

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.

This is an interesting article about a very important topic. The data analysis provided significant findings that can provide relevant information for future humanitarian missions.

I recommend the paper for publication, however, the following issues can be addressed:

1. On the paragraph:

“We considered patients or children living in favorable socio-economic conditions if they had parents with health insurance, resided in their own house, or held a high-income job. Patients with unfavorable economic conditions were those without medical insurance and with income lower than the minimum wage in Togo, given that no social security-supported hospital treatment was available during that specific period.”

Is there a reference for this classification?

2. On the discussion section:

“Other common perioperative complications that can occur during surgery for CLP, such as excessive bleeding and other anesthesia complications , were not observed in our study.”

It would be interesting to discuss a possible reason for this finding. Was a different technique used? Were the biosafety conditions better than other studies?

3. The authors postulated about the inherent limitations of a retrospective study very shortly. This issue could be better discoursed. Also, it could be discussed if further longitudinal studies are necessary to adress more conclusive perspectives on the role of those humanitarian missions.

4. The title and the aim: I understood that an important goal of the mission was to educate local surgeons, but it was not clear on the title, neither on the aim of the paper. Bringing this idea could give the paper a richer approach.

