



## Research Article

# Satisfaction, confidence and self-rated clinical judgment in simulation-based learning: A mixed methods study of Thai nursing students



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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Simulation-based learning (SBL) has become a key component in nursing education. It provides students with a structured and safe environment to develop their clinical decision-making skills. The benefits of SBL are well recognized in Western countries, but they are less understood in Asian settings. Cultural hierarchies and indirect communication may influence how students learn and build confidence.

**Methods:** A convergent mixed methods design was employed at a public nursing school in Eastern Thailand. Quantitative data from 186 students were analyzed using descriptive statistics and logistic regression, while qualitative interviews with 24 students were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis. The two strands were integrated through convergence and complementarity to provide a comprehensive understanding of students' experiences.

**Results:** The students reported high levels of satisfaction and confidence. The regression results showed that students with greater confidence were associated with higher self-rated clinical judgement (AOR = 1.164, 95% CI: 1.073-1.262), although satisfaction showed no clear link. The qualitative analysis identified five themes: Confidence Through Iterative Success, Situated Thinking in a Realistic Context, Safe but Stimulating Atmosphere, Learning by Observing and Doing and SBL as a Pedagogical Upgrade. Integration revealed that confidence was the key link between the SBL experience and self-rated judgement.

**Conclusions:** SBL helps nursing students strengthen confidence and self-rated judgement. However, cultural factors, such as hierarchy and observation anxiety, may still hinder learning. Designing culturally sensitive and psychologically safe SBL sessions may enhance the effectiveness of this approach in nursing education in Thailand.

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## Introduction

Nursing education in Thailand is evolving to meet the challenges posed by increasingly complex healthcare systems that demand nursing graduates to demonstrate greater clinical competence and professional readiness. In response, Outcome-Based Education (OBE) has been adopted as a national framework to ensure the alignment of academic training with essential pro-

fessional competencies (Lkhagvaa et al., 2024; Tan et al., 2018). The Bachelor of Nursing Science (BNS) programs in Thailand operationalize OBE principles by integrating classroom instruction with supervised clinical practicums, as regulated by the Thailand Nursing and Midwifery Council (2021).

Simulation-based learning (SBL) has emerged as a key pedagogical strategy in competency-based curricula. It offers nursing students a structured, interactive and psychologically safe environment to develop their clinical judgment, confidence and decision-making skills. Studies have indicated that SBL enhances satisfaction, performance and professional preparedness

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