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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 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. 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; a) determine how educational theory/pedagogy guides nursing faculty in the use of international preceptorship as a clinical teaching/learning modality; and b) 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 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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