. The reason for this is not clear; it could be due to environment pollution or genetic factors. The study objective is to compare prevalence rates of asthma between two Iraqi ethnic groups who emigrated to the US from Iraq and to predict associated risk factors. We hypothesize no difference in prevalence rates between the two groups because they shared the same environment and culture in Iraq.

**Methods:** From data of published research studies, we selected 2079 Michigan Iraqi residents based on certain variable groups. The Iraqis are Iraqi Arab and Iraqi Chaldean. In each of the three studies, participants responded to an interview in Arabic using a validated structured survey which asked about socioeconomics and the presence of seven physician-diagnosed diseases (e.g. asthma, hypertension, diabetes, heart diseases, obesity, depression and sleep apnea) and self-rated health. The study used chi-square and regression analysis.

**Results:** Results indicate asthma prevalence of Chaldeans (4.4%) significantly differed from that of Arabs (12.5%). No difference in other diseases except sleep apnea and depression. Significant differences exist when testing asthma prevalence among those who suffer from any of six diseases; however, the prevalence in all were lower for Chaldeans. The Chaldean population reported less daily life stress and environmental exposure. Logistic regression for asthma predict only Iraqi Arab (OR=2.8, C.I 95%=1.0-7.3) and combined diseases, while for excellent to good health it predict several variables (e.g. Chaldean, less expose to environmental exposure).

**Conclusion:** We reject the study hypothesis because asthma prevalence is about three times higher in Iraqi Arabs as compared to Iraqi Chaldeans. This is true although both groups emigrated from Iraq, share similar geographical area, and lived in similar environments. Therefore, ethnic background was the only significant risk factor associated with asthma. Genetic differences could explain the high susceptibility to asthma in Iraqi Arabs compared to Chaldeans. No other variables were significantly associated with asthma in Arabs, nor in Chaldeans.

### Biography

Hikmet J Jamil received his Medical Degree from Baghdad University. He holds several Postgraduate degrees from England. In 1979, he joined Baghdad University and then in 1998, he joined Wayne State University and in 2015 joined Michigan State University. He has published 20 books and 191 field research articles. He is one of the founders of The International Society of Iraqi Scientists in 2000 and The Al Nahrain International Society of Iraqi Scientists in 2017. He was elected in 2002 as President of International Society of Iraqi Scientists until 2015. He received the Best Teacher Award from Wayne State University in 2006, 2010 and in 2013.

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