

Undergraduate Psychiatric Simulation Course: A review of medical student feedback forms

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Background:

Simulation Based Education (SBE) is an effective training method which narrows the gap between theory and practice in medicine. The Undergraduate Psychiatric Simulation Course (UPSC) was originally developed in NHS Lanarkshire and commenced in Ayrshire and Arran in October 2022. The course is aimed at 4th and 5th year medical students from Dundee and Glasgow University.

The UPSC encompassed a range of psychiatric scenarios carried out by actors. The scenarios include: anxiety (obsessive compulsive disorder), acute mania (bipolar affective disorder), acute psychosis (schizophrenia), cognitive impairment (dementia), self-harm (emotionally unstable personality disorder), substance use (opiate dependence syndrome), alcohol withdrawal and post-partum depression.

Students are expected to take a focused history, establish a diagnosis, perform risk assessments and refer to senior colleagues using a structured handover approach. The course is facilitated by an Emergency department and Psychiatry consultant who provide teaching and feedback for each scenario.

Aims and Objectives:

The primary aim of this quality improvement project is to determine whether the students have found the simulation course beneficial and if it increased their confidence in dealing with psychiatric presentations. Also, to establish if there could be any improvements to the course.

Method:

This is a retrospective review of feedback forms completed by medical students since the commencement of the UPSC course in October 2022 until July 2024.

Students were asked:

1. How confident were you in responding to psychiatric presentations prior to this simulation
Scale: 1 (not at all) – 10 (very confident)
2. How confident were you in responding to psychiatric presentations following the simulation
Scale: 1 (not at all) – 10 (very confident)
3. What was the most useful part of the day?
4. What was the least useful part of the day?
5. Overall, how would you rate your experience of the day?

Scale: 1 (poor) – 10 (excellent)

6. Any other comments/ feedback?

Feedback forms were anonymised and collected at the end of each session. The data and information was analysed using Microsoft excel.

Results and Discussion:

