**CaSR** gene A986S polymorphism contributes to the increased risk of primary hyperparathyroidism: A meta-analysis

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**ABSTRACT**

Primary hyperparathyroidism (PHPT) generally occurs due to mis-regulated secretion of parathyroid hormone. In humans, CaSR gene is responsible for calcium homeostasis, which regulates parathyroid hormone. By carefully evaluating published studies, the current meta-analysis assessed the association of CaSR gene R990G (rs1042636) and A986S (rs1801725) polymorphisms with the risk of primary hyperparathyroidism (PHPT). The meta-analysis includes five studies that focused on CaSR R990G and A986S polymorphisms. The effect size measures such as odds ratio (OR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI) were assessed for independent studies. The heterogeneity test showed no significant heterogeneity between studies; hence, pooled effects were assessed under fixed effect model. Meta-analysis of the CaSR polymorphisms demonstrated that only A986S polymorphism showed increased risk of PHPT in the dominant model (SS+AS vs. AA: OR = 1.40, 95% CI = 1.13-1.73, P = 0.002). Further, there is no evidence for publication bias for these polymorphisms. In conclusion, this meta-analysis supports that the CaSR A986S polymorphism correlates with an increased risk of PHPT.

**KEYWORDS**: Primary hyperparathyroidism, CaSR, R990G, A986S, rs1042636, rs1801725, Polymorphism, Meta-analysis.

**Citation**: Rakshit S et al. CaSR gene A986S polymorphism contributes to the increased risk of primary hyperparathyroidism: A meta-analysis. Polymorphism 2020; 5: 87-95.
INTRODUCTION
Primary hyperparathyroidism (PHPT) generally occurs due to improper mineral metabolism, hypercalcemia and dis-regulated secretion of parathyroid hormone (PTH) (Corbetta et al., 2006, Han et al., 2013, Lakkakula & Neral, 2019). PHPT can also arise due to several familial endocrine disorders, such as multiple endocrine neoplasia type 1 and type 2A along with familial hyperparathyroidism. In western countries, PHPT is the third most common endocrine disease with 21.6 cases per 100,000 per-years. Almost 0.3% of the general population and 1–3% of the postmenopausal women were shown to have PHPT (Wang et al., 2016). Clinically, PHPT can cause neuromuscular disease, overt bone disease, hypercalcemia, nephrolithiasis and urolithiasis (Ghanta & Lakkakula, 2021). Increased serum PTH levels lead to increased serum calcium, which is an indication PHPT (Wang et al., 2016). It was well documented that PTH concentration in serum can be influenced by both genetic and environmental cues. Although irregular PTH concentration is genetically determined in 60% cases, genetic background of it is not yet completely known (Matana et al., 2018a; Matana et al., 2018b). The human calcium sensing receptor (CaSR) gene is a G-protein coupled membrane receptor located on chromosome 3q13.3-21. CaSR has 8 exons with a coding region of 3234 base pairs (Vahe et al., 2017). In humans, the CaSR gene product is mainly localized in the distal kidney tubules and parathyroid glands. Upon activation, this protein inhibits PTH secretion and tubular calcium reabsorption to control serum calcium levels (Ding et al., 2017). Activating and inactivating mutations in the CaSR gene cause either hypocalcemia and calcemia, respectively. Though benign SNPs do not cause pathological phenotypes, but they can contribute to individual variability by influencing CaSR function (Rothe et al., 2008). In the parathyroid glands, binding of calcium to CaSR increased intracellular calcium via accumulation of inositol-1,4,5-phosphate through phospholipase C pathway. As, cyclic AMP gets reduced due to the inhibition of adenylate cyclase, secretion of PTH and subsequent gene expression is also reduced (Miedlich et al., 2001, Vezzoli et al., 2007). There are 3 clustered single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) that have been identified in exon 7 of CaSR, i) A986S (Ala986Ser; rs1801725) protein variant where a guanine/thymine substitution occurred at codon 986; ii) R990G (Arg990Gly; rs1042636) protein variant where an adenine/guanine substitution occurred at codon 990; and iii) Q1011E (Gln1011Glu; rs1801726) protein variant where a cytosine/guanine substitution occurred at codon 1011 (Han et al., 2013, Liu et al., 2015). Previous reports suggested that the A986S and R990G polymorphisms are common in Caucasian and Asian populations, respectively (He et al., 2014). Several studies have analyzed the association between CaSR gene polymorphisms and PHPT, but the results are inconclusive. In the present study, a meta-analysis was carried out to assess the correlation between CaSR gene polymorphisms (R990G and A986S) and the risk of PHPT.

