This paper presents an analysis of a drama-based intervention, Forum Theatre, intended to increase empathy among advanced medical students in France. This is a core area of medical education, and it is good to hear from a place with a different system and curriculum. Overall, my impression of this paper is positive. It is clear and well-written (although it needs careful editing and proofreading). The methodology and analysis seem careful and appropriate, and the results are clear. Overall, I think this paper makes a useful, albeit relatively small, contribution to our understanding of this area and to medical training. I do have some comments that the authors may wish to consider as they revise the paper. I hope these comments are helpful, and I wish them good luck in their future research in this important area.

1. The abstract is clear, and indicates the results clearly (the results are not surprising).

2. In the introduction, I think the authors might acknowledge the very long tradition of research in this area, and the number of interventions that are very close to the one they used (really, only the name is different). The brevity of this section is a good thing, but I think a little more to situate this study in the large literature would be helpful to readers (they do this in the discussion, but it needs a little here too). To me, the contribution of this work is that the literature has been applied very specifically to advanced medical training, and I would emphasise that.

3. The method looks careful and appropriate - this is an intensive training, and I wonder how easy it would be to apply it to other programs.

4. The results are clearly presented. They are interesting, but not surprising given the rest of the literature in this area.

5. The discussion is clear and sensible. One suggestion: when you compare results on the empathy scale across countries, I wouldn't discount the impact of response bias. You do mention social desirability, which is part of this, but cultural variables around emotional expression, modesty, and so forth also have a big impact. The best way to explore this, of course, is to do more studies in different cultures.

6. Limitations are good, but I would also mention that fact that the empathy measure came
immediately after the FT sessions. It would be useful in future research to explore the long-term impact of the intervention. You do mention this at the end, but a bit more detail would be helpful.

7. I'm not sure you need the figure or Table 1 (both are clear in the text) - alternatively, you could include them in supplementary material.

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.

Yes

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:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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