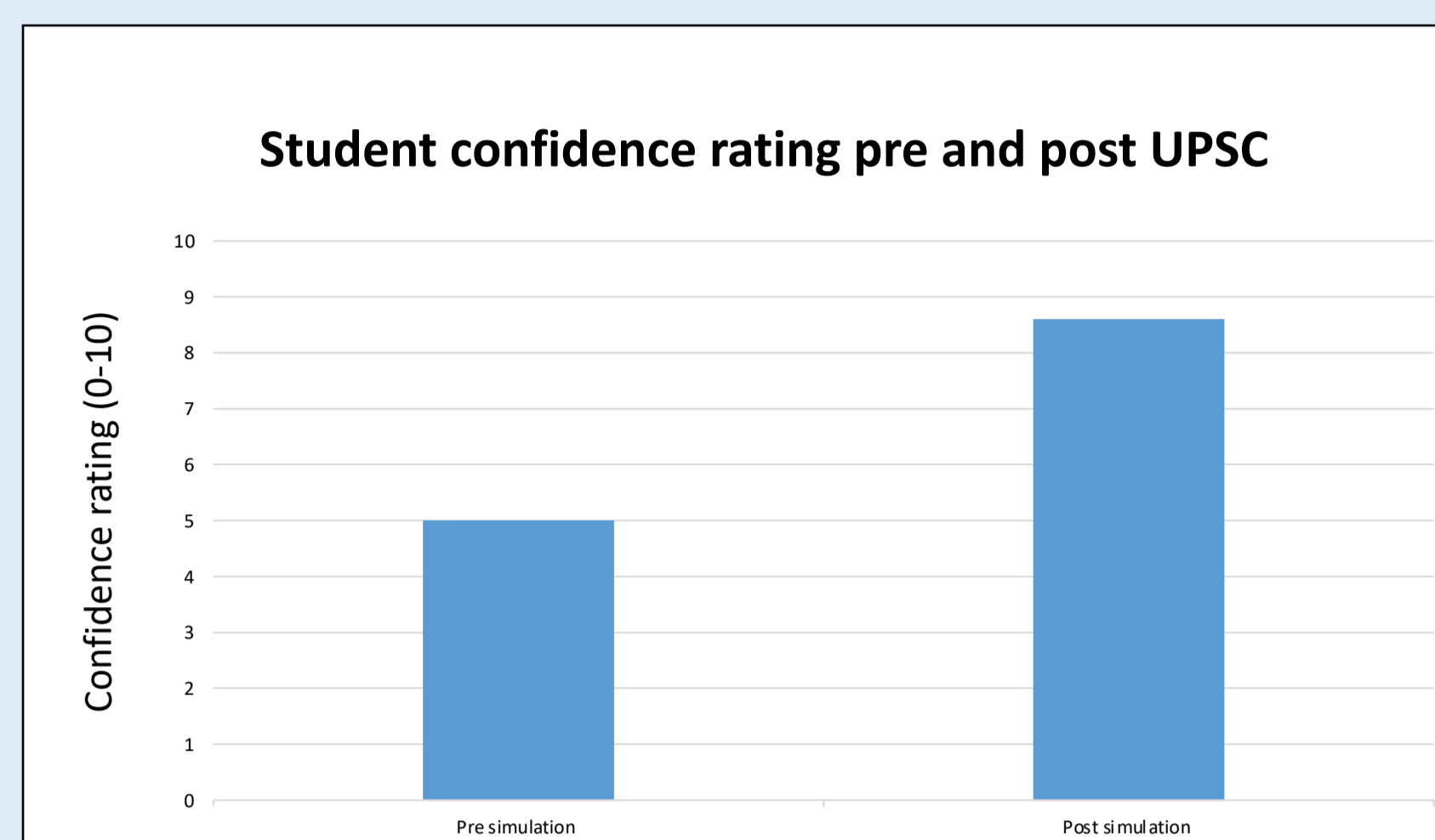


Figure A: Displays the average student confidence rating prior to UPSC was 5/10. Post simulation the average was 8.6/10.

The discussions and debriefs following the simulated scenarios were the most recognised useful part of the day (35%). Feedback (25%), teaching (16%), participation in the scenarios (16%) and observing others (8%) were also reported to be the most useful part of the day by students. Studies show that debriefing and feedback following simulation has been fundamental in optimising learning from the sim experience. The results highlight that the UPSC has shown to have multiple beneficial components to the students learning needs.

