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The process involved in international preceptorship in undergraduate nursing education

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In undergraduate education, nurse educators have embraced the use of preceptorship as a teaching/learning modality in preparing senior nursing students for professional practice. As educational institutions broaden their international agenda to include borderless or global nursing placements, a thorough examination of international nursing preceptorship is not only wise, but necessary. The participation of students in an international preceptorship placement focuses on teaching and learning in a social clinical context. The purpose of this study was to examine the social-psychological process involved in international preceptorship and to develop a substantive theory to inform nurse educators in their approach to nursing pedagogy in clinical teaching in the international context. The grounded theory (GT) method was used to conduct this study. Participants were drawn from a population of current and former undergraduate nursing students who had participated in an international preceptorship placement. The goals of this research were to: Determine how educational theory/pedagogy guides nursing faculty in the use of international preceptorship as a clinical teaching/learning modality; and acquire an understanding as to how international preceptorship should best be structured to respond to the learning needs of today's adult learner. Through in-depth analysis of the participant interviews in this study, it became evident that the social-psychological process involved in international preceptorship was making a cognitive shift in the global pedagogical context. This process emerged from the data to explain what was actually occurring throughout the international preceptorship. Intrinsic to this process of making a cognitive shift in the global pedagogical context were five major categories or ambient conditions. These categories included: Getting ready; viewing through a different lens; moving toward cultural competence; enriching a professional identity; and enhancing personal growth. These findings and implications will be discussed.

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