PROMOTING GLOBAL COMPETENCIES AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION: THE USE OF FACEBOOK IN COLLABORATIVE LEARNING FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS, A CASE STUDY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA AND WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY, NEW JERSEY

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Abstract

In the 21st century, institutions of higher education are required to broaden their curricula to equip students with global competency skills. The 2014/2015 academic year marked a collaboration project between postgraduate students from the University of Namibia and the William Paterson University in New Jersey in the Educational Technology module using the Facebook web page to promote global competency skills among students. This study ought to understand the University of Namibia postgraduate’s students, lecturer and the lecturer from William Paterson University ‘perceptions on the use of Facebook as a platform for international collaborative learning. The study determines whether the collaborative project promotes global competency skills among students or not.

This qualitative study is anchored in a multiple case design. The purposive and convenience sampling methods were used to select the participants. Interview guides and field notes were used to collect data from UNAM postgraduate students and both University of Namibia and William Paterson University lecturers who participated in the collaborative learning project. The activities from the Facebook web page were also analysed. Significantly, the six sets of knowledge from the TPACK framework were the lens through in which the study was observed.

The results showed that students were able to complete the international collaborative learning tasks successfully despite several challenges experienced. The study further confirmed that the project enhanced students’ global competency skills such as problem-solving skills, innovative and critical thinking, team work, and working with peers from different backgrounds. It was also found that students had learned new concepts of the subject matter as well as technological instructional strategies.
Therefore, teachers should be prepared for global learning so that they would be able to implement the global competency skills in a K-12 environment. Global competency skills are key elements in developing the 21st century. Developing policies and curricula focussed on internationalisation of higher education and preparing the essential conditions for the appropriate technology tools are recommendations going forward for any higher education institution.
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<td>CK</td>
<td>Content Knowledge</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPD</td>
<td>Continuous Professional Development</td>
</tr>
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<td>ECD</td>
<td>Early Childhood Development</td>
</tr>
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<td>GY</td>
<td>Guyana</td>
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<td>HTML</td>
<td>Hypertext Mark-up Language</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMTE</td>
<td>Integrated Media and Technology Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISTE</td>
<td>International Society for Technology in Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>K-12</td>
<td>Kindergarten to 12\textsuperscript{th} Grade</td>
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<tr>
<td>M.Ed.</td>
<td>Master of Education</td>
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<td>OICL</td>
<td>Online International Collaborative Learning</td>
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<td>PCK</td>
<td>Pedagogical Content Knowledge</td>
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<td>Technological Content Knowledge,</td>
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<td>TK</td>
<td>Technological Knowledge</td>
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<td>TPACK</td>
<td>Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge</td>
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<td>TPK</td>
<td>Technological Pedagogical Knowledge</td>
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<td>UNAM</td>
<td>University of Namibia</td>
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<td>WPU</td>
<td>William Paterson University of New Jersey</td>
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<tr>
<td>WWW</td>
<td>World Wide Web</td>
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Acknowledgements

“Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable” (Psalm 145:3).

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- My entire family and friends (Teopo, Elize, Paula, Patrick and Fransina): You are my pillars of strength. I am because we are.
Dedication

This thesis is devoted to my dearest father, Johannes Kashimba.
Declarations

I, Julia Lettie Kashimba, hereby declare that this study is my own work and is a true reflection of my research, and that this work, or any part thereof has not been submitted for a degree at any other institution.

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Name of Student Signature Date
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the orientation of the study and discusses the statement of the problem, the research questions, significance, limitations and delimitations of the study as well as giving detailed descriptions of the terminologies used in this thesis.

1.2 Orientation of the study

Universities worldwide remained firm to ensure that students are provided with education that will enable them to function in the 21st century. Bereiter and Scardamalia (2012) mentioned that kindergarten to 12th Grade (K-12) education system in many countries was designed when standardized learning and testing aimed to prepare students to succeed in standardized jobs and homogeneous communities. This system may not only be outdated, but has also never adequately prepared all students for the global challenges. Willard (2005) emphases that for students to be global-ready graduates, they are required to have better perspective of the global systems, global issues. Willard (2005) further says that, students would be familiar on with the dynamics of how things are interrelated and interconnected in the world, and how the society can best address global issues, as well as the skills to listen, observe, evaluate, analyse, interpret, and relate to such global issues.

Moreover, Bereiter and Scardamalia (2012) highlighted that in the 21st century, teachers should also acquire the global competencies that would help them to meet the demands of teaching learners of the 21st century. Global competence is conceptualised as the capacity and disposition to understand and act on issues of global significance which represents the knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviours necessary to thrive in today’s
interconnected world (Hunter, White & Godbey, 2006). Similarly, Schwarzer and Bridgall (2015) support the importance of teachers acquiring global competencies to get a broader view of the challenges and opportunities their learners are faced with in the 21st century. In the same vein, global competency prepares teachers to operate beyond their countries’ boundaries and learn from similar problems experienced by other teachers in other countries.

The concept of global competency is strongly closely linked with the aspect of internationalisation of higher education. Significantly, internationalisation of higher education remains an integral focus for many institutions of higher learning to remain relevant across the world. Thune and Welle-Strand (2005) state that the reason for focusing on internationalisation in higher education is because education needs are continuously changing to meet the 21st century demands. In addition, Wangari (2016) mentions that internationalisation of education exposes students to multicultural ideologies, multi-skills and intercultural awareness; promotes global minded citizens; and promotes global competencies.

In an era of advanced technologies, universities across the world have been using various digital tools and eLearning platforms to deliver teaching and learning activities through collaborative learning and networking. Presently, Facebook has been reported to be the most used social media for communication and collaborative learning among students and educators working on assignments or simply for socialisation (Shin, 2010, Blankenship, 2011; Sharma, Joshi, & Sharma, 2015). In the same vein, Hew (2011) and Lambi (2016) stress that, although universities and colleges have been using Facebook as a platform for communication and collaborative learning, lecturers have limited knowledge on how Facebook and other social media can be used to support
deeper teaching and learning. This gap does not only affect students’ exchange of ideas but also hampers their global competence (Hrastinski & Aghaee, 2011).

Peters, Winschiers-Theophilus, and Mennecke, (2015) observed that in Africa, there are insufficient literature to provide empirical evidence on the usage of Facebook in higher education, compared to western countries. Bosch, (2009) confirms that, in South Africa, for example, Facebook has been used as a tool for teaching and learning among college students and academic staff, however it is not clear how it was used. In addition, Bosch (2009) emphases that the use of Facebook has been encountering many challenges when applied to education in South Africa. These challenges were attributed to inadequate information technology infrastructure in South Africa. Moreover, countries such as Kenya, Tanzania and Nigeria have been using Facebook in education institutions, and resource scarcity was noted as a major challenge hindering the use of Facebook (Wyche, Forte, & Schoenebeck, 2013; Uimonen, 2013; Asemah, Ekhareafo, & Olaniran, 2013). Similarly, in Kenya, Tanzania and Nigeria, it is also not clearly stated how Facebook is used at institutions of higher learning (Wyche, Forte, & Schoenebeck, 2013; Uimonen, 2013; Asemah, Ekhareafo, & Olaniran, 2013).

Kapitako (2016) notes that, compared to other African countries such as Kenya, Tanzania and Nigeria, Namibia is known to have limited literature on the use of Facebook in institutions of higher learning. Kapitako (2016) further states that, currently, Namibia has 231,340 Facebook users countrywide, which is 10.7% of Namibia’s total population. It is evident that Namibia has a relatively high Facebook adoption rate in comparison to other African countries (Internet World Stats, 2015). Currently, there are a few significant publications that show the use of Facebook in a
higher education setting in Namibia such as: (1) A comparative study on the cultural influences on Facebook practices among the Namibian college students and United States students (Peters et al., 2015); and (2) Social media and police-community relations: a case study of the Namibian Police Force’s Facebook page (Kapitako, 2016).

Advocates of social media in education such as Boyd and Ellison (2007) claim that institutions of higher learning have little knowledge on how Facebook and other social media can be used to support students’ deeper learning and to promote global competency among students. This gap in literature and skills or competency does not only affect the students’ knowledge and skills but also affects the prevalence of international collaborative learning and the chance to internationalise learning (Hrastinski & Aghaee, 2011).

Over the last few years, the use of Facebook in education has significantly increased in universities and colleges, which has seen the enhancement of student-centred and collaborative learning (Johnson, Adams, & Cummins, 2012; Gordon, 2014). It has been observed that students around the globe are using Facebook to organise collaborative classroom activities, which allows students to discuss different topics relevant to them (Willems & Bateman, 2009; Shin, 2010; Blankenship, 2011).

Notably, Namibia is one of the countries trying to compete in the global economy and has introduced a national blueprint, named Vision 2030, and subsequently other national development strategies or initiatives to move Namibia towards a knowledge-based economy (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, 2005). This calls on the Namibian government to invest in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructures and services (Vision 2030) in order for teachers to ensure the
successful implementation of all the goals in the Namibian ICT in Education Policy (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, 2005).

The University of Namibia (UNAM) is among the prominent universities in the SADC region that recognise the importance of globalisation and internationalisation in education by developing an eLearning policy (UNAM eLearning Policy, 2015). This policy allows students and lecturers to collaborate with other national and international institutions of higher education. Additionally, UNAM eLearning policy supports the mission of the University by providing multiple approaches that enhance effective and flexible teaching and learning through blended and fully online course delivery.

The UNAM eLearning Policy (2015) is guided by the following main objectives:

1. to define how ICTs can be used as a delivery mechanism to assist and facilitate learning for the benefit of both face-to-face and distance students, and their lecturers;

2. to provide greater access to quality education by increasing enrolment opportunities through non-face-to-face approaches eLearning Policy Draft Document;

3. to improve efficiency in the administration and management of Technology enhanced learning;

4. provide guidance on the planning, designing, developing and delivering of modules that use eLearning as a method of teaching and learning;

5. to create, maintain and execute the implementation plan of eLearning at UNAM;

6. to monitor and review progress of activities and implementation plan, and
7. to produce ICT literate graduates, capable of participating in knowledge-based economies and societies.

In line with the objectives of the UNAM eLearning policy, several initiatives were implemented and some are underway, such as the technology course delivery university-wide and in certain faculties. The Faculty of Education undergraduate students in the subjects of Integrated Media and Technology Education 1 and 2 (IMTE) participated in an international project with students from the William Paterson University of New Jersey (WPU). This was the first of its kind in terms of encouraging global competency amongst Bachelor of Education students. Students created an electronic poster using the Glogster platform around the theme of “Digital Citizenship” and explored cultural exchange between students from the two institutions (Wilder & Boer, 2012). The main aim of the project was to expose students to international cultures and promote global-minded students. This project was guided by the following objectives:

- to provide students with opportunities to learn about and work with their international peers;
- to expose students to ways in which technology can be used to help students to transcend classroom walls;
- to assist students to understand the importance of promoting cyber safety and cyber ethics to fellow students.

Students who were involved in the project expressed that they experienced challenges ranging from participation, infrastructure unavailability, scheduling issues, etc. (Wilder & Boer, 2012).
Similarly, the University of Namibia (UNAM) and William Paterson University (WPU) of New Jersey embarked on a collaborative learning project in 2014 for the Educational Technology module and used Facebook as a platform to internationalise the Educational Technology coursework for postgraduate students through collaborative learning. The main aim was to expose students to multicultural ideologies, intercultural awareness and to promote global competence and internationally minded students.

The UNAM and WPU Educational Technology project started with eight (8) students in 2014 and six (6) students in 2015. In both years, Facebook was used as a platform for communication and interaction between lecturers/moderators and students as well as between students and fellow students to work on the tasks given and to allow students to participate on the slot that suited their schedules outside the classroom. Both UNAM and WPU students were deliberately assigned to random groups and given different specific tasks. However, students were not allowed to carry out this project during lectures. Instead, Facebook was merely used as an autonomous virtual platform for students towards their learning. The Facebook platform was used only to upload project guidelines and questions in the form of attachments for the students’ accessibility and to work on their tasks. The lecturers/moderators had to grade the students while they remained on the Facebook page.

The objectives of the international collaboration project were to:

- provide students with the opportunity to create a technology-integrated lesson plan and learn through technology;
- enhance student’s global competence;
- promote intercultural awareness and promote global competence and international minded citizens among the students; and

- help students to understand the importance of cyber safety and cyber ethics associated with social media.

All postgraduate students who participated in 2014 and 2015 Educational Technology project were able to complete their tasks of which formed part of their deliverables for continuous assessment. Thus, the aim of this study was to investigate the perceptions of students and lecturers on the use of Facebook as a platform for internationalising collaborative learning.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Bereiter and Scardamalia (2012) propose that the goal of curricula is to broaden students’ outlook of the world through various modes. However, curricula for teachers’ education in most universities remain silent on the aspect of internationalisation of education, which plays a major role in the promotion of global competence among graduates, and the University of Namibia is no exemption.

Bereiter and Scardamalia (2012) list the competencies necessary for one to be considered educated in the 21st century and highlights cosmopolitanism as an important quality to develop and be a citizen of the world. Not many initiatives have been done at UNAM in the Faculty of Education to empower students to develop global competency, learning to look outward and not entirely inward. It is crucial for the future teaching force to liaise with international universities in education to develop a global community that is focusing on solving issues that affect all education and learning programmes. Thus, this study investigates the perceptions of UNAM-WPU
Educational Technology lecturers and students around the aspect of global competency that encouraged internationalisation of higher learning through collaborative learning on Facebook and other eLearning platforms at the University of Namibia as well as in other African institutions of higher learning. The focus of this study was to unpack this aspects of the project in order to recommend to the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education program elements to incorporate when pursuing global competency among students and to bring this aspect to the attention of UNAM top management in order to encourage policy and innovation in this field.

1.4 Research Questions

The research endeavoured to find answers to the following questions:

The main research question was: *What are the UNAM and WPU lecturers’ and postgraduate students’ perceptions on global competence when using Facebook as a learning platform?*

The sub-questions that informed the main question were:

1. What benefits did the UNAM-WPU lecturers and postgraduate students identify when using Facebook to build their global competency skills?

2. What challenges did the UNAM-WPU lecturers and postgraduate students experience and identify when using Facebook to build their global competency skills?

