Reviewer’s report

Title: Association between 20q12 rs13041247 polymorphism and risk of nonsyndromic cleft lip with or without cleft palate: a meta-analysis

Version: 0 Date: 16 Oct 2019

Reviewer: Jayakumar Jayaraman

Reviewer's report:

In this article titled "Association between 20q12 rs13041247 polymorphism and risk of nonsyndromic cleft lip with or without cleft palate: a meta-analysis", the authors have addressed one of the important areas in cleft lip and palatal research. Although the topic is of great interest, I have several concerns in the way this research was collated and presented. I will list down my comments in orderly manner:

The article requires major language revision. I find difficult to comprehend several sentences throughout the manuscript.

Abstract:
The aim and conclusion do not match. The authors have mentioned the allele and genotype as well as ethnic variations in the conclusion that is not part of the aim. The Result section is too elaborate with the statistical data which makes difficulty in following.

Introduction:
This section must include a brief note on the clinical importance of establishing the association of polymorphism in NSCL/P patients. The aim does not match with the conclusion. I suggest the authors to modify the aims and objectives accordingly.

Methods:
What is the basis of classifying the ethnic groups? The authors in Table 1 have included "Indians" (Ref. 5) in Caucasian group and "Mexicans" (Ref. 8) and "Brazilians" (Ref. 7) in mixed ethnic group. The reason for this segregation must be clearly explained with appropriate references.

In addition, the authors have categorized one Brazilian study wrongly in Caucasian group (Ref.12). This error must be corrected and changes made must be appropriately reflected in the results and throughout the manuscript.

Results:
The results of the quality of assessment of each article using Newcastle-Ottawa Scale must be presented in the form of a table.

Discussion:
The authors have indicated a similar study with 10 articles has been published earlier. The authors must clearly indicate how addition of three articles in your study has improved the knowledge on understanding the polymorphism in cleft patients.

Figure 1. The numbers in the Eligibility criteria do not match. The Full-text articles excluded, with reasons should be (n=14).
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

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