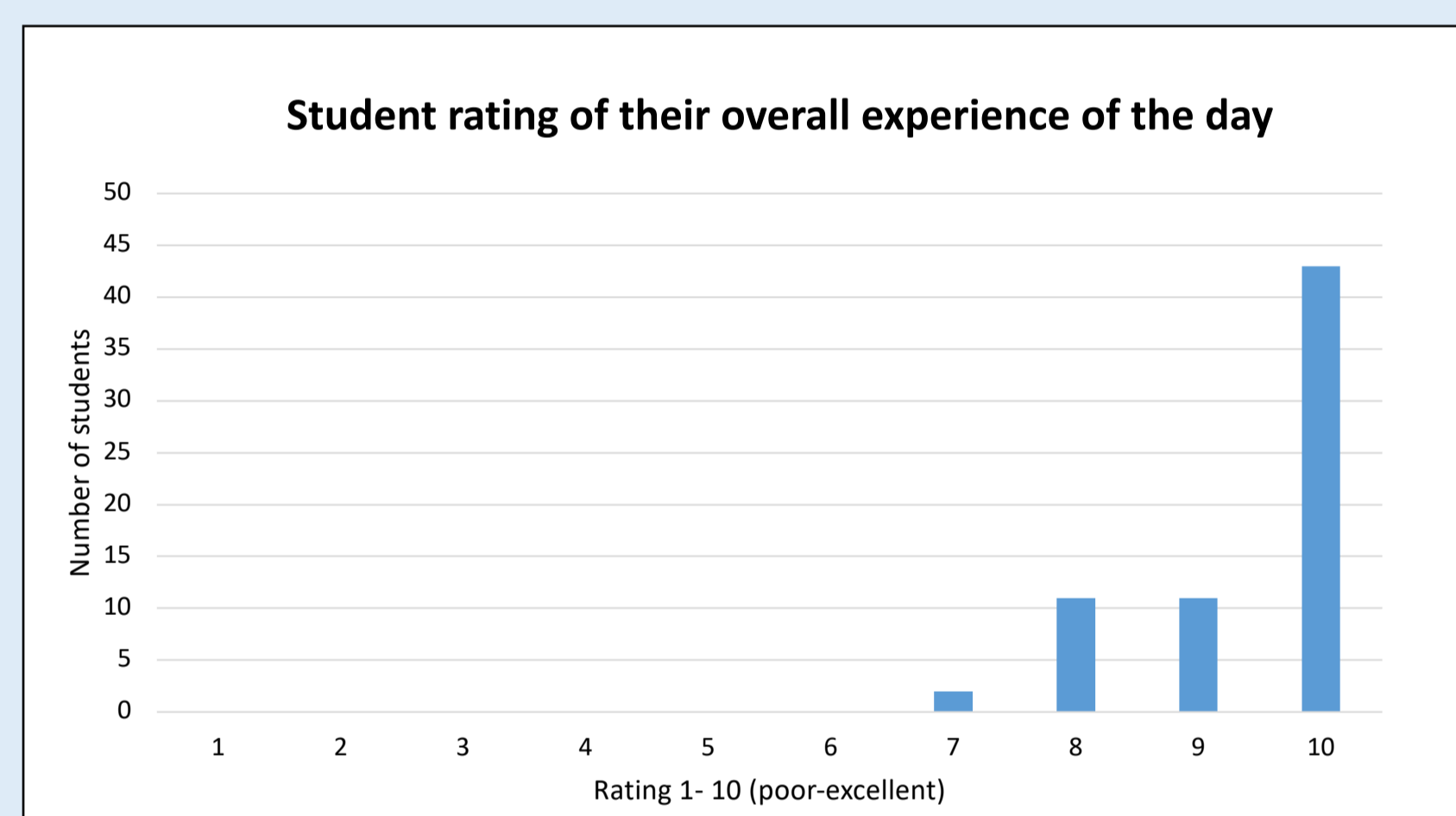


Figure C: Displays how students rated their overall experience of the day. 43 students rated their day as (10/10), 11 students (9/10), 11 students (8/10) and 2 students (7/10).

67 students completed feedback forms. Prior to the simulation course the average confidence rating was 5 and post simulation the average confidence rating was 8.6. Displaying an increase of 72% in the confidence of students following the simulation course. Results demonstrate that the UPSC heightened student's self-esteem, confidence and ability to deal with psychiatric presentations. There was also less variability in the confidence ratings of students post simulation, displaying that UPSC has provided consistent and high standard of teaching for the student body.