3. What can be done to ensure the promotion of internationalisation through collaborative learning at the University of Namibia using social media such as Facebook?
1.5 Significance of the study

Internationalisation of higher education is regarded as an effective process of integrating an international perspective as well as the intercultural dimension into teaching, research and service functions of the institution (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2016). Thus, this study is very important as it recommends WPU and UNAM to develop an internationalisation of higher education policy to guide the collaboration activities. In addition, the study informs programme developers and educators on the appropriate framework of using Facebook as an autonomous platform for collaborative learning. The study also uncovers how Facebook can be better used to facilitate deeper understanding through collaborative learning. In conclusion, the study highlights areas that require further research for better practices.

1.6 Delimitation of the study

This study was focused on UNAM-WPU Master of Education (M.Ed.) postgraduate students and their lecturers who participated in the Educational Technology project in the 2014 and 2015 academic years and had used Facebook as platform for international collaborative learning.

1.7 Definition of terms

The following are the concepts and terms used in this thesis.

**21st Century Skills:** the ability to collect or retrieve information, organise and manage information, evaluate the quality, relevance, and usefulness of information, and generate accurate information through the use of existing resources. These skills are identified as achieving 21st century learning through digital age literacy, inventive
thinking, effective communication, and high productivity (Pacific Policy Research Centre, 2010).

**21st Century Learning:** learning that includes traditional school subjects and contemporary content themes in combination with the interdisciplinary 21st century themes. The core subjects and themes that frame 21st century learning include traditional core subjects, while emphasising civic literacy, global awareness, financial literacy, health literacy, and environmental literacy (Pacific Policy Research Centre, 2010).

**Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)** are categorised as tools that can be used for accessing, gathering, manipulating and presenting or communicating information simpler and in the fastest mode (Lloyd, 2005).

**Internationalisation of higher education:** Internationalisation of higher education is regarded as an effective process of integrating an international perspective as well as the intercultural dimension into teaching, research and service functions of the institution (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2016).

**Cosmopolitanism:** is based on the philosophical stance of ethics, education and maintains that values across cultures of people from various backgrounds are universal, thus they should be honoured and appreciated in totality (Coryell, Spencer, & Sehin, 2014).

**Globalisation:** According to Svensson and Wihlborg (2010), globalisation is understood as a process of increasing convergence and interdependence of economies and liberalisation of trade and markets.
**Global competence:** refers to the acquisition of in-depth knowledge and understanding of international issues, an appreciation of and ability to learn and work with people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, proficiency in a foreign language, and skills to function (Hunter, White & Godbey, 2006).

**Social Media** is a term for the platforms that can be used to engage with internal and external stakeholder audiences in the form of highly accessible digital technologies such as blogs, podcasts, social networks, wikis, micro-blogs and message boards (Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, 2017).

**Social Networking Sites** are internet-based communities that allow numerous people across the world to create and exchange their feelings, ideas and understandings on the second life space.

**HTML software** is an open source software whereby Markup symbols or codes are inserted in a file intended for display on a World Wide Web (WWW) browser page. The markup tells the Web browser how to display a Web page’s words and images for the user ([www.coffeecup.com/free-edito](http://www.coffeecup.com/free-edito)).

### 1.8 Thesis outline

This thesis consists of five chapters:

Chapter 1 introduces the thesis by presenting the orientation and historical background of the study, the statement of the problem, research questions that guided the study, the rationale of the study, limitations encountered during the study, and delimitation of the study. It further gives the detailed definitions of the terms and concepts used in this thesis.

Chapter 2 reviews literature on the use of Facebook in education focusing on
frameworks that could be adopted in higher education to implement internationalisation. The chapter further reveals gaps in the existing body of knowledge on the use of Facebook in higher education, presents the theoretical and conceptual frameworks, and reveals shortcomings that require further research. Similarly, unanswered questions, disagreements in literature that require revision to resolve controversies are also presented in this chapter.

Chapter 3 concentrates on the research methodology that framed this study, namely, the research design, instruments, data collection procedure, population of the study and the sampling procedure followed in the study. In addition, this chapter discusses the procedure used for data analysis and how the researcher observed good ethics during the study.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study. This is the information that was collected from the respondents (UNAM-WPU post graduate students and their two lecturers of Educational Technology at the Master’s level) on their use of Facebook during collaborative learning.

Chapter 5 discusses and interprets the findings of the study while critically scrutinising and making sense of the responses expressed in answering the research questions.

Chapter 6 presents a summary of the study findings, draws conclusions from the study’s results and makes recommendations. The conclusions are based on the researcher’s understanding regarding the phenomenon investigated, which made it possible for the researcher to give a number of recommendations based on the issues that came out of the findings of the study. Lastly, this chapter provides suggestions for improving educational practices and areas that require further research.
1.9 Summary

This chapter presented the historical background of the study, discussed the statement of the problem, objectives, significance, limitations, and delimitation of the study, as well as giving explanations of key terms used in this thesis. The next chapter will concentrate on the review of literature related to the phenomenon under study, that is, the use of Facebook in higher education for collaboration. Theoretical and conceptual frameworks that informed the study are also presented.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the theoretical and conceptual framework and their relevance to the study. Thereafter, literature is reviewed to reveal the gaps in the existing body of knowledge. Similarly, unanswered questions and disagreements in the literature that might require further revision to resolve controversies is also discussed.

2.2 Theoretical framework

This study was guided by a framework known as the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework. According to Graham, Borup, and Smith (2011), the TPACK framework builds on the idea of pedagogical knowledge that was introduced by Shulman in 1987. TPACK is an acronym that refers to the knowledge about the complex relations among technology, pedagogy, and content that enable teachers to develop appropriate and context-specific teaching strategies (Koehler, Mishra, Shin, & Graham, 2011).

Furthermore, Graham et al. (2012) state that the TPACK framework suggests a set of knowledge domains that teachers need to possess when integrating technology into teaching and learning. Mishra and Koehler (2009) further state that the TPACK framework comprises six components and each component is equally significant when teachers and students are integrating technology in teaching and learning. The components are: content knowledge (CK), pedagogical knowledge (PK), technological knowledge (TK), technological content knowledge (TCK), technological pedagogical knowledge (TPK), and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). Most importantly, Mishra and Koehler (2009) present the interpretations of
these six components as follows, which helped the researcher to understand the focus of this study.

- **Content knowledge (CK)** is any subject-matter knowledge that a teacher is responsible for teaching.

- **Pedagogical knowledge (PK)**: the knowledge of the teacher about a variety of instructional practices, strategies, and methods to promote students’ learning.

- **Technology knowledge (TK)**: the teacher’s knowledge about traditional and new technologies that can be integrated into the curriculum.

- **Technological Content Knowledge (TCK)**: the knowledge of the reciprocal relationship between technology and content. Therefore, disciplinary knowledge is often defined and constrained by technologies and their representational and functional capabilities.

- **Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)**: a notion of an understanding of how particular topics, problems, or issues are organized, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction.

- **Technological Pedagogical Knowledge (TCK)**: an understanding of technology can constrain and afford specific pedagogical practices.

Typically, the TPACK framework supports the views of pedagogy (Graham et al., 2012). In addition, Mishra and Koehler (2009) assert that the TPACK standards measuring knowledge of teaching could positively impact professional development that is designed for teachers at all levels. The TPACK framework strongly encourages critical thinking, innovation and problem-solving skills when identifying and using
technology in teaching and learning. In the same vein, TPACK informs that the knowledge of both students and lecturers on how to manipulate the type of technology to be used in teaching and learning is equally important. It is against this background that the researcher found the TPACK framework appropriate for this study because it assisted the researcher to understand the following: the knowledge of pedagogy; the context of the study; the ability of both students and lecturers to use technology in teaching; and the appropriateness of using Facebook as a platform to host or facilitate the project of internationalisation of education among students.

2.3 Conceptual framework

2.3.1 Internationalisation and globalisation

It is very important to discuss the main terms and concepts used in the study and their relevance to the study. The first concepts to look at are internationalisation and globalisation. These concepts will be discussed simultaneously because they are interrelated and usually used interchangeably.

The concept of internationalisation in higher education is interrelated to, or rather used interchangeably with globalisation. According to Svensson and Wihlborg (2010), globalisation and internationalisation are dynamically related concepts, though internationalisation of higher education can be seen as a proactive response to the catalyst globalisation. Internationalisation is closely related to the dynamic process of globalisation. The Policy Framework for the Internationalisation of Higher Education in South Africa explains that “the key concept of ‘inter-nation’ implies a relationship between and among countries, people, systems and cultures” (Republic of South Africa, 2017, p.9).
In addition, Svensson and Wihlborg (2010) state that globalisation can be understood as a process of increasing convergence and interdependence of economies and liberalisation of trade and markets. While globalisation in economic terms refers to moving goods and services across borders, moving consumers across borders or engaging with virtual movement of goods and services. In the education context is to take educational services across borders. Notably, Van der Wendel (2001) refers to internationalisation as a process of increasing cooperation between states or activities across state borders but reflects a world order in which nations and states still play a central role.

On the other hand, the Policy Framework for the Internationalisation of Higher Education in South Africa defines internationalisation of higher education as:

“an intentional or steered process to integrate or infuse intercultural, international and global dimensions in higher education; to advance the goals, functions and delivery of higher education and thus to enhance the quality of education and research” (Republic of South Africa, 2017, p. 9).

In the same vein, the same Policy Framework clarifies that scholars understand globalisation to involve “gradual expansion of the scope of social processes and social action from the local or the regional to the global level”; “increasing integration on a global scale”, or “the expansion, concentration, and acceleration of worldwide relations (Republic of South Africa, 2017, p.8).” The influence of globalisation on the internationalisation of higher education can be observed in “the unprecedented developments in information technology and social media, the pervasive impact of economic liberalisation and trade agreements, the increased flow of people, ideas,
capital, values, services, goods and technology across borders” (Knight & Schoole, cited in Republic of South Africa, 2017, p.8).

In general terms, internationalisation and globalisation in higher education can be understood as strategies for expanding higher education opportunities and ideas beyond national boundaries. Having clarified the concepts of internationalisation and globalisation, the next subsection focuses on the concept of cosmopolitanism and its relevance to education, particularly to this study.

### 2.3.2 Cosmopolitanism

Another concept worth discussing in this study is cosmopolitanism and its relevance to higher education. According to (Coryell et al, 2014), cosmopolitanism has ancient origins. It emerged with the discussions of Plato and Socrates and then later moved from Socrates to the influence of Cynic Diogenes in the fourth-century BCE (Before Common Era or Before Christ).

In the view of Coryell et al. (2014), cosmopolitanism in the context of education is a philosophical stance of ethics in education and it maintains that values across cultures of people from various backgrounds are universal, therefore they should be honoured and appreciated in totality. Langran (2011) further clarifies that the ideology of cosmopolitanism is commonly associated with upright standards that are emphasised by a shared global community.

Bereiter and Scardamalia (2012) refer to the state of being cosmopolitan or a one-world ideology and view a cosmopolitan as someone who is a citizen of the world, at home in and able to navigate among a variety of cultures, ideas, and life styles. In the same writing, Bereiter and Scardamalia add that being cosmopolitan means that the
person cherishes his or her own background, traditions and views, and those of the world, but is not bound by them. Cosmopolitanism from the education point of view encourages curricula to broaden students’ outlook through multicultural education rather than producing narrow-minded students (citizens). Bereiter and Scardamalia, (2012) supported the idea of cosmopolitanism by proposing that education curricula need to incorporate knowledge-based learning, such as global awareness, foreign language learning and cross-cultural student activities that make students and graduates to feel at home in world.

In summary, the concept of cosmopolitanism simply demands that schools, colleges and universities should implement educational programmes that will produce individuals who will be able to function in their countries of origin and beyond, and this is the primary goal of internationalisation of education.

The next term worth discussing in this study is information and communication technology as it was used between students from two different universities to carry out their project.

2.4 Information and Communication Technologies

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are types of machinery that can enhance performance. According to Lloyd (2005), ICTs are categorised as tools that can be used for accessing, gathering, manipulating and presenting or communicating information simpler and in the fastest mode. These technologies may include hardware, software applications and connectivity (such as access to the internet and networking infrastructure). Generally, computers and other minor digital devices tend to be referred to as ICTs, but ICT treadles are more than just a computer and those
minor digital devices. Social network sites are an important feature of ICT as described in the next paragraph.

Social Networking Sites (SNSs) are online applications that allow people worldwide to create and exchange ideas online. Barnes (2012) refers internet sites as an online environment that connects individuals to share ideas regardless of place, time or size of population. Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, Friendster, Google+ and Badoo are examples of SNSs that are rapidly growing and successfully bringing many people together (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2011; Lambic, 2016). In the study of Sharma et al. (2015) to predict the use of Facebook in higher education, the youth were found to be the predominantly active users of Facebook worldwide. For purposes of this study, Facebook was used to host the collaborative learning project between national and international university students. Thus, the next section focuses on literature on the origin of Facebook, its features and its uses in higher education.

2.4.1 Facebook in higher education

Facebook was originally created and launched in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg, together with his fellow students at Harvard University, as a social network site for students (Needham & Company, 2007; Sheldon, 2008, Hew, 2011). In 2006, Facebook had more than 12 million users, and by 2009, the number of active users increased to 350 million, not only in the United States but it expanded to other countries around the world and it has been used in education and public institutions (Hew, 2011; Boyd & Ellison, 2007; Moorman, & Bowker, 2011; Facebook Newsroom, 2015). Remarkably, Facebook is known to be the leading social media worldwide, with about 1.39 billion active users, who are predominantly students (Golder, Wilkinson, & Huberman, 2007; Dougherty, 2012; Facebook Newsroom, 2015).
Impressively, Facebook can allow users to: record live videos; create individual and organisational profiles; enter personal information such as names, gender, contact details, interests, religious views, relationship status, birthday reminder, favourite music, favourite movies, favourite TV shows, favourite books, favourite quotes, political and religious views, educational and employment background; and upload pictures and videos clips (Jernigan & Mistree, 2009). In addition, Facebook users can add other users as friends, send them friend requests, send private messages, join groups, create pages, post statuses, tag friends in pictures and leave comments (Hew, 2011; Prates, Fritzen, Siqueira, Braz, Andrade, & Ranier, 2013). Like other social network sites, Facebook users are allowed to privatise their personal information as per the users’ preferences and it is currently available in 70 different languages (Peters et al., 2015).