METHODS
Study design and search strategy
PubMed, Embase and GoogleScholar were searched to retrieve the papers related to CaSR gene polymorphisms and PHPT. Our search strategy included the following search terms or keywords: (“primary hyperparathyroidism” or “PHPT” or “hyperparathyroidism” or “pHPT”), (“calcium receptors” or “calcium-sensing receptor” or “CaSR” or “parathyroid calcium sensing
POLYMORPHISM

receptor”), rs1042636, rs1801725, CaSR R990G and CaSR A986S. Furthermore, same manual searches were carried out to retrieve potentially relevant studies from cross-references. Studies that met the following inclusion criteria were considered for meta-analysis: (1) study should have both case-control genotypes; (2) research should have been done to evaluate the correlation between CaSR gene polymorphisms and the risk of PHPT; (3) relevant complete data information: country, ethnicity, the number of cases for each genotype, and SNP site information must be available; (4) studies must have been published in English. Studies were directly rejected based on the following exclusion criteria: (1) case only studies; (2) unclear genotypic data; (3) studies involving unclear diagnostic criteria; (4) studies involving PHPT but other genes or SNPs.

Data extraction and Statistical analysis
By inclusion and exclusion criteria stated above, finally five studies were included in the meta-analysis (Miedlich et al., 2001, Cetani et al., 2002, Corbetta et al., 2006, Scillitani et al., 2007, Han et al., 2013). Two authors independently collected data from each study. To assess the relation between CaSR gene polymorphisms and PHPT risk, odds ratio (OR) and corresponding 95% confidence intervals (95% CI) were estimated. Forest plots were drawn using OR and 95% CI’s of independent studies as well as pooled effects in the dominant model. Cochran’s Q statistics and I² test were conducted to assess the heterogeneity among enrolled studies. To determine whether the results would be significantly influenced or not by deleting studies one by one, we implemented one-way sensitivity analysis. To confirm the reliability of original analysis results and to investigate publication bias, Begg’s funnel plots and egger’s linear regression test were conducted. Metagenyo web tool was used in the current meta-analysis (Martorell-Marugan et al., 2017).

RESULTS

Study characteristics
The selection process of articles for current meta-analysis is summarized in figure 1. After extensive search through different online databases, we identified total 37 records. After screening and evaluating their suitability using inclusion and exclusion criteria defined above, we selected 5 articles for meta-analysis. The present meta-analysis evaluated the association of CaSR gene R990G and A986S polymorphisms with the risk of PHPT. The genotype frequencies of CaSR R990G and A986S polymorphisms were documented in Table 1. The heterogeneity test showed no significant heterogeneity between studies of R990G (GG+RG Vs. RR: $P_{\text{heterogeneity}} = 0.381$, I² = 4.5%) and A986S polymorphisms (SS+AS vs. AA: $P_{\text{heterogeneity}} = 0.605$, I² = 0%).

CaSR polymorphisms and PHPT susceptibility
The association of CaSR R990G and A986S polymorphisms and the risk of PHPT was reported in five studies. The association for each individual study as well as the pooled effects for these polymorphisms are presented in Figure 2. Meta-analysis of the CaSR R990G polymorphism demonstrated no significant association with PHPT in the dominant genetic model (GG+RG Vs. RR: OR = 0.82; 95% CI = 0.60-1.11; $p = 0.199$) (Table 2). For CaSR A986S polymorphism, the pooled odds ratio for mutant genotypes in the dominant model showed increased risk of PHPT (SS+AS vs. AA: OR = 1.40, 95% CI = 1.13-1.73, $P = 0.002$).
Figure 1: Flowchart of literature search and study selection.