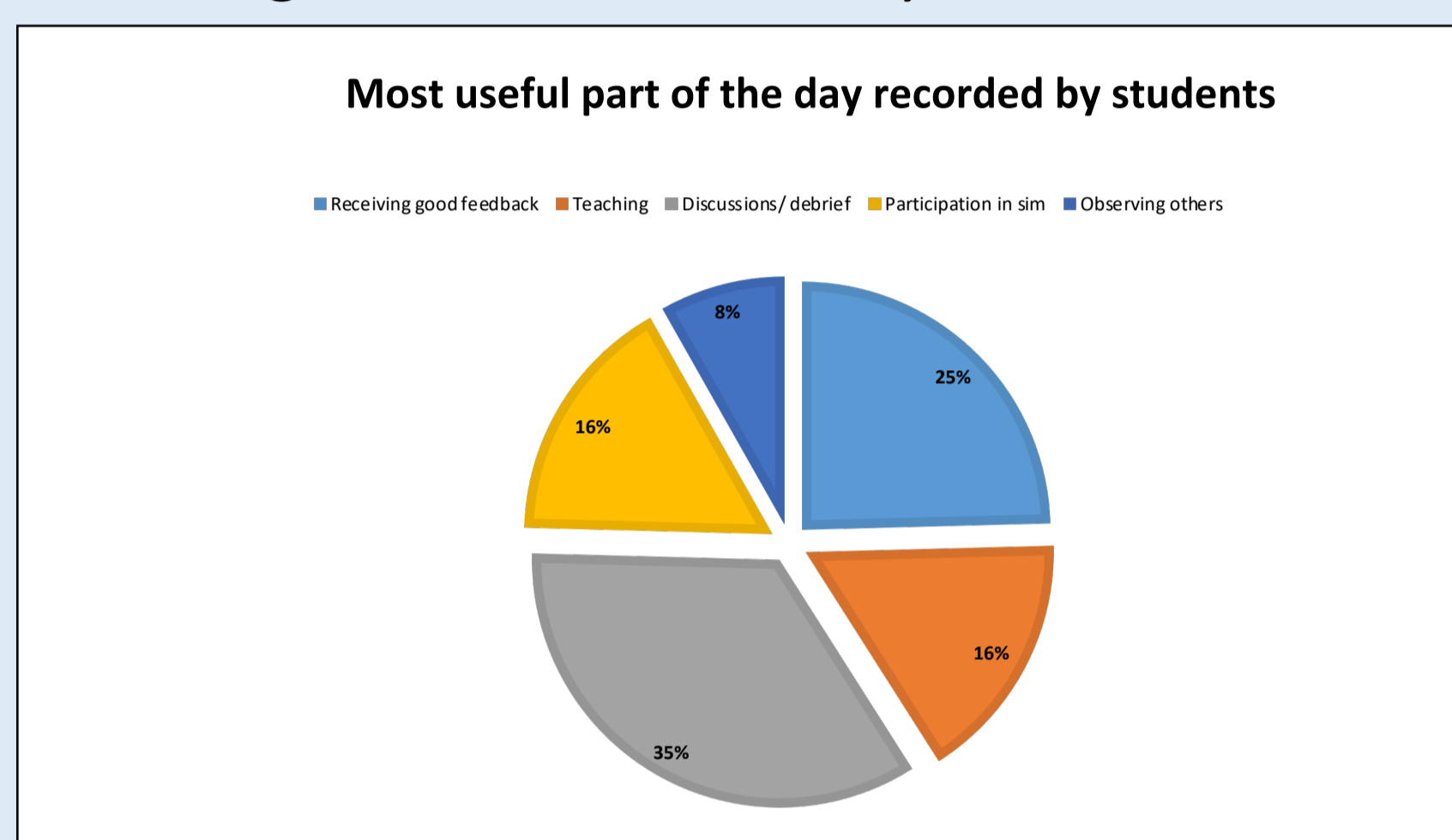


Figure B: Most useful parts of the UPSC documented by students. The discussions and debriefs (35%), feedback (25%), teaching (16%), participation in the scenarios (16%) and observing others (8%)

Student participants of the UPSC were asked to rate their overall experience of the day on a scale of 1-10 (poor-excellent).

67 participants answered the question. 2 students rated the day as 7/10 (2%). 11 students rated as 8/10 (16%). 11 students rated as 9/10 (16%). 43 students (65%) rated the day as 10/10 (excellent). All of the students rated the day 7/10 or above. Overall, displaying high satisfaction of the UPSC.

Students were asked what the least useful part of the day was. 73% of students did not highlight anything as being the least useful part of the UPSC day, suggesting that they found all parts of the day to be useful. A few students felt that the day was too long and would have benefited from being a shorter session. Some commented that having to travel a far distance to the session was the least useful part of the day. A few students thought formal written feedback would be beneficial.

Conclusion:

The results from this quality improvement project highlight that the Undergraduate Psychiatric Simulation Course has increased students confidence in dealing with psychiatric presentations and they have found the course valuable for their learning needs.

- 100% of the students rated the day either 7/10 or above (10 being excellent).
- substantial increase (72%) in the confidence ratings of students following the simulation course
- less variability in the confidence levels of students post simulation, displaying that UPSC has provided consistent and high standard of teaching for the student body
- Discussions, debriefs, feedback, teaching and participation in the scenarios themselves were reported to be the most useful part of the day from a high number of students.

Participation in the UPSC hopefully aided students in their preparation for upcoming OSCE examinations and reflect in their results. As students now feel more confident in dealing with psychiatric presentations this will give them a platform that they can build upon when dealing with psychiatric presentations in future clinical practice.

Future steps: The aim is to continue to provide more sessions ensuring there is capacity for each student to carry out at least one scenario. Unfortunately, some physical factors such as location/ travelling times can not be adjusted at present. It was decided not to provide formal, written feedback as the majority of students enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere of the day.