In the United States of America, Facebook has been a commonly used social network site among students, with about 90% participation among undergraduate students (Ellison et al., 2011; Stutzman, 2006). Although there are many online sites, Facebook has been reported to be “spectacular” success social media in the United Kingdom among British students (Madge, Meek, Wellens, & Hooley, 2009). The students had been using Facebook mostly to communicate with fellow students regarding their assignments and group work or merely to socialise, and educators were contacting their students and sending them useful links (Madge et al., 2009).

Moreover, in Asia, Facebook has been the most used social media platform at the University of Delhi since 2007 by both students and university staff to maintain their social relationships by viewing, visiting and sharing their lists of social connections (Boyd & Ellison, 2007; Park, 2010; Moorman & Bowker, 2011). Hew (2011) and
Falahah and Rosmala (2011) also report that Facebook has been used in Singapore and Indonesia not only in the academic institutions but also by members of the public for information distribution and social connections.

In Africa, there is limited literature to provide empirical evidence on the use of Facebook in comparison to western countries (Peters et al., 2015). Bosch (2009) states that South Africa has been using Facebook as a platform for teaching and learning among college students and academic staff. In addition, in Kenya, Tanzania and Nigeria, Facebook is used within the educational institutions and among other civil servants, and resource scarcity was noted to be a major challenge (Wyche et al., 2013; Uimonen, 2013; Asemah et al., 2013). Based on this literature, although Facebook has been in use in education, it is not clear the how it has been used to facilitate learning.

Compared to other African countries such as Kenya, Tanzania and Nigeria, Namibia has limited literature on the use of Facebook in education, although 10.7% of the country’s population (i.e., 231,340 people) use Facebook nationwide (Kapitako, 2016). According to the Internet World Stats (2015), Namibia is known to have a relatively high Facebook adoption rate compared to other African countries. Little is known about Facebook’s potential for collaborative learning at Namibian Institutions of learning.

Advocates of Facebook in education (Boyd & Ellison, 2007; Hew, 2011) assert that institutions of learning have little knowledge on how Facebook and other social media can be used to support students’ deeper learning. This gap does not only affect the students’ exchange of ideas, but also hampers collaborative learning (Hrastinski & Aghaee, 2011).
There are few significant literature on the use of Facebook for collaborative learning among students from different universities. However, LaRue (2012), Oberer and Erkollar (2012), and Nkhoma et al. (2015) confirm the use of Facebook at different universities. LaRue’s (2012) study found that nursing students used Facebook to conduct Health Informatics activities. In this class, students were assigned to groups and the Help Centre on the Facebook website was consulted to facilitate the class. Interestingly, SurveyMonkey and HTML software were used to share information among students on their Facebook classroom’s wall and in the family room that formed part of the class. LaRue (2012) reports that Facebook-based activities went well even though there were a few glitches at the beginning, especially on information distribution. In addition, LaRue (2012) comments that after students had familiarised themselves with the modes in which the information was to be distributed to them, flexibility, peer teaching, teamwork, critical thinking and problem solving were the main observations made during the lesson.

In Nkhoma et al.’s (2015) study, Facebook was used as an out-of-class communication platform between students and instructors as a means of interaction for learning. Nkhoma’s study revealed how often or how much the students used an online social network and the reasons that they gave for online communication had a positive impact on how they perceived the quality of the content of student-instructor interaction on Facebook. At the same time, the results indicated that the use of Facebook can have a negative impact on how students perceive the quality of the content of student-instructor interaction on their perceived performance.
2.4.2 Potentials and pitfalls of social networking in higher education

Willems and Bateman (2009) conducted a study on potentials and pitfalls of social networking in higher education with special focus on Facebook. The study revealed that Facebook is useful in formal teaching as a pedagogical support to enhance students’ learning. In the same study, Willems and Bateman (2009) note “the dearth of policy to promote the responsible and critical uses of such emergent technologies in academia” and stress that the situation requires rectification. Thus, Willems and Bateman (2009) recommend further investigation into the use of Facebook and its application to higher education in order to guide the development of the policy on the uses of Facebook to benefit the institutions of higher learning.

Lampe et al. (2011) explored students’ use of Facebook for organising collaborative classroom activities, and the study revealed that some students use Facebook to collaborate around classroom activities, which may lead to new forms of classroom interactions that support the loosely coupled, time-bound nature of the class as an organisation. However, Lampe et al. (2011) further recommends studies need to be conducted to assess whether these activities are likely to result in positive outcomes, such as increased interest in the course, gains in school-related self-efficacy, or higher levels of engagement with course content.

Another study conducted by Haipinge (2013) on students’ perceptions on the role of social media in learning revealed that students could not only identify the learning affordances of social media but also take advantage of those affordances. Furthermore, the study shows that social media has the potential to support networked learning. Additionally, Haipinge (2013) further indicates that social media literacy is needed to
help students to deal with the large amounts of information they interact with, and also to share content on social media.

Internationalisation of higher education has been and remains an interest for many colleges and universities globally. Thune and Welle-Strand (2012) state that the importance of internationalisation in higher education needs to be recognised by both the states and institutions of higher education, emphasising that the environment for higher education has changed, mainly in three central areas such as the economy, policy and technology. In addition, MacPherson (2011) reminds scholars about the demand for 21st-century skills and the globalisation significance. Therefore, it is important for higher education in this era of globalisation to engage in internationalisation programmes. Having said this, the growth of a global information and knowledge-based economy remains critical.

Furthermore, Al Farra (cited in Khalideen, 2006, p.8) stresses that “international education involves internationalism which is a combination of skills, attitudes and values” that allow “freeing of oneself from prejudices, stereotyping and bigotry and understanding value systems different from one’s own, and empathizing and sympathizing with them.” It is evident that the internationalisation of higher education goes beyond tolerance and involves commitment, respect and appreciation for humanity. It supports and favours the promotion of peace, harmony and prosperity regardless of the one’s citizenship, colour, culture and, creed or beliefs (Khalideen, 2006. p.8).

Thune and Welle-Strand (2012) further state that internationalisation of a curriculum helps to define an ethos for the future of the global population as well as to provide students with knowledge on global perspectives and the opportunity to discuss and
debate comparative issues. However, in some instances, internationalisation activities are confined to whatever limited knowledge instructors/lecturers may possess (Barnett & Coate, 2005). Consequently, there is a possibility of setting the limitations for the learning to occur around internationalisation programmes. This could be seen as a serious concern because the academic knowledge and learning that is supposed to occur is more crucial than news of what is happening worldwide. Barnett and Coate (2005) point out that in this game, students also have the responsibility to play and to bring their broader international experiences to the classroom even if their lecturers or instructors may not be fully conscious about the ideas they would like to address. Therefore, students’ prior experiences may interfere with the lecturers’ ideas of engaging the curriculum from a more technical point of view with the aim to deepen understanding.

Corson (1995) reminds that students’ levels of understanding may limit the depth of dialogue that is supposed to occur during an internationalisation programme. There is therefore a need to view the curriculum as a place where students and lecturers can have flexible interaction to discover the issues they have in common. This will help to promote global competence across the curricula. Furthermore, Barnett and Coate (2005) recommend that the outcome of an internationalised curriculum should seek to develop a critical consciousness in students so that they become aware of the human problems that are inherent in present-day society and are motivated to address them while reminding the lecturers involved to take into consideration the issue of ethical stances.

Moreover, Bégin-Caouette (2012) emphasises that institutions of higher education should support efforts to establish partnerships with foreign institutions to expose
teachers to multicultural education and global competencies. The same study by Bégin-Caouette (2012) revealed that higher institutions of education have a significant role in internationalising services provided to teachers in the areas of training activities, teacher mobility and international cooperation. The results also demonstrate that the national level remains prominent and that the state acts as a developer, while institutions of higher learning act as operators of the national strategy. Moreover, Ilieva, Beck, and Waterstone (2014) discuss ways in which the internationalisation of higher education could be sustainable in nature. They suggest that viewing internationalisation through an educational sustainability lens offers expansion ways of understanding such as relations, discourses, and the current contexts of higher education in global times. In addition, Ilieva et al. (2014) highlight ways to recognise the ideologies of internationalisation in higher education such as blind acceptance of internationalisation, economic imperatives for internationalisation, and benign ideology of educationalists. Wals and Jickling (2002) advise that there is a need to be constantly mindful that it is easier to identify unsustainable activities than to imagine and prescribe those deemed sustainable.

Moreover, Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard, and Henry (2006) have found that the effective changes in educational practices require more than positive aspirations, though these are very important for mobilizing support for change. More importantly, ideas have to be concretized and institutionalized in structures, in cultures and in practices. Taylor et al. (2006) further note that changes to structures are easier to make than changes of attitudes and behaviours, but structures, attitudes and behaviours all combine to create barriers that impinge on internationalizing the curriculum. Stark and Lattuca (1996) have outlined some barriers to internationalisation such as lack of background by faculty members in the international aspects of their discipline; little or no incentives
by the university to encourage faculty to give increased attention to international work including curriculum reconstruction; parochialism; and a narrow view of education by the university.

Internationalisation of higher education is a common phenomenon in recent research on higher education.

“‘The world economy is simultaneously becoming more internationalized and more knowledge-centred. These transformations affect societies and, respectively, national education systems. Schools and universities reflect these developments to differing extents and scopes in their teaching and learning practices. The global and international dimension has become prominent in school organisation, structure and curriculum, while scholars are still arguing about the possible benefits and drawbacks’” (Yemini & Cohen, 2014:27).

It appears that the institution’s rationale for becoming active in internationalisation will determine the kind of policy and activities in which the university engages. This also depends on whether internationalisation is seen as a fundamental responsibility of the institution to prepare students to be active global citizens, or, whether internationalisation is seen simply as an economic venture. Internationalisation of teacher education will require a lot of travelling and organisation of meetings and conferences with other international teachers.

Dunn and Nilan (2007) point out that in South Africa, after the apartheid regime, internationalisation of higher education has been a popular theme as the country takes its place as a regional leader in education and research in sub-Saharan Africa. However, Dunn and Nilan (2007) stressed that competing discourses of
internationalisation have produced economic and moral dilemmas rather than the realisation of philanthropic academic aims and that:

‘the process of internationalizing higher education in South Africa has been greatly compromised by under-funding and over-crowding of post-secondary education institutions in the country’” (Dunn & Nilan, 2007:18).

It is evident (Dunn and Nilan, 2007) that previously when hosting educational meetings, conferences and training across the borders, people use to travel to attend meetings and it has been costly and time consuming. Nowadays, with the introduction of new technologies, people have to move with the time and find other means of using available and commonly used technologies to organise such events. As a benefit, teachers’ education has to be simplified and efficient in terms of saving resources and time, although there is no clear evidence as to whether the use of technology in collaborative learning is cheaper than travelling across borders. Furthermore, there is a need to find out if these activities carried out through technology are producing the higher levels of knowledge, which is the aim of this study. Luke (2008) concurs that there is a need to internationalise student-teacher programmes so that teacher-educators may develop partnerships, create international perspectives, and become more cosmopolitan educators. The hope is that colleges and universities of education should develop and create focused, comprehensive, internationalised education programmes that will be seamless across programmes and within academic and non-academic activities. Yet, literature has noted that for the most part, teacher preparation programmes in American colleges and university campuses are among the least internationalised, despite the recent attention to internationalisation in higher education (Schneider, 2007).
Notably, Facebook is among social network sites that are mostly used in today’s world. However, the question remains as to whether there is a place for internationalisation of higher education on this platform. New and emerging technologies are continuously changing the traditional ways of communication and it improves our lives and makes it more interactive, collaborative, comfortable and fast-paced (Ozuem & Lancaster, 2008). Kaplan and Haenlein (2016) state that internet is an important part of this technology change and has an impact on our educational services as it allows teachers and students to share data, software.

Importantly, there has been a significant emphasis on making such platforms easier to use and better integrated into higher education. For instance, in previous years it was often necessary to install software to access bulletin board systems (such as internet relay chat). The availability of web-based portals has enabled a much-integrated user-generated experience on both desktops and mobile systems (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2016).

Additionally, and most importantly, the 21st century educators are required to have a higher level of global competence to effectively operate in the global economy. The notion of a knowledge-based economy is strongly tied to the internationalisation of education. International teacher-education programmes ought to inspire teachers with diverse competencies to prepare for future teaching. Dooly and Villanueva (2006), state that internalisation of teacher education can expose educators to multicultural ideologies, multi-skills and intercultural awareness, and promote international-minded citizens. Regardless of the proclamation that global competence is necessary for a teacher in the 21st century, many educationalists may question which specific competence is required in the 21st-century classroom. Despite the benefits that
internationalised teacher education brings, there are also limitations that may arise when implementing these programmes. Ranier (2011) suggests that there is a need to consider ways of assisting the institutions of higher education to release a portion of funds back, these options may include variety of enrolment options such as enrolling through blended learning, continuing education unit, and partnership and networking through elearning platforms.

2.4.3 Learning for global competence

Global competence can be understood as an acquisition of knowledge and skills from an international perspective. Mansillais and Jackson (2017) state that global competence is the capacity to examine global and intercultural issues, to take multiple perspectives under a shared respect for human rights, to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with people from different cultures and to act for collective well-being and sustainable development. Additionally, Willard (2005), understands global competence as the ability to be fluent in at least one other language; fluency in digital literacy; well-versed knowledge and skills; and, most importantly, some knowledge of the cultural history of one or two countries or regions outside one’s country of origin. Furthermore, built on the views above, global competence is when individuals are exposed to the global education that would enhance their knowledge and skills in various areas presented in the definitions of Willard (2005) and Mansillais and Jackson (2017). But then again, the questions still remain: what are the global competence skills that the internationalist students would acquire through the internationalisation of higher education; and what is the rationale behind global competence skills acquisition?
Willard (2005), identifies several specific global competence skills as follows: initiative, enthusiasm, inquisitiveness, interest in continuous learning, courage, self-confidence, self-control, self-knowledge, positive outlook toward adversity, appreciation of diversity, perseverance, creativity, comfort with uncertainty, open-mindedness, language and communication skills, assertiveness, sense of humour, and thriving in diverse environments.

In addition, Walker (2012), identifies nine benefits of online collaborative learning as follows:

1. Promoting critical thinking skills;

2. Promoting creative thinking through social stimulation and sharing of ideas;

3. Requiring active student involvement in the learning process. Students increase preparation and practice working with one another;

4. Providing a safe place for questions;

5. Creating more personal environment in large classes;

6. Providing a social support system for students;

7. Building diversity understanding among students;

8. Allowing version control management with the creation of a central folder or location where recent versions are saved; and

9. Developing team skills applicable on the job and beyond.
Willard’s (2005) and Walker’s (2012) views on global competence skills demonstrate that internationalisation of higher education has a distinct advantage in preparing students for the global society.

