

Review of: "Cleft Lip and Palate Repairs in X, "Sourire de l'Espoir" Humanitarian Missions' Experience: A Retrospective Study of 201 Consecutive Cases"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Dear authors:

I found your work to be interesting, however I must agree with other colleagues that the research methodology is weak, and despite many patients it lacks in relevant or novel results regarding the treatment of clef Lip & Palate and its structure is more of an anecdotal review or experience of your humanitarian work.

After mentioning this issue, I appreciate the honesty of showing your results and I think this work gives us a clear perspective about the development and results of surgical humanitarian campaigns in low-income countries.

Unfortunately, the results highlight the incomplete approach that this campaign offers to patients that need multidisciplinary approach and long-term follow-up to diagnose further complications such as maxillary hypoplasia, Velopharyngeal insufficiency, need for alveolar bone grafting, secondary surgeries (that one expects when children finish growing) and nasal deformities.

I want to offer you a reflection as a health care provider in a middle-income country, that still relies on this kind of campaigns for the treatment of clef lip& palate for rural or low-income provinces. I must add that these kinds of actions as humane and selfless as they are, make this pathology invisible and increase the lack of funding, and attention in the healthcare system that usually relies on them for the treatment of this pathology. Leaving patients invisible for the state's healthcare system, poorly treated, with several aesthetic stigmas, and functional disorders non treated.