Table 1: The distribution of CaSR gene R990G and A986S polymorphisms and risk of PHPT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>PHPT</th>
<th>Controls</th>
<th>HW p value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>AG</td>
<td>GG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CaSR R990G polymorphism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miedlich et al. 2001</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cetani et al. 2002</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corbetta et al. 2006</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scillitani et al. 2007</td>
<td>Rome</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Han et al. 2013</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CaSR A986S polymorphism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>GG</td>
<td>GT</td>
<td>TT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miedlich et al. 2001</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cetani et al. 2002</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corbetta et al. 2006</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scillitani et al. 2007</td>
<td>Rome</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Han et al. 2013</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2: Results of the meta-analysis of CaSR R990G and A986S polymorphisms and PHPT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CaSR R990G</th>
<th>CaSR A986S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dominant Model</strong></td>
<td>GG+RG Vs. RR</td>
<td>SS+AS vs. AA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of studies</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I² %</strong></td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heterogeneity p value</strong></td>
<td>0.381</td>
<td>0.605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OR</strong></td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>95% CI</strong></td>
<td>(0.60-1.11)</td>
<td>(1.13-1.73)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Association p value</strong></td>
<td>0.199</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Egger’s test p-value</strong></td>
<td>0.831</td>
<td>0.391</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. Forest plot of summarized results of meta-analysis.
Sensitivity analysis and publication bias
Each time by excluding one study, we performed sensitivity analysis to check robustness of the analysis. Sensitivity analysis demonstrated no significant changes in the pooled OR of both CaSR R990G and A986S polymorphisms (Figure 3), which indicated the statistical robustness of the results. Symmetry in the shape of the Begg’s funnel plot for both CaSR R990G and A986S polymorphisms (Figure 4) indicated no publication bias. Egger’s test further supported that there was no publication bias for both CaSR R990G (p=0.831) and A986S (0.391) polymorphisms.

DISCUSSION
The current meta-analysis was performed to investigate the correlations between CaSR gene polymorphisms (R990G and A986S) and the risk of PHPT. For the present study, we have collected data from five different studies published on Asian and Caucasian populations. For R990G polymorphism, 697 PHPT and 1113 controls met the inclusion criteria, and for A986S polymorphism, 763 PHPT patients with and 1034 controls met the inclusion criteria. The data obtained from the current meta-analysis suggested that the CaSR R990G polymorphism is not associated with the risk of PHPT. In contrast to this, CaSR A986S polymorphism increased the risk of PHPT. Hence, it could be an important biological marker for early diagnosis of PHPT.
CaSR, a multifunctional receptor is found mainly in the tissues related to calcium homeostasis, but can be found in brain, pancreas, esophagus, stomach, heart, skin, lens epithelium, pituitary gland, ovary, breast, testis and prostate (Magno et al., 2011, Wang et al., 2016). Several lines of evidence demonstrated that the calcium-sensing receptor variants are known to influence the serum calcium
concentration (O’Seaghdha et al., 2010, Majumdar et al., 2020). Other than calcium homeostasis, CaSR gene also involves in several biological processes, such as cytoskeletal organization, entero-endocrine secretion, various ion channel activities, ion transport regulation, gene expression control and cell fate. By regulating PTH secretion and renal tubular calcium reabsorption, CaSR maintains calcium homeostasis (Breitwieser, 2012, Wang et al., 2016). Several other disorders were observed after loss-of-function mutations in CaSR gene, such as autosomal dominant familial hypocalciuric hypercalcemia, characterized by elevated parathyroid (PTH) levels with increased bone turnover (Wang et al., 2016). General populations significantly differ from PHPT patients in terms of the distributions of SNPs in the CaSR gene. Studies on CaSR R990G polymorphism indicated that this polymorphism is not associated the increased risk of PHPT (Miedlich et al., 2001, Cetani et al., 2002, Scillitani et al., 2007, Han et al., 2013). However, this polymorphism showed increased risk of PHPT and associated with disease parameters of PHPT (Corbetta et al., 2006). Studies related to CaSR R990G polymorphism showed that this polymorphism showed correlation with elevated risk of PHPT (Miedlich et al., 2001, Cetani et al., 2002, Corbetta et al., 2006, Scillitani et al., 2007). In contrast with this, there is no association between this polymorphism and PHPT in Chinese patients (Han et al., 2013).

We would like to acknowledge the limitations of our meta-analysis. Relatively small sample size in some studies may reduce the reliability of our conclusions. We did not consider studies published in languages other than English. The individual studies used in the meta-analysis are relatively small. Therefore, a greater number of studies with larger sample size and accurate genotyping method would provide a more reliable statistical analysis. In summary, this meta-analysis supports that the CaSR A986S polymorphism increases the risk of PHPT. This polymorphism in the CaSR gene can be beneficial and serve as a marker for the diagnosis of PHPT.

Acknowledgments
The authors thank the reviewers for their valuable time and effort.

Conflict of interest statement
The authors have declared to have no conflict of interest.

Authors’ contributions
SR, LS performed literature search; SR, LS and BLVKS performed meta-analysis; SR, LS wrote the first draft; BLVKS critically revised the manuscript and all authors approved the final draft.

Source of Funding
No specific funding was received for this work.

Declaration of originality
The author declares that the work presented in this manuscript is original and no text/figure has been copied from elsewhere without appropriate citation.

REFERENCES