Essentially, global competence and skills integration are crucial aspects in the education system because the demands of the job market of today’s world will not remain the same as those of the past. There is an increasing call for more powerful and relevant learning in response to these new demands and opportunities (Gardner, 2007; Reimers, 2009; Stewart, 2007 as cited in Mansilla & Jackson (2017), and students need to be prepared with the capacity that is beyond just reading, writing, arithmetic, and science knowledge. In addition, Mansilla and Jackson (2017) are of the view that students should be introduced to extensive knowledge and skills around global issues, attuned to diverse perspectives, able to communicate across cultures and in other languages, disposed to act toward the common good citizenship, and to work in diverse environments. When we are looking at the global competence skills identified by Willard (2005) and Walker (2012), internationalisation of education may not merely promote global competency skill but it also promote the mastery of the knowledge of the subject-matter among the students.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter presented the theoretical framework on which the study is based. In addition, the conceptual framework of internationalisation of higher education and barriers is discussed in depth. This was followed by a discussion on the uses of social networks, particularly focusing on Facebook. The chapter ended with Facebook’s potentials and pitfalls in higher education, although in this case Facebook was not created for the same aim and objectives as pertaining to this study.
The researcher noted that there is a gap in literature on the use of social media such as Facebook to host international collaborative learning at higher education level, which makes this study unique and of high significance.

The next chapter presents the methodology used to collect data for this study. It begins by presenting the research design, followed by the description of the sample and the instruments used in the research. This is followed by a discussion of the data collection procedure, data analysis, as well as the ethical aspects that were considered in this study.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The methodology chapter focuses on the research design, instruments, method, population and sample of the study. The chapter also discusses the procedure followed in data analysis and the ethical considerations for the study.

3.2 Research design

This study was a qualitative study and was anchored in a multiple case design. Neuman (2006) explains that during qualitative research, the researcher seeks to describe, decode, understand, explain, explore, translate, as well as clarify situations, feelings, perceptions, values, attitudes, beliefs and experiences of a group of people. Qualitative research attempts to comprehend certain phenomena about human nature and the environment by focusing on meanings and understandings. Johnson and Christensen (2012) state that qualitative data are presented in the form of words, actions, sounds, symbols and images from documents, observations and transcripts.

Given the above explanations, the qualitative research paradigm was found to be suitable for this study as it helped the researcher to understand the perceptions of students and lecturers on the use of the Facebook web page for international collaborative learning. The paradigm also helped the researcher to understand the communications and activities carried out on the Facebook web page by students and lecturers. Qualitative data are presented as facts in words (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006; Johnson & Christensen, 2012).

Leedy and Ormrod (2010) explain that qualitative research serves one or more of the following purposes:
• **Description** - reveals the nature of certain situations, settings, processes, relationships, systems or people.

• **Evaluation** - provides a means through which a researcher can judge the effectiveness of particular policies, practices or innovations.

• **Interpretation** - enables a researcher to gain new insights about a particular phenomenon, develop new concepts or theoretical perspectives about the phenomenon, and discover the problems that exist within the phenomenon.

• **Verification** - allows a researcher to test the validity of certain assumptions, claims, theories, or generalizations within real world contexts.

In this study, the researcher attempted to find out the use of Facebook as platform for international collaborative learning among University of Namibia postgraduate students and their lecturers in the module of Educational Technology, with the aim to promote global competencies. The researcher employed this qualitative paradigm to collect information through interviews, observations and document analysis so as to understand the context (Facebook web page) in which the international collaborative learning occurred and its outcomes.

The study was anchored in a case study design, with specific focus on multiple case studies because the population involved two different sites, i.e., the University of Namibia and William Paterson University. Johnson and Christensen (2014) refer to a case study design as a form of qualitative research that focuses on providing a detailed account of one or more cases. In addition, Creswell (2008) refers to a case study as a variation of an ethnography in which the research provides an in-depth exploration of bounded system, for instance an activity, an event, a process or an individual based on
extensive data collection.

Given the descriptions above, the researcher found the case study design to be the best for this study. However, the nature of the study required accessing data from different universities, hence the use of multiple case studies. Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009) state that such studies are commonly referred to as multiple case studies, collective case studies, multi-case studies, multi-site studies, or comparative case studies.

Gay et al. (2009) explain that multiple case studies in educational research are a common strategy for the following reasons:

- They improve the external validity or generalizability of the research, although the traditional claims with respect to external validity are still limited for the case study research.
- They allow the researcher to make claims that the events described at the one site are not necessarily idiosyncratic to that site and thus contribute to the researcher’s understanding about the contextual variations, or lack thereof, across sites.

Similarly, Johnson and Christensen (2014) support the use of the multiple case design as it gives deeper insight on the research topic by concurrently studying multiple cases in one overall research study and a deeper analysis of each case despite limited resources. Johnson and Christensen further state that the multiple case design can fall short because the depth of analysis usually has to be sacrificed because of the breadth of analysis obtained from studying more than one case. Given these explanations, the researcher found the multiple case design to be best suited for this study.
3.3 Population

Hartas (2010) defines a population as a group of individuals or organizations that share the same features that interest the study. Johnson and Christensen (2014) describe a population as a set of elements with similar characteristics or a total group on which a researcher is interested to generalise the sample results. Leedy and Ormrod (2010) point out that when a population is selected, researchers should not look at the size of the population, but the general characteristics of a researched phenomenon should inform the selection of a population. This study had two categories of the population, i.e., postgraduate students and their lecturers. The students were enrolled for the Master of Education in Educational Technology in 2014 and 2015 at the University of Namibia (UNAM), while their lecturers moderated the international collaborative learning project under investigation. It is important to mention that students from William Paterson University who collaborated with the UNAM postgraduate students were not part of the population; only their Educational Technology module lecturer formed part of the study’s population. Therefore, the population of the study included two (2) lecturers, i.e., one (1) from the University of Namibia and the other one (1) from William Paterson University in the United State of America. These lecturers were teaching the Educational Technology module during the international collaborative learning project. In the students’ category, only the UNAM postgraduate students were included in the study because they were available and accessible. There were therefore eight (8) postgraduate students from the 2014 academic year and six (6) postgraduate students from the 2015 academic year, which gives a total of 14 postgraduate students enrolled in the Master of Education course, specialising in Educational Technology.
3.4 Sample and sampling procedure

The researcher used two types of sampling methods to determine the sample of the study, namely, purposive sampling and convenience sampling. According to Creswell (2008), purposive sampling is a method of selecting the people or sites that can best help the researcher to understand the central phenomenon. Johnson and Christensen (2014) confirm that this procedure can be used when the researcher intentionally selects the individuals and sites based on specific criteria, to learn or understand the issues. This understanding emerges through a detailed understanding of the people or sites. Creswell (2008) further maintains that purposive sampling is a method that helps researchers to develop a detailed understanding of the phenomenon that

- might provide ‘useful’ information,
- might help people ‘learn’ about the phenomenon,
- might give a voice to ‘silenced’ people.

In this case, a lecturer from the University of Namibia and another one from William Paterson University who participated in the international collaborative learning project were sampled purposively on the basis that they taught the modules of Educational Technology and that they moderated the project under investigation. The rationale for the standards of choosing the sites and sample is that they are information rich. Therefore, purposive sampling was employed to include both lecturers who moderated the project because they had better knowledge of the project and were able to provide rich and detailed information for the study.

Another sampling procedure that was used to select postgraduate students sample is the convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is a method that involves a selection
of research participants on the basis of accessibility (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). When convenience sampling is employed, the researcher selects participants because they are willing to participate, convenient, available to be studied and represent some characteristics that the researcher seeks to study (Creswell, 2008). Although there were fourteen (14) postgraduate students in the program, the researcher only sampled twelve (12) postgraduate students because two students were not available for the study. The researcher found the students from UNAM convenient because all students were from the same country, compared to the students from William Paterson University in the USA.

3.5 Research instruments

There are various methods of data collection. Kumar (1999) emphasizes that the choice of method or instrument depends on the purpose of the study, the resources available and the skills of the researcher. Triangulation is the process of corroborating evidence from different sources (such as teachers and students), types of data from observational field notes and interviews or methods of data collection from documents in descriptions and themes in qualitative research (Creswell, 2008). In this study, the researcher used more than one instrument to collect the data, namely, interviews, field notes, observations and downloads from Facebook web page activities. The researcher used triangulation to ensure credibility of the study. The four research instruments are discussed next.

3.5.1 Interviews

Seidman (2013) outlines interviews as the basic mode of inquiry through which a researcher learns more about what the participants think about a specific topic under study. Interviews can be used to obtain in-depth information about a participant’s
thoughts, beliefs, knowledge, reasoning, motivations and feelings about a topic (Seidman, 2013).

The interview guide serves as a structure for the interview process. Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2009) describe an interview guide as a form designed by the researcher, which contains instructions for the process of the interview, the questions to be asked, and space to take notes of the responses from the interviewees. Johnson and Christensen (2012) enlighten that this process allows the researcher to enter into the inner world of another person’s perspective. Johnson and Christensen (2014) further advise that the interviewer must first establish trust and rapport, in order to make it easier for the participants to provide information about their inner worlds. The interview guides used in this study consist of all essential components such as informed consent information, space to collect demographic data, close-ended questions and open-ended questions (See Appendices A and B).

3.5.2 Facebook web page conversations and activities

Observation is another method of data collecting. Imenda and Muyangwa (2006) define observation as systematic and attentive recording of events as they occur (without attempting to modify them), using appropriate means of study and investigation. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000) argue that “observations enable the researcher to gather data on the physical setting, the human setting, the interactional setting and the programme setting”. The researcher reviewed all the conversations carried out by students on the Facebook web page by looking at how they behaved on the page and by observing their reactions on the topics they were discussing. In addition, the researcher downloaded all the activities that were carried out by students from this Facebook web page.
3.5.3 **Field notes**

The researcher took notes of all useful data outside of the interview guide, such as the context, side-notes and additional thoughts during the interview process. The notes taken were coded using numbers to represent each respondent to ensure accuracy during the data analysis process.

3.6 **Data collection procedure**

The researcher requested for the records of the postgraduate students from the Centre for Postgraduate Studies who had studied for the Master of Education (Educational Technology) degree during the past years. These records helped the researcher to track the contact details of every student. The researcher made necessary arrangements with the students to conduct the interviews. Before the actual interviews started, all students were informed about the purpose of the study and why their contributions towards the study were crucial.

The researcher conducted one-on-one interviews with the students at their respective places while taking notes of the data that were not part of any question and that appeared to be important for the study. With permission from the students, audio-recordings of all interviews were done using a smartphone voice-recorder application as means of verification of every response to each question during the analysis process.

The lecturer from the University of Namibia was interviewed telephonically, using a mobile phone. The researcher used a mobile phone with a call recorder to record all the conversations as a backup method to enable the researcher to replay the conversation during the data analysis process.

The lecturer from the William Paterson University, USA was interviewed through
Skype. However, due to poor voice projection, the researcher had to send the information captured during the Skype interview to the lecturer for verification.

The researcher reviewed all the conversations carried out by students on the Facebook web page by looking at how they responded to specific issues. The researcher also used the snipping tool to snap-shot some of the conversations from the UNAM-WPU collaborative learning Facebook web page’s timeline for analysis. Furthermore, the researcher downloaded all the collaborative learning activities from the Facebook web page for analysis.

3.7 Data analysis procedure

The collection and analysis of qualitative data can be done simultaneously (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh & Sorensen, 2006). For this study, the researcher started the data analysis process when data collection was completed. Qualitative data are based on induction. Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009) point out that during qualitative data analysis, the researcher starts with large sets of data representing many things and seeks to narrow them progressively into smaller and important groups of key data. Gay, Mills and Airasian further state that the qualitative researcher constructs meaning by identifying patterns and themes that emerge during data analysis. During the analysis process for this study, the researcher examined each piece of the information and, building on insights and hunches gained during data collection, attempted to make sense of the data in its totality. The data collected using different instruments were transcribed verbatim and analysed using iterated reliability (Johnson & Christensen, 2012) to identify labels, which led to themes and codes. Most importantly, the audio-recorded data were transcribed to create the transcripts identifying elements using the TPACK framework as the lens.
The researcher also used document analysis methods in this study. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000) refer to the document analysis method as a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents, both printed and electronic such as computer-based and internet-transmitted materials. Like other analytical methods in qualitative research, document analysis requires that data to be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Documents and communications of students from the Facebook web page consisting of direct text and images were downloaded and examined without the researcher’s intervention.

3.8 Validity

Gay, et al. (2009) explain that in qualitative research, the trustworthiness features consist of efforts by the researcher to address the more traditional quantitative issues of validity, in other words, the degree to which something measures what it purports to measure, and reliability is the consistency with which the same result can be replicated over time or by different observers. To ensure the credibility of the findings, the researcher considered the following: First, the researcher triangulated data that was obtained using the three research instruments (Section 3.5). Bergamn (2008) reminds that the triangulation method is applied in research to reduce the chances of reaching false conclusions. Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, and Sorensen (2006) confirm that triangulation allows the researcher to investigate whether the data collected using one procedure or one research instrument confirms the data collected using a different procedure or instrument. Second, the researcher transcribed, verbatim, the data collected during interviews and snap shot the communications from the Facebook web
page of the students’ project. In addition, the lecturer from the William Paterson University in the USA was interviewed via Skype. The connection was poor and it terms of spotty inaudibility during the interview. Therefore, the researcher had to send the data captured during the Skype interview to the lecturer for verification. Johnson and Christensen (2012) concur that the use of verbatim and member checking accurately portrays the meaning attached by participants to what is being studied and the degree to which the participants’ viewpoints, thoughts, feelings, intentions, and experiences are accurately understood. To conclude, Ary et al. (2006) confirm that, if multiple investigators agree in their description of the context, in their description of the events, and in their reporting of what was said, ‘internal validity’ is ensured.

3.9 **Ethical considerations**

The researcher obtained permission to access the research sites from relevant authorities before the data collection. The University Ethics Committee approved and issued the ethical clearance certificate in response to a letter from the researcher to conduct the research (see Appendices C and D).

