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# COMPARISON OF THEORY-PRACTICE LINK IN US AND UK STUDENT NURSES

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## PURPOSE
- The purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate first year student nurses’ view of the influence Link Lecturers* at a university in England and academic professors at a southern university in the United States have on their theory-practice link. The study also investigated the Link Lecturers’ and academic professors’ perspectives of their influence on the theory-practice link with their students.
- *Link Lecturers is the term given to nursing professors in England.

## OBJECTIVES
- To attempt to capture participants’ (student nurses and professors) views of self, support, practice, and the theory-practice link
- To understand first year nursing students experiences of applying theory in practice settings
- To understand academic professors’ and link lecturers’ experiences of enabling student nurses to make the theory-practice link.

## METHODOLOGY
- Interpretive hermeneutic phenomenology was used to explore the views of the nursing students and the nursing faculty who were recruited via convenience sampling methods to enable data saturation. Semi-structured interviews using the Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique (ZMET) were conducted with student nurses and academics. ZMET is an eleven-step in-depth interview technique that elicits both conscious and unconscious thoughts by exploring metaphoric expressions. It enables the participants to define, describe and evaluate their experiences.
- Data was analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. Numerous themes emerged from all four of the groups of participants.

## GUIDING QUESTIONS
- As a student nurse, what do you feel your Clinical Professor / Link Lecturer does with you in the practice setting?
- How do you see your role as a Clinical Professor / Link Lecturer with your student nurses in the practice setting?

## RESULTS

### Findings of UK Student Nurses:
- Check progress and practice documentation
- Who is my LL?
- Nothing-email and telephone conversation

### Findings of USCA Student Nurses:
- Helps put pieces of puzzle together
- Helps with mounds of paperwork
- Learning may hands-on skills
- + influence on learning, support & encouragement when needed, increases my confidence

### Findings of Link Lecturers in the UK:
- Bridge between no influence/heavy theory and practice workload
- Problem-solver support

### Findings of USCA Clinical Professors:
- Connect the dots, encouragement, increasing knowledge base and critical thinking skills
- Juggle many things wear many hats
- Help them race take advantage of TM against the clock
- + help make links

### Findings of USCA Clinical Professors: