

Review of: "Clowns, Clown Doctors, and Coulrophobia: A Scoping Review"

Rosario Esteinou¹

¹ Centro de Investigación y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

This is a very good paper, a very good review of existing studies, with clear aims and results. Also, the core recommendation about putting children in the center, asking for their and parents' consent, considering children's needs, and adjusting or tailoring the performance of the doctor-clown accordingly, is sensitive and appropriate. These kinds of studies are of great value as they aim to improve the provision of health services from a child-patient perspective and a sensitive and empathetic approach.

The paper, in my opinion, can be published as it is, but I would like to mention two aspects that could be considered. The first one refers to the concept of liminality, developed by Victor Turner. This concept could provide insight regarding how children, women, and individuals in general react with fear, discomfort, and anguish when facing a clown or a doctor-clown. The second regards the availability of information. The authors point out the limited available data and studies. It is shocking that facing a clown or doctor-clown, women are more affected than men. This gender difference should be addressed in further studies as it is not enough to point out as a possible trigger having experienced previous trauma. Having trauma as an explanatory factor is limited and may hinder the role of other factors. In this line, one limitation, not of this paper specifically, but of the available studies, is that gender differences have not been addressed as well as the possible factors related to them.