According to Bertram and Christiansen (2014), ethical consideration issues refer to the researcher’s behaviour towards human subjects when conducting research, which should benefit participants in a positive manner. Thus, to observe good ethics in this study, the researcher first sought consent from the participants and informed them about the purpose of the study (Appendix E). The participants were then informed that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time should they start to feel uncomfortable with participating in the study. Lastly, the principles of confidentiality, anonymity, personal integrity, honesty and respect were fully maintained in the study.

The data collected will be kept in a password-protected file for safe keeping for a
duration of four years, thereafter it will be deleted.

3.10 **Summary**

This chapter presented the methods used in the study. It focused on the research design, research instruments, population and sample. In addition, the chapter discussed the procedure for data analysis and how the researcher handled the ethical issues in the study to maintain good ethics.

The next chapter presents the findings of the study.
CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study and answers the research questions that primarily focused on the perceptions of students and lecturers on the use of Facebook as a platform for collaborative learning internationally.

The researcher used the TPACK framework to situate the research findings. It is also important to mention that the researcher used codes to represent the various participants, for example, P1 for Participant (student) 1, L1 for Lecturer 1, and Q2 for Question 2. These codes are used in places where participants are quoted directly, depending on the position of the participant (see Table 4.2). The question numbers are exactly as they appear in the research instrument.

Moreover, this chapter is presented in the following order: first, the demographic information of the participants (students and lecturers); second, the findings from students, followed by the lecturers’ findings, as well as the data extracted from various documents (Table 4.1); third, the analysis of the TPACK Framework in relation to the students’ responses.

Additionally, the data are presented in a format that directly answers the research questions. Table 4.1 below indicates which data is used to answer the respective research questions.
Table 4.1: The research questions matched with the data collection methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research questions (RQ)</th>
<th>Students’ Interview Questions</th>
<th>Interview Protocol</th>
<th>Document Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ 1:</td>
<td>What benefits did the UNAM-WPU lecturers and postgraduate students identify when using Facebook to build their global competency skills?</td>
<td>How was the collaborative project between the UNAM-WPU postgraduate participants structured?</td>
<td>The structure of 2014 collaborative learning project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What was your general impression on the collaborative learning project?</td>
<td>What did you consider when you were planning for this project?</td>
<td>The structure of 2015 collaborative learning project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>As a student who participated in the international collaborative learning project on a Facebook page, what did you experience/learn from this exercise?</td>
<td>Are there any institutional guidelines or policy on internationalisation of higher education using social media or any other e-learning tools at your university?</td>
<td>The nature of activities of UNAM-WPU Teacher Collaboration-Facebook Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What benefits did you gain from this international collaborative learning project?</td>
<td>What was the nature of Facebook activities of the students during UNAM-WPU Teacher Collaboration on Facebook Page?</td>
<td>Collaborative learning project results for 2014 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RQ 2: What challenges did the UNAM-WPU lecturers and postgraduate students identify when using Facebook to build their global competency skills?</td>
<td>RQ 2: What challenges did you encounter during the UNAM-WPU collaborative learning project?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What challenges did you encounter during the UNAM-WPU collaborative learning project?</td>
<td>How did you overcome the challenges encountered during the UNAM-WPU collaborative learning project?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How did you overcome the challenges encountered during the UNAM-WPU collaborative learning project?</td>
<td>How was the UNAM-WPU collaborative learning project monitored?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What participants’ attitudes and behaviours did you observe during this collaborative learning project?</td>
<td>How was the UNAM-WPU collaborative learning project assessed?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What global competency skills did UNAM-WPU collaboration lecturers observe or identify that students gained from this exercise using Facebook?</td>
<td>Did the UNAM-WPU collaborative project attain the intended outcomes?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ 3:</td>
<td>What can be done to promote internationalisation of higher education through collaborative learning at the University of Namibia using social media such as Facebook?</td>
<td>What would you recommend for lecturers who would like to use Facebook for international collaborative learning projects?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What would you recommend for students who are using Facebook for international collaborative learning?</td>
<td>What would you recommend to your fellow lecturers who are collaborating or would like to collaborate with international universities using social media such as Facebook?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 Demographic information of the participants (students and lecturers)

This section presents the demographic information of the UNAM postgraduate students and lecturers who participated in the study.

4.2.1 Profiles of students

Table 4.2: Profile of the students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Level/Grade</th>
<th>Area/Subject</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>31-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>41-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P3</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>Math and Science</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>31-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>Private Tutor</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>Physical Science and Maths</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>Education Officer</td>
<td>8-12</td>
<td>Physical Science</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>31-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>Online Courses Coordinator</td>
<td>All courses</td>
<td>All courses</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>31-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P7</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>Math and Physical Science</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P8</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>Geography and Biology</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>31-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P9</td>
<td>Instructional Designer</td>
<td>Health Organisation</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>31-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P10</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>Math and Science</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>31-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>Geography and Biology</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>31-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>English and Biology</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>31-40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As reflected in Table 4.2, twelve postgraduate participants (eight males and four females) were enrolled for the degree of Master of Education majoring in Educational Technology at the University of Namibia in the academic years 2014 and 2015.

Eight of the twelve participants indicated that they were teachers at secondary level, one was an Education Officer, another one was a private tutor and two indicated that
they were working with the eLearning content during the time of the project (online programme coordinator and online instructional designer).

In addition, the study revealed that almost all participants who participated in the study were within the age range of 31-40 years. Only one participant fell within the 41-50 age range (Table 4.2).

4.2.2 Gender distribution

The nine of the participants in the study were male, whilst the remaining 3 were female.

4.2.3 Age analysis

The nine (9) of the twelve (12) participants were between 31 and 40 years, while only two (2) were below 31 years of age, and one (1) participant was above 40 year during (table 4.2).
4.2.4 Profile of the lectures

Table 4.3: Profile of participating lecturers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecturer</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Highest Qualification</th>
<th>Specialisation</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L1</td>
<td>WPU</td>
<td>Doctor of Education</td>
<td>Instructional Technology and Media</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2</td>
<td>UNAM</td>
<td>Doctor of Education</td>
<td>Instructional Technology, Media and Educational Technology</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3 shows the particulars of the lecturers who were directly involved in the process of planning, implementation, monitoring and assessment of the WPU-UNAM Teacher Collaborative Learning project for the 2014/2015 academic year. The participants’ biography are described below:

**Lecturer 1**

L1 holds a Doctor of Education degree in Instructional Technology and Media, with many years of experience in the field of instructional technology in teachers’ programmes. She is a full professor and works for the William Paterson University in the United States of America as an educator.

**Lecturer 2**

L2 holds a Doctorate in Education, specialising in Instructional Technology, Media and Educational Technology. L2 is a senior lecturer at the University of Namibia responsible for Educational Technology modules. She is equipped with years of
teaching experience combined with knowledge in instructional design in the digital age. Additionally, she encourages the use of e-learning management systems and social media in higher education yet delivering quality education that addresses the 21st century skills.

4.3 Benefits of using Facebook to build global competency skills

This section addresses Research Question 1:

*What benefits did the UNAM-WPU lecturers and postgraduate students identify when using Facebook to build their global competency skills?*

4.3.1 The structure of collaborative learning (lecturers’ perspective)

In 2014, the project collaboration started with WPU postgraduate students taking the module of Field Experience in Instructional Technologies offered by L1, as shown in Table 4.4. On the other hand, the UNAM postgraduate students enrolled for the Master’s degree in Education, specialising in Educational Technology also participated as part of the Educational Technology Project module requirements under the supervision of L2, as reflected in Table 4.4. The findings from these respondents confirmed that these two modules were aimed at preparing graduates to promote and facilitate the use of media and technology in classrooms and beyond.

According to the data from the lecturers, the UNAM postgraduate students involved in the project in 2014 were more than the WPU students. Therefore, students were allocated into groups that had one (1) WPU student and more UNAM students as shown in Table 4.5.
Table 4.3: The structure of the 2014 collaborative learning project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>School subject</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>UNAM</th>
<th>WPU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>School subject</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Environmental Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>School subject</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>Subject of their choice which provided for special needs students</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4</td>
<td>Early Childhood Development (ECD)</td>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Educational game or multimedia storybook with audio/text in a Namibian mother tongue for children.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-Literacy</td>
<td>All Primary School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-Numeracy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher further found that the lecturers assigned the students to three groups for secondary subject areas that these student-teachers were teaching. The lecturers emphasised that the main purpose of the WPU-UNAM collaborative learning project was to provide students with an opportunity to create a technology-infused lesson plan that could be used in the Namibian context (classroom).

Information gathered from the respondents also showed that there were two UNAM students who were not teachers but instructional designers and one WPU ECD students (Table 4.5). The lecturers assigned these three students a task that was aligned with...
their working experiences, not to create a lesson plan but rather to design an Early Childhood Development Multimedia Game for the Namibian context.

Additionally, the study found that the WPU students were studying through a self-directed mode of learning delivered through online learning, unlike the UNAM students who enrolled on either the part-time or the full-time mode, having face-to-face contact and video conferencing sessions with the lecturers. Commenting on this point, one of the student participants said:

“WPU students had no face-to-face meetings, only online. This collaboration project was one of three assignments in the course which was given during Summer 1 semester which ran from 21 May to 10 June in 2014. WPU students were graded on the lesson plans/educational game they developed with their UNAM partners using a rubric, and this was calculated into their final course grade” [P1: Q1].

It appears that the lecturers who moderated the WPU-UNAM collaborative learning project had the students’ interest at heart because they did not only assign tasks for grading purposes but they also took into consideration the prior learning of their students.

Moreover, the study revealed that in 2015, the collaborative learning was not limited to UNAM and WPU but it integrated teachers from Guyana (GY). Notably, the findings showed that teachers from Guyana (GY) participated in the collaborative learning as part of their continuous professional development (CPD) organised by Guyana’s Ministry of Education. The Guyana teachers’ engagement in the collaborative learning project was therefore not an academic requirement, but, rather, for CPD, whereas for the UNAM and WPU student-teachers, the engagement was to
fulfil academic requirements. It is also important to mention that in 2015, UNAM and WPU continued with a new cohort.

Furthermore, the study revealed that in 2015, the collaborative learning project was structured in such a way that each group had at least one WPU student, one UNAM student and one GY teacher (Table 4.6). Surprisingly, Guyana teachers were so many that the UNAM and WPU students could not be placed together in the same group.

According to the information obtained from the respondents, all the Guyanese teachers were Information Technology Literacy teachers. Therefore, for the 2015 project, it was not possible to assign the participants to groups according to areas of focus at work, unlike the 2014 project (see Table 4.5). Notably, all groups in the 2015 project had the same collaborative assignments.
Table 4.4: The structure of the 2015 collaborative learning project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>UNAM Students</th>
<th>WPU Students</th>
<th>GY Teachers</th>
<th>Members per group</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Design a one- or two-day, hands-on workshop based on a low-cost technology and curriculum areas that have been agreed on by members of the group. Develop the slideshow presentation to be used in the workshop: Presentation should include two or more sample lesson plans (briefly described) which meet curriculum goals and incorporate that technology. Develop an accompanying document of relevant and related resources (both digital and non-digital) to be distributed during the workshop as a printed hand-out. Develop the workshop schedule (e.g., when to do presentation of the slideshow, hands-on activities, etc.). Develop a follow-up survey that assesses workshop participants’ Level 1 (reaction) and Level 2 (learning). GY and UNAM students will deliver the workshop, videotape it, and discuss reflections with WPU partners (this requirement was dropped due to lack of time).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further investigations by the researcher showed that WPU students for the 2015 project enrolled for a one-month (May-June) Field Experience summer programme. It is reported that the Field Experience programme for the WPU students was entirely an online course without face-to-face contact sessions, and they covered the collaborative learning project in the module of Instructional Technologies.

The study also revealed that all three WPU students who participated in the 2015 project were enrolled for the Instructional Technologies module, and they were doing this project to fulfil academic requirements (table 4.6). On the other hand, the study revealed that the four UNAM students who participated were enrolled for the Master of Education degree, and they were also doing the collaborative learning assignment in the module of Educational Technology Project for academic purposes. The results also indicated that the collaborative learning project for 2015 was structured to fit the profiles of the participants (table 4.6).

### 4.3.2 Factors considered when planning international collaborative learning on a Facebook page (lecturers’ perspective)

For the 2014 collaborative learning project, the two lecturers mentioned that they had identified a common platform which is Facebook that would allow students from both universities to interact with ease. They also said that they ensured that both groups had daily access to the internet. Here are the voices of the lecturers:

‘‘As a lecturers planned this project, we considered the interest for both groups regardless of their different curricular. We made sure students participating are having at least everyday access to internet. Considered if Facebook is the best option and they have access to it’’[L1:Q4].

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In addition, the lecturers proposed that students’ assessment should be aligned with the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) coaching standards competencies so that students could demonstrate their mastery of technology coaching competencies. L2 also mentioned that they considered the interests of students from both universities, although their curricula were different.

The study also found that students were encouraged to use additional online tools for exchanging information such as Google drive, Skype and many others. Another consideration noted during the study was the timeframe, as the WPU course was on a condensed schedule for four weeks and the materials were covered in three weeks to allow time for the collaborative learning project. The collaborative learning project took one week before the end of the course.

Considerations for the 2014 project were similar to those of 2015. However, for the 2015 project, students were set in separate Facebook pages as well as having one overarching Facebook group that they were all part of. This was done as a result of a lesson from the 2014 project when it was a bit confusing. Thus, the lecturers tried to do the collaborative learning for 2015 differently (L1 and L2).

It is clear that at least the lecturers who initiated the collaborative learning project for students not only from different countries but from different continents (Africa and the United State of America) agreed on the best methods and strategies most suitable for the participants before hosting the collaborative learning on Facebook. Such common ground was important, considering factors such as internet connectivity, assessment tools, curriculum context, use of additional online tools, timeframe, set in separate Facebook pages, and having a common Facebook group which students were all part of (as italicised in the above paragraphs). However, there was also a need to consider
not only the timeframe of the project but also the different time zones of the countries where the students were operating in.

4.3.3 The availability of the guidelines or policy on internationalisation on social media and other e-learning systems

Both lecturers mentioned that WPU and UNAM had an eLearning Policy that strongly encouraged students and faculty members to access the online platform to connect with other institutions globally. In addition, when they were asked if WPU and UNAM were in possession of the Internationalisation of Higher Education Policy, both participants confirmed that their universities currently did not have such a policy document. However, both lecturers had recommended WPU and UNAM to review the teaching and learning policy and align it with the use of e-learning tools and social media sites at institutions of higher education. The lecturers also emphasised that, even though there were no guidelines or policy supporting internationalisation of education on social media, universities needed to reconsider investing in infrastructures that rapidly facilitate and promote the implementation of internationalisation of higher education. Commenting on these issues, the lecturers made the following statements:

“Currently, UNAM does not have guidelines or policy of internationalisation of higher education, though UNAM is working hard to be recognised by other international universities. But, there is an eLearning Policy that puts emphasis on the use of eLearning systems in education” [L2: Q4].

“UNAM should review/revisit the teaching and learning policy and make internationalisation of high education a priority” [L2: Q4].
“UNAM to invest more in facilities that can speed up the implementation of internationalisation of education” [L2: Q4].

“At the time, WPU did not (and to my knowledge still does not) have a policy on internationalisation of higher education using social media. There is however a policy on online learning and teaching.” [L1: Q4].

The participating lecturers further suggested that the universities involved in the study should review their curricula across all departments and relevant publications for better action. Both lecturers commented on this issue:

“UNAM should look into the curricula across all department to see how best we can accommodate other international universities to work on tasks with our students” [L2: Q4].

“There have been many research projects and publications exploring the topic of internationalisation of higher education and the use of online/social media to facilitate this, so my recommendation would be to review such documents” [L1: Q4].

The information gathered from both UNAM and WPU lecturers showed good progress in terms of internationalisation of higher education. This is because both universities have made progress on the aspect of e-learning policy development and implementation. UNAM, in particular, has considered internationalisation of education across all faculties as a key to produce graduates that will be able to cope with the demands of the 21st century, and the graduates that will survive in today’s competitive global market. One lecturer suggested that such transformation could be made possible through the implementation of the internationalisation of higher
education policy, supported with reinvestment in the ICT facilities across all UNAM campuses.

4.3.4 The nature of the activities of students on the UNAM-WPU teacher collaboration Facebook page

The researcher asked this question to try and understand the level of interaction of students who were involved in the collaborative learning on the Facebook e-Learning page with their fellow students and with their lecturers. Remarkably, it is reported that in 2014, the students used the Facebook page to post drafts of their lesson plans as well sharing of ideas. In addition, during this activity students were informed that they had to check on the collaborative Facebook page at least once a day to ensure that they responded to their peers within a limited timeframe.

Moreover, for the 2015 collaborative learning, students used the same collaborative learning platform to share information, drafts of workshop materials and various other relevant information. Interestingly, the study also found that students made greater use of Facebook “messaging-again”, possibly because of the time zone differences. The respondents also expressed that they observed a lot of communications, both project-specific and friendly conversations among the GY teachers and the WPU and UNAM students, on the collaborative learning Facebook page. To find comprehensive answers to the question of student activities on the Facebook page, the researcher also analysed the information on the Facebook page of the students’ groups. Figure 4.2 summarises students’ Facebook activities generated during collaborative learning projects.
Figure 4.1: Activities of UNAM-WPU Teacher Collaboration on Facebook

Figure 4.2 indicates the data extracted from the students’ Facebook page for collaborative learning, with 38 updates/posts, 132 comments, 61 ‘likes’, 16 document uploads, and 2 shared links. It is evident that students were actively communicating with each other during the collaborative learning project. Below are some of the snapshots from the WPU-UNAM Teacher Collaboration Facebook Page.

As reflected on the information from the Facebook page, moderators began by welcoming remarks and then allowed students to introduce themselves as a way of familiarising with each other as illustrated below:
Figure 4.2: Introductory snapshots (Students joining the Facebook group)

(Source: WPU-UNAM Teacher Collaboration Facebook Page)

The above snapshots were some of the students’ direct texts during the introductory phase.

After the introduction and welcoming remarks, students were observed sharing ideas and documents for the tasks assigned to them as confirmed in Figure 4.4 below.
Figure 4.3: Student to student collaboration

(Source: WPU-UNAM Teacher Collaboration Facebook Page)

Furthermore, the Facebook Page shows that lecturers were guiding, encouraging and reminding students to remain focused and to work on their tasks as displayed in Figure 4.5.
It is evident that students were communicating with other students as well as with their lecturers.

**4.3.5 Students’ attitudes and behaviours (lecturers’ perspective)**

Both lecturers agreed that the students demonstrated positive attitudes and appreciated the initiative of international collaborative learning, despite UNAM students complaining about the issue of poor internet connectivity. Additionally, L1 indicated that WPU students were persistent to complete the collaborative assignments within the given duration because their academic marks depended on successful completion of the assignments. However, the UNAM students were taking time to respond to their international peers and this frustrated the WPU students. This is exactly what the lecturer said:
“They were also very eager to make quick progress on the collaboration assignment as their grade was riding on successful completion. For all of them, there were times of frustration as their UNAM peers did not get back to them in a timely fashion and/or did not seem to have any sense of urgency in moving forward with the collaboration.” [L1: Q6].

“In 2015, there was less frustration for WPU students, as at least one of the GY partners in each group seemed much more responsive and interested in working on the collaborative project” [L1: Q6].

It seems L1 felt some sort of dissatisfaction with the way the UNAM students were participating in the collaborative learning assignments. It appears that the UNAM students were not meeting the expectations of the WPU students in terms of their level of participation.

The results also showed that students who were active from the UNAM side were observed sharing experiences ideas with the WPU students about what was happening at their schools. Commenting on this aspect, L2 said the following:

“Students were excited about the initiative and the WPU students were keen to communicate more with UNAM students” [L2: Q6].

“Students were continuously exchanging ideas on what was happening at their schools [L2: Q6].

Additionally, the lecturers mentioned that they observed good ethics among students. On the same note, L2 said that some students developed some bonds of friendship:

“All students demonstrated high level of professionalism” [L2: Q6].
“Some students even developed some sort of friendship, shifting from just academic peers to some, like, personal friends” [L2: Q6].

Overall, it is evident that despite the internet connectivity barrier, students showed a high level of gratitude about the initiative of working with international students, displaying good attitude and acceptable academic behaviour.

4.3.6 General impression on the collaborative learning (students’ perspective)

The participants interviewed expressed that the collaborative learning was an indeed a good initiative. Some participants appreciated that they felt like they had face-to-face classes with international students. Additionally, the rest of the participants mentioned that they were impressed beyond imagination. Participants further mentioned that this project exposed them to a deeper understanding of ICT integration, the appreciation of ICTs in education, as well as an understanding of how to deal with peers from different backgrounds. Some respondents supported the use of Facebook as it appears to have been a popular and simple to understand social media platform for the majority of the students. Some of the students commented as follows:

“I am highly impressed, we are actually catching up with the changes. In fact we are moving together with the developed world” [P1: Q1].

“I am fascinated by the fact that we adapt to changes and are willing to live like digital natives” [P5: Q1].

Some participants could not hide their excitement and appreciation towards the projects during the interview as they were impressed by the initiative of the project. Students said that the collaboration with international students without travelling long
distances to those countries was remarkable. Quoted below are some of the students’
direct words:

“It was as excellent teamwork and another way of learning from what other
international universities are doing without really necessary for us to travel long
distances that would cost us lot of time and money” [P2: Q1].

“It was a good encounter to interact with international peers” [P7: Q1].

Contrarily, fewer participants indicated that at the beginning of the project they were
anxious to communicate with people whom they did not know, but the situation
stabilised when they became familiar with them. This is one of the direct statements
from a student:

“At first, I didn’t expect much because I was linking-up with people I don’t know, but
after we started interacting I was greatly impressed, I loved the experience very much
and learned a lot from it” [P6: Q1].

Overall, students’ results demonstrated a high level of appreciation for the opportunity
provided to them to interact with the international students who were not only from
another country but from a completely different continental background.

4.3.7 Experience with the collaborative learning (students’ perspective)

4.3.7.1 Communicating with fellow students

Most students mentioned that collaborative learning promoted the communication
among themselves, and such interactions brought in new educational concepts. Some
respondents also mentioned that communication through social media while working
on their academic assignments helped them to understand aspects from an international
perspective. In addition, respondents said that the collaborative project promoted a culture of teamwork and networking with the international students. Some of the respondents commented thus:

“It changed how I viewed Facebook before and after the collaborative project” [P4: Q2.1].

“WPU students assigned to us (me in particular) were prompt in responding to anything posted to them, and this also forced me to keep the communication going. I was obliged to keep the flow going” [P7: Q2.1]

“I learnt how to apply new concepts/terminologies in the context of education and new technologies” [P5: Q2.1].

“It encourages collaboration and open a wide spectrum of knowledge. I was able to learn many things from the USA students” [P2: Q2.1].

On the other hand, some of the respondents complained about the issues of poor internet connectivity and differences of time zones.

“We learnt a lot at no costs, apart from poor internet connectivity issue. We didn’t have to travel to America” [P12: Q2.1].

“Most of the time one has to wait for many hours for the response from our American peers because our time zones vary” [P 9: Q2.1].

“Poor internet connectivity was interfering with my progress” [P3: Q2.1].

The overall results show that students managed to exchange ideas on Facebook. The study also revealed that the students gained knowledge, skills and experience from the collaborative learning. Therefore, the project helped the students to view Facebook as
a platform not only for socialisation activities but also a platform that can accommodate academic activities. However, some respondents felt that the communication was affected because of poor internet connectivity, and the fact that students were not in the same time zones.

4.3.7.2 Cyber safety and ethics during the collaborative learning

The findings from the UNAM students revealed some issues related to cyber safety and ethics, which they experienced during the collaborative learning on the Facebook page with their counterparts from the international universities.

Figure 4.5: Cyber safety and ethics

Figure 4.6 summarises what the respondents said regarding the aspects of cyber safety and cyber ethics experienced during the international collaborative learning project. Notably, 72% of the participants said they felt safe or never experienced threats. However, about 14% of the respondents stated that they had experienced threats from
strangers, whilst the remaining 14% requested to be excused from this point. These are some of students’ direct voices:

“We (students and lecturers) treated each other with due respect and accepted each other regardless of our geographical, social, academic, economic, cultural and religious differences [P8: Q2.2].

“No distractions experienced on my side, neither ill behaviours among peers or from other Facebook users in general [P9: Q2.2].

“During this assignment, cyber ethics and safety was ensured, the class group on Facebook was a closed group, meaning people who are not members of the group were not able to see our activities” [P10: Q2.2].

“All students were more professional. Though we did not know each other in person, with time we developed trust among each other [P12: Q2.2].

Most students made it clear that using Facebook for collaborative learning is commendable because Facebook users can privatise their accounts. In addition, 72% also stated that all members of the collaborative learning project observed good ethics throughout.

In contrast, some students also said that they felt unsafe and further stressed that they were receiving friend requests from strangers and later such strangers would request for their personal information. The 14% that felt unsafe also emphasised that they were feeling insecure on Facebook because they had never had Facebook accounts before, and that this account which they created for the collaborative learning project was their very first one.
“Although the task was under supervision, I was not confident posting my personal views on the group with peers from the other university, whom I had never met” [P3: Q2.2].

“I was never comfortable posting anything on my timeline since then because I was uncertain about the safety of being on a Facebook group/page with students I have never met [P7: Q2.2].

“From that time I have been receiving a lot of friend requests from strangers, and when I viewed their Facebook friends I realised that they are friends with some of the American students [P1: Q2.2].

However, some students confirmed that the aspect of cyber safety and cyber ethics was not an issue to them during the international collaborative learning, compared to those who confirmed that their cyber safety and cyber ethics had been compromised. Some they reserved their comments on this matter. Based on this evidence, Facebook could be regarded as a generally safe place for learning activities.

4.3.7.3 Opportunities within Facebook for collaborative learning (students’ perspectives)

When participants were asked to give ideas on the educational opportunities in using Facebook for international collaborative learning, most students supported that Facebook could be used as a mode of communication among students as well as between lecturers and students.

Some students were very specific and had distinctive sentiments by mentioning some of the applications on Facebook that could be better used for collaborative learning. Below are the exact transcriptions of what they said:
“With the rapid changes in technology development, Facebook can also allow lively class through Live Video application” [P3, Q2.2].

“Facebook has many applications that can be used to share information in a private room, such as a class page, class group and chat room” [P4, Q2.2].

“This platform needs more exploration to find the place for education that can yield better outcomes” [P5, Q 2.2].

“Facebook is good; it allows one to upload and download documents” [P7, Q2.2].

“Messages can be sent to participants/learners to reschedule tests in case of emergency or unexpected absences” [P9, Q2.2].

“It has a share icon that... that can... that can... allows teachers to share links of important subject related sites” [P10, Q2.2]

Participants identified strategies such as live video chats, private chats, uploading and downloading documents, messages, sharing of information as noted in the quotes above. Therefore, it can be confidently concluded that there is a place for collaborative learning on Facebook, although the participants emphasised that it requires close and continuous supervision.

4.3.8 Collaborative learning project benefits (students’ perspective)

Participants mentioned that they had benefited more from the UNAM-WPU collaborative learning project. Some participants expressed that the project enabled them to compare and contrast their universities’ education systems. Some participants said:
“We were able to think critically, generating new ideas and share the methods of teaching and learning because the main task in our group was to develop a lesson plan with the integration of ICT” [P6, Q3].

“It allows us to build educational relationship with other students from the international countries” [P5, Q3].

“It also enables us students to compare the quality of education, looking at the similarities and differences that exist” [P7, Q3].

“It builds us in terms of online learning because we were able to think critically and innovating new ideas and methodology of learning” [P4, Q3].

Students’ results confirmed that the collaborative learning allowed students to benefit in different ways, such as reinforcing critical thinking skills and being innovative, getting exposed to ideas from other educational systems, and many other ways.

Below are students’ direct voices:

“It is the best thing to do but I would recommend other LMS like Edmodo or Moodle for a quick assessments of results” [P5: Q3].

“It allows us to build educational relationship with other students from the international countries” [P7: Q3].

“It enables us to compare the quality of education, looking at the similarities and differences that exist between the two universities” [P6: Q3].

“It builds us in terms of online learning, we are able innovating new ideas and methodology of learning” [P3: Q3].
Furthermore, some participants expressed that using Facebook for collaborative learning with international peers was a convenient way of learning due to its flexibility of time, space and costs. In addition, participants mentioned that the convenience could also be reinforced by the platform’s easiness to share information such as academic articles, journals, lesson plans as well as being used as a form of interactive applications, for example voice call, video chat and chat room.

‘‘Facebook was the best platform, it free of charge, accessible worldwide at any time that suit us’’ [P1: Q3].

‘‘It was really great, it allows us to voice call and communicate via chat room’’ [P4: Q3].

Participants (students) further expressed that Facebook was a good platform for participants who are naturally shy as they can participate without much hindrance. The other point brought forward by some participants was that Facebook allowed them to understand how the other university was doing with regard to technology integration in the classroom, thus upgrading their global understanding. Some participants further said that the assignment inspired them with the culture of technology acceptance in their daily life, which was not the case before. These are the students’ direct voices:

‘‘Collaborative learning on Facebook is good, it can encourage equal participation of all type of students’’ [P7:Q3]

‘‘Even shy students can feel free on Facebook’’ [P11:Q3]

‘‘I got to know what other students are doing’’ [P12:Q3]

‘‘I learned that technology use in education in America is a priority’’ [P9:Q3]
Moreover, participants also mentioned that the use of Facebook promotes good interaction between students and lecturers at convenient times, thus allowing the sharing of essential expertise. Participants also said that this platform is a very cheap form of collaborative learning where someone does not need to relocate to get an opportunity to collaborate with international peers. Participants further revealed that they enjoyed the socialisation aspect of the platform, whilst learning a lot from their international peers. Evidently, the collaborative learning did not only benefit the students academically but they also appreciated the social nature of Facebook and its convenience.

4.3.9 Collaborative learning project benefits (lecturers’ perspective)

When the two participating lecturers were requested to inform the researcher on the significance and benefits around the international collaborative learning assignments hosted on the Facebook page for students, the following are the benefits that the lecturers narrated:

- It gave them first-hand experience in working with international teachers and fellow students who had very different linguistic, cultural, pedagogical, professional expectations, as well as other different international matters. As a result, students were continuously exchanging ideas on what was happening at their universities.

- It strengthened the culture of online international collaborative learning, especially among the UNAM students who were communicating at a slower pace throughout.
Below are some of the comments made by the lecturers, verbatim:

“The students gained first-hand experience on using a different curriculum and create technology integrated lesson plans. This made them much more aware of the fact that educational systems are not all like those in the United States” [P1: Q7].

“Students were exposed to different experience and understanding. They learn to work with students from different cultural background” [P2: Q7].

The benefits of the international collaborative learning were not only reported from the students’ results. The lecturers’ findings also confirmed several benefits that came with the international collaborative assignments.

4.4 Challenges faced during the use of Facebook in the collaborative learning project

The next sections are presented in response to Research Question 2.

What challenges did the UNAM-WPU lecturers and postgraduate students identify when using Facebook to build their global competency skills?

4.4.1 Challenges experienced during the collaborative learning project

(students’ perspective)

The results revealed that the challenges encountered by the students included poor internet connectivity, differences in time zones, differences in the curricula, lack of commitment among students and delayed feedback from fellow students. On the aspects of internet connectivity and access to ICT facilities, it was pointed out that
using Facebook was inconvenient, especially in areas with limited internet and other technology facilities.

Below are some of the direct voices of the students:

“It was quite difficult to respond to group activities promptly as I was not at constant internet connection at times” [P12: Q8].

“There are times when we don’t have access to the internet in the area or the network is just down yet my fellow students are expecting my contributions on topics” [P3: Q8].

“I was using the modem device (3G) that UNAM provided to every registered student but these devices, (3G), internet is very slow” [P5: Q8].

“It was not easy to tackle the task at the same time and finding solutions immediately with our peers from William Paterson University because we are falling under different time zone” [P11: Q8].

Another issue raised was the nature of Facebook. Students mentioned that it was impossible for them to work on a document on Facebook at the same time. On this note, participants were concerned about the time required to complete the project because they were compelled to give each other chances to work on a particular document before uploading it for the next person to work on it.

On the other hand, a few participants said that they felt that some UNAM students were uncomfortable to work with American Students. They also felt that this affected the motivation of other students at the conception stage of the project. Below are some of the students’ comments as recorded:
“At first, I noticed that UNAM students were not confident enough to participate and this I can only attribute it to the psychological fear of working with students from United State of America” [P2: Q8].

“Some days, students were either not online or just silent and this was very much discoursing” [P10: Q8].

It is evident that internet connectivity, differences in time zones, lack of commitment and delayed feedback were not the only challenges experienced during the collaborative learning, but the differences in the curricula and the nature of the Facebook platform that was used were also some of the challenges in the process. Interestingly, the issue of low self-esteem among the UNAM students was also noted as a challenge, which was attributed to the psychological fear of collaborating on a learning project with students from a different background.

4.4.2 Strategies used to minimise challenges experienced during the international collaborative learning project (students’ perspective)

Regarding the issue of time zone differences, students were advised to work on the assignments during the times that suited them, while requesting patience among themselves, especially with the limited speed of internet connectivity that was experienced by some students and to give them time to give each other the feedback on the following day. In addition, UNAM students who were in remote areas with unreliable internet connection were urged to consider other alternatives. In this regard, some students were recorded as saying the following:

“With the issue of time zone differences, we agreed to work as your time allows” [P2:Q9].
“I have tried to visit the Facebook page at least once a day to work on the task, given delayed responses due to different time zone and slow internet connections” [P6:Q3].

“We have to go to places where there is reliable network and schedule appointments on what time to go online” [P5:Q9].

Furthermore, the issue of the subject-content that was not corresponding was addressed, whereby students were advised to concentrate only on areas that were aligned with their subject-content, while motivating those students who were found to be making the least contributions to the assignments. It was also noted that students found a better way to work on documents without missing out on some information given the social nature of the platform on which they hosted the project.

“As a group leader, I have been always encouraging my group members to contribute and share ideas and tried to allocate members in our group with specific tasks to complete” [P4:Q9].

“We reported the setbacks to our lecturers, who in turn took it up with the inactive members” [P3:Q9].

“We gave each other chances and when one member finishes, always have to inform the next group member to ensure that we are working on the right and one document” [P6:Q9].

4.4.3 Challenges experienced during the international collaborative learning project (lecturers’ perspective)

The lecturers mentioned that having all four groups using the same Facebook page in 2014 was confusing for the students and also made it difficult for the lecturers to follow and monitor students’ progress. In addition, the biggest challenge both lecturers noted
was that some of the WPU students were not receiving responses from UNAM students on time, thus making the WPU students very anxious since their grades depended on this collaboration. On the other hand, L2 reported that access to internet among the UNAM students was a serious challenge that made them not to respond to their peers in a timely manner. In addition, both participants said that the overlapping of time, different academic calendars, and different curricula as well as cultural differences in terms of priorities were the main challenges.

Moreover, for the 2015 project, the lecturers reported that there were three separate Facebook groups for the project to monitor. L1 reported that it was not easy to monitor all these groups, thus, it was a challenge, especially when the groups held long Facebook messaging sessions. However, L1 said that this was much better than having everyone on a single Facebook page for all groups, like what happened in 2014.

4.4.4 Strategies used to minimise challenges experienced during the international collaborative learning project (lecturers’ perspective)

All the participants indicated that there was constant communication between them in order to speed up the responses of UNAM students. Students with similar interests and backgrounds were paired and students were being constantly reminded to respond on time. L1 stated that the project requirements were scaled back since it was not fair to penalise WPU students in their grade because of non-communication from their UNAM partners.
4.4.5 Strategies used to monitor the UNAM-WPU collaborative learning project (lecturers’ perspectives)

In terms of monitoring of the collaborative learning activities, the respondents expressed that they had closely monitored the Facebook page as they logged in at least once on a daily basis. One lecturer also made it categorically clear that her students were always carbon-copying her the emails sent to their peers as well as forwarding all the emails received from their peers. No cyber-bullying or cyber-attack was reported from the lecturers’ side who moderated the collaborative learning.

4.4.6 Methods used to assess the UNAM-WPU collaborative learning project

In terms of the collaborative learning activity assessments, students’ lesson plans were evaluated with a rubric aligned to the ISTE technology coaching standards. Likewise, the deliverables of the collaboration learning such as the workshop plan, materials, schedule, and participant survey were all evaluated using the rubric aligned to the ISTE technology coaching standards.

4.4.7 Results of the UNAM-WPU collaborative learning project

Figure 4.7 shows the percentage scores of the UNAM students who participated in the collaborative learning with their international counterparts on the Facebook page in the academic year 2014.
Figure 4.6: Collaborative learning project results for 2014 students

Lecturers who supervised the collaborative learning project confirmed that this exercise promotes global competencies among students. Remarkably, the majority of UNAM students successfully completed their exercise, with the scores of 60% and above (Figure 4.7), even though they needed extra time because of delays in internet connectivity.

4.5 Ways of promoting internationalisation of collaborative learning at UNAM using Facebook

This section answers Research Question 3:

*What can be done to ensure the promotion of internationalisation through collaborative learning at the University of Namibia using social media such as Facebook?*
4.5.1 Advice for lecturers planning to use Facebook for international collaborative learning (students’ perspective)

Participants were asked to give suggestions on what they thought was necessary for the lecturers to take into consideration when planning to use Facebook for international collaborative learning. Most students commended the use of the Facebook platform in education without any reservation. However, they alluded that collaborative learning requires thorough exploration, possibly by focusing more on the challenges. Some respondents also suggested alternative platforms that educators needed to explore more, such as Edmodo and Moodle, especially for deeper learning activities that will be assessed for academic fulfilment. Nevertheless, the participating students emphasised that this does not rule out the use of Facebook for learning purposes, as long as proper arrangements are put in place.

Moreover, some participants felt that lecturers needed to start using Facebook on a local basis first before going international. Another relevant recommendation raised was that supervisors (lecturers) should involve students to determine which universities to collaborate with, what type of tasks to execute on Facebook, as well as the duration of collaborative learning sessions to avoid the challenges faced during the UNAM-WPU project.

Furthermore, the participants suggested a staggered approach whereby, after online collaborative learning and online activities are completed, local students need to meet face-to-face to consolidate the effort and see how best the deliverables can be applied in different settings.

Moreover, some respondents were very much concerned about the internet connectivity. Therefore, they suggested that supervisors (lecturers) should ensure that
there is reliable internet connectivity. The supervisors also need to monitor the chat
room so that inactive members can be dealt with. Below are some of the students’
suggestions:

“Lecturers should try to eliminate factors such as inactive members and slow internet
connection” [P1: Q8].

“Chat rooms should be controlled daily in order to spot inactive members” [P5: Q8].

One respondent made a very important recommendation that lecturers/academics
should advise the Facebook team on making the Facebook website more academically
complementary. This is what the respondent said:

“Lecturers and the entire academic team need to contact the Facebook administrative
team so that they can give suggestions on how best Facebook can suit to be used for
academic purposes rather than for socialisation only” [P2, Q8].

Furthermore, participants recommended that before implementing the international
collaborative learning on any social media platforms such as Facebook, lecturers
should make sure that all students understood how the social media platform
(Facebook) works because they felt that once a member of the group does not know
how to use Facebook for example, it will adversely affect other members of the group.

In addition, one respondent felt that lecturers in charge need to understand the content
of the project and know the structure of activities suitable to be conducted on
Facebook. Below are the participants’ direct words:

“Remain focused and ensure the uses of appropriate structures and strategies of
instructions to use on Facebook” [P10, Q8].
“Lecturers should know the questions of the activity carried out by students on Facebook because students may contact them anytime when they get stuck” [P3, Q6].

From the above comments, it is evident that Facebook is a good platform to promote international collaborative learning, provided that both parties (lecturers and students) take into consideration the necessary measures.

4.5.2 Advice for students using Facebook for collaborative learning (students’ perspective)

Participating students were asked to give advice to other students on what to take into account when using Facebook for collaborative learning. The following are the recommendations raised by the participants:

“Participants should always be active, make positive contributions and observe cyber safety and cyber ethics” [P2: Q7].

“Students need to exercise self-discipline and stick to the tasks given unlike diverting attention to other issues and other websites during the group work session” [P4: P7: Q7].

“Students need to welcome new initiatives and use the platform to learn” [P5: Q7].

“Take this opportunity with open arms and be willing to learn new concepts from your international fellow participants” [P6: Q7].

“It is a good opportunity and should rather be used for the purpose it is intended for if they do not share your personal information with strangers online” [P11: Q7].

“Respect other users and be mindful of cyber predators” [P12: Q7].
Notably, participants expressed that for students using Facebook as a platform for international collaborative learning project, there are numerous factors to take into consideration. These factors range from cyber safety and ethics, active engagements, and self-discipline among the peers.

### 4.5.3 Recommendations on using Facebook for international collaborative learning (lecturers’ perspective)

Participants gave the following suggestions for better use of Facebook in education for international collaborative learning:

- It is very important for both students and lecturers to understand the purpose and objectives of the collaboration.

- When engaging in collaboration, students and lecturers should expect the unexpected, because sometimes the planned activities may not work out as planned.

- The implementers need to be conscious of the type of assignments to be conducted on social media such as Facebook.

- Collaboration should be conducted with universities that have a common understanding of the issues at hand.

- To avoid unnecessary delays, all students and moderators involved in the collaboration should have access to a computer, laptop, tablet or smartphone with reliable internet connectivity.

- Lecturers and moderators on the collaboration should have an understanding of internationalisation of learning.
• Students, lecturers and moderators should be encouraged to have patience, to be flexible and to recognise that things might be changed in the process, including deadlines, assessment criteria, topics and even the requirements of the assignments.

• The process should be considered to be more crucial than the end product.

• Students should rehearse with their peers who have done it before (lecturers should use the concept of “community of practice”).

Generally, Facebook appears to be a suitable social media platform to host international collaborative learning, provided proper arrangements and consultations are deliberated.

4.5.4 Analysis of framework: Linking the findings to the TPACK Framework

Table 4.5: An analysis of the TPACK framework

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The TPACK framework underpins this study and it is crucial to unpack and identify the students’ combination of essential skills/knowledge in three areas (content,
pedagogy, and technology) that are required if teachers are to integrate technology to greatest effect in their teaching (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). The researcher analyses the findings of the study based on the TPACK framework.

The TPACK framework helped the researcher to recognise the six components needed to carry out activities during the collaborative learning. Such components include the knowledge and skills to be possessed in education. The researcher unpacked and placed the identified knowledge and skills into categories according to the research questions and interview questions that were addressed, for both students and lecturers. Table 4.7 above shows the presence of the six components in the research questions and the interview questions.

4.6 Summary

This chapter presented the data gathered from sources such as respondents (lecturers and UNAM students), lesson plan deliverables and Facebook page activities. The researcher used the interview guide to obtain the information from the respondents. Notably, the findings of the study revealed that the collaborative learning project built UNAM students’ global competencies because they were able to share knowledge on the subject matter with their international peers from different backgrounds and various life dimensions.

Although the collaborative learning project met the intended objectives and outcomes, there were numerous limitations encountered throughout the implementation of this project, such as internet connectivity, different curricula, different academic calendars as well as the incompatible academic expectations among students.
In addition, in regards to the TPACK framework used in the study, the data revealed that the students had the required knowledge of the subject matter to execute what was required of them. Remarkably, the findings were also positive on the technological and pedagogical knowledge in using the selected online platform. This could be attributed to the fact that the students were technology-literate. Contrarily, the findings also highlighted some shortfalls on the UNAM students’ side as some of them were not responding timely to their fellow students. This could be aligned with the unavailability and inaccessibility of internet, different priorities, and levels of perseverance among UNAM students.

The next chapter presents the discussions pertaining to the research findings, linking them to the TPACK framework. Conclusions and recommendations of the study are also made in the next Chapter.
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the discussion of the findings, conclusions made from the study, and some recommendations. The discussion focuses on key aspects addressed in the research questions. It starts with the key aspects such as general information of the participants of the study, general impression of the research participants, benefits of the WPU-UNAM collaboration, challenges encountered, strategies to minimise these challenges, and a discussion on how the results relate to the TPACK framework. Furthermore, the limitations of the study are discussed. Conclusions are then drawn from the study and recommendations to improve practices for international collaborative learning using online platforms, particularly Facebook, are made. Lastly, the chapter highlights areas that need further research.

5.2 Summary of the findings

According to the findings of this study, the international collaborative learning project promoted global competencies among the participating students. These findings are in line with aim of this study, which was to examine the use Facebook as a platform for international collaborative learning and to determine whether this exercise yielded the intended outcomes or not. Evidence from the study shows that the students were able to exchange knowledge and skills. In addition, the students were able to create technology-infused lesson plans and other ways of integrating technology in teaching and learning. This exercise reinforced critical thinking and creativity among students, while at the same time preparing them to be efficient in their fields of study.
Despite the numerous commendations that emerged from the study, there were several challenges experienced including: limited internet connectivity, differences in the content, differences in time zones, lack of commitment among students, monitoring of issues, and different academic calendars. These challenges require immediate attention in order to fill the gaps identified in the study. The study also found that WPU and UNAM have eLearning policies but with limited emphasis on the use of social media in education. However, both institutions do not have policies for internationalisation of higher education.

Based on the gaps identified, the researcher makes recommendations related to practices and for future research (see Subsection 5.6.2). These recommendations will reinforce the use of social media at university level, especially for nationalising and internationalising of higher education services through collaboration.

The study used a TPACK framework which supported the researcher to thoroughly unpack the findings of the study for better recommendations.

5.3 Discussion of the findings

5.3.1 General information of the participants in the study

This study shows that students enrolled for the Master of Education degree that specialised in Educational Technology at UNAM during the academic years 2014 and 2015 included both males and females, although the males were the more than females. This aspect is beyond the scope of this study but it has elicited a question in the mind of the researcher as to why male students are more likely to enrol for a Technology course than female students, even though female overall postgraduate students were the majority at UNAM for the academic years 2014 and 2015.
In terms of the students’ profiles, the eighty (8) participants were secondary education teachers (Grade 11-12); none of them were pre-lower or upper-primary teachers (see Table 4.2). This raises questions as to why only teachers at secondary school level enrolled in this course.

For curiosity sake, another observation made by the researcher is that the lecturers’ profiles indicated that both lecturers who were in charge of the UNAM-WPU collaborative learning were female. This could be explained by the fact that both were PhD holders with countless years of experience in the field of instructional technology, media and educational technology. Their interests and inspirations were centred on the promotion of the use of eLearning systems and social media in higher education nationally and beyond (see Table 4). This could be another influential force behind this initiative of the WPU-UNAM collaborative learning on social media.

5.3.2 Students’ general impression and experiences from the UNAM-WPU collaboration on Facebook

Most students expressed that the collaborative learning project with their international counterparts was a good initiative. They further narrated that it provided them with opportunities to interact and share knowledge and skills on several aspects with students from different backgrounds. These opportunities include: the opportunity to gain better understanding on the global educational issues; the reinforcement of critical thinking and creativity; and learning the culture of team work as well as the culture of working with peers from diverse backgrounds. The South African Policy Framework for the Internationalisation of Higher Education recognises that an international collaborative learning process can integrate or infuse the intercultural, international and global dimensions among students that include advancing the goals, functions and
delivery of higher education services, while enhancing the quality of education and the research agenda (Republic of South Africa, 2017). Thune and Welle-Strand (2012) also assert that the internationalisation of education provides students with the knowledge and skills on global perspectives, and gives students the opportunity to discuss and debate comparative issues.

Furthermore, Dooly and Villanueva (2006) argue that the internalisation of teacher education can expose teachers to multicultural ideologies, multi-skills and intercultural awareness, and promote global-minded citizens. Similarly, this study confirmed that students, through collaborative learning online with international students, can gain exposure to better ideas of designing technology-integrated lesson plans, appreciate the use of technology in education, and have a chance to know how to work on educational activities with international students. It is evident that the international collaboration in this study served its purpose of internationalising education. Separate studies conducted by LaRue (2012) and Oberer et al. (2015) confirmed that the use of Facebook in education brings better results. Therefore, faculty members should encourage the use of social media for collaborative learning among students.

Furthermore, collaborative learning does not only benefit students academically, but it also saves time and reduces costs. This is because students will not be required to travel long distances beyond their national borders in order to collaborate on a project. Kaplan and Haenlein (2016) and Ranier (2011) support the notion of using social media in education as it brings students and faculty members together with limited resources. It is therefore important that institutions of higher learning consider using social media such as Facebook for collaboration, bearing in mind the current economic crises in most countries.
The participating students were impressed about how Facebook could be used for international collaborative learning. However, the students raised some concerns and suggested that hosting collaborative learning on Facebook needs the moderators to closely and continuously monitor the process. Willems and Bateman (2009) concur that there is a need for a policy that promotes responsible use of social media in higher education. Thus, the study recommends that faculty members in learning institutions should always ensure that there are enough moderators to monitor the entire process as well as ensuring that all students are actively participating in the project’s activities. At the same time, there is a need for higher education to have policies that regulate the use of Facebook and other social media platforms in higher education.

In contrast, some of the students who participated in this study mentioned the issue of nervousness when they started the dialogue with international students. Walker (2012) posits that although collaborative learning is extremely beneficial, the process is never flawless, thus, a safe and friendly ground should be created for students beforehand. This study has identified a need to provide students with a platform to know each other on a Facebook page before the actual project’s activities begin in order to minimise suspicions among students.

Moreover, it emerged from this study that there are many opportunities on Facebook for collaborative learning (see Chapter 4). Barnes (2012) suggests several social media (Twitter, Myspace, Friendster, Google+, LinkedIn and Badoo etc.) that can allow users to communicate using various applications within these platforms (e.g. chatting, discussion forums/groups, microblogging, nudging, and live videos). These platforms also present potential opportunities for universities to network and collaborate, with the guidance of institutional policies for better outcomes. Jernigan and Mistree (2009)
assert that the primarily purpose of Facebook is to bring together users from all corners of the world and it is the most commonly used social media. For this reason, Facebook has been thus far the best online tool to use for the promotion of national and international collaborative learning in higher education institutions. Such practices would empower students to meet the demands of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century in the education sector.

The participants in this study made valuable suggestions for applications within Facebook that can be used to establish the relevance of content and to direct the attention of its members towards particular items such as: the ‘write a post’ space, the ‘upload file’ icon, the ‘comment’ icon, ‘notifications’, and the ‘like’ button (see Chapter 4). Inclusively, these features would be helpful as indicators of the relevance of Facebook in education. In addition, Facebook offers its users a calendar in order to coordinate dates, to plan, and to market events of all kinds digitally. This could be helpful for students and lecturers to plan their activities in time slots that suit them. It is equally important to take note that using Facebook for international collaborative learning can be frustrating sometimes if students have limited access to ICT facilities and limited exposure to virtual collaborative learning. In fall 2010, (Dewan and Ganley, 2010) 99 percent of public schools in the United States had access to the internet. In Africa, internet connection remain a priority in schools and speeds are a significant barrier (Williams, Pitchforth & O’Callaghan (2014; Chapter 4: page 81). Thus, collaborative learning would be more convenient if conducted with sufficient access to ICT facilities, constant awareness raising among students, monitoring, and taking into consideration the type of students participating in the project as well as their learning styles.
Cyber ethics and cyber bullying were some of the concerns raised by a few participants. At the same time, there were many students who never experienced any sort of threats during the collaborative learning. Notably, students who felt unsafe were the same students who mentioned that they had never had Facebook accounts before. The experiences of threats could therefore be attributed to limited exposure to Facebook and awareness on safer use of Facebook. Haipinge (2013) concurs that social media has the potential to support networked learning, however, critical social media literacy is required to help students to deal with the large amount of information they interact with critically, and also to share the content on social media with a critical mind. It is evident therefore that the students who experienced such problems might have lacked knowledge of safer ways of using Facebook. Thus, social media literacy and awareness is a critical aspect for all students before starting to work on any kind of activity on social media to ensure students’ safety on social media.

Furthermore, students may also need to be advised to customise their general Facebook accounts settings such as chat room, privacy, security, login, timeline, tagging and notification settings to mitigate problems with online predators. Peters et al. (2015) state that Facebook users are allowed to privatise their personal information as per the users’ preferences. In addition, using Facebook for educational purposes may be troublesome because users may encounter a number of frequent interferences that can divert their attention from their actual academic tasks. At the same time, students may experience unexpected technical breakdowns, which may be beyond their control. On the other hand, some students may have experience difficulties in retrieving previous posts or get annoyed by friend requests from many cyber predators as well text messages from the internet scammers or just by irrelevant posts and tags on their timelines as the Facebook site is getting commercialized swiftly. The faculty members
in charge of such collaborative learning are therefore required to be mindful of these unexpected hindrances. Additionally, the faculty members in charge need to ensure that students participating in the collaborative learning where internet is involved should possess the necessary technological knowledge.

5.3.3 Lecturers’ general impression and experiences from the UNAM-WPU collaboration on Facebook

As shown in Table 4.5, students were assigned to groups according to their areas of focus per subject and teachers. The grouping did not only consider the subject areas of the teachers but also took into consideration the size of the group. Smaller groups were created for easier moderation and to supervise students better on the Facebook page.

The main purpose of the WPU-UNAM collaborative task was to allow students to design the technology-integrated lesson plans according to the Namibian curriculum. Therefore, the students’ tasks were assessed with a rubric aligned to the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) coaching standards. This means that the tasks were adopted for the Namibian context with the idea of assisting the UNAM students to design the ICT-infused lesson plans from an international perspective so that they could use them in a real life class situation.

WPU students were pursuing their courses online and there were no face-to-face contact sessions, and the WPU-UNAM collaboration was one of their major assignments. Having the UNAM students sharing the experience with international students through a widespread understanding of online learning gave the UNAM students a better chance to share ideas and learn cultures and to understand issues from different perspectives.
Notably, in 2015, the collaborative learning between UNAM and UNAM continued, but with a different cohort of people consisting of Guyana teachers, UNAM students, and WPU students. Each of these groups had a separate Facebook page. The difference from the 2014 collaboration was the placing of students into groups on different Facebook pages, unlike in 2014 when they all had groups of people on one Facebook page. This study strongly supports this initiative and recommends that it should be reinforced in future collaborations due to the fact that there was a significant increase in the number of students in the collaboration of 2015 compared to 2014 as reflected in Table 4.5 and Table 4.6. Significantly, such an arrangement could make it easier for learner supervision, lessening distractions among students, and making the platform a safer place for group members as some students may be confused by the number of students on the collaborative groups on the Facebook page.

Although the lecturers interviewed mentioned that both universities were in possession of eLearning policies. It remains worrisome in terms of the application of social media at UNAM and WPU. This could be because the current eLearning policies at these collaborating universities had little emphasis on the use of social media for international collaborative learning. Therefore, it is necessary for UNAM and WPU to review their policies to ensure their policies have sufficient emphasis on the use of social media for national and international collaborative learning.

Another point worth discussing is the absence of an internationalisation of higher education policy at UNAM and WPU. It appears that the absence of such a policy may have a serious impact on the educational services’ collaboration. This could be because there is no guide that helps to set up the project correctly. For instance, the South African Policy Framework for Internationalisation of Higher Education (2017) is clear
on this point, that the related national policies and institutional policies are very crucial. Such policies are very important because they have a role to: provide high level principles and guidelines, set broad parameters, and provide a national framework for internationalisation of higher education within which higher education institutions can develop and align their institutional policies and strategies. Therefore, the absence of internationalisation of higher education policies at UNAM and WPU would raise concerns regarding the custom in which the internationalisation of learning between the two universities was conducted without working policies for internationalisation of higher education.

Generally, policies are very important documents, thus, countries are expected to have frameworks for internationalisation so that institutions of higher learning can make use of them to direct the internationalisation of education services.

A positive finding was that the information extracted from the Facebook collaboration page demonstrates a high level of engagement during the collaborative learning (see Figures 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5). The page shows 38 updates/posts, which indicates that both students and their lecturers were posting ideas on new developments of the project. The interaction and engagement included 132 comments, 16 document uploads, and 61 ‘likes’, with only 2 shared links on the Facebook page (Figure 4.2). These records are ample proof that there was a high level of interaction during the collaborative learning.

During the international collaboration, lecturers observed positive attitudes and behaviours among students and students developed friendships, shifting from just academic peers to personal friends. Students were willing to work in a team, and were excited about the initiative in general. Bran (2016) argues that without positive
attitudes and behaviours, students have little chance of learning proficiently. These are clear indications that the students appreciated the initiative.

Moreover, these aspects can affect the collaborative learning process, the learning climate and students’ participation in the classroom tasks. Importantly, lecturers involved in the collaborative learning should ascertain better strategies to influence positive attitudes and behaviours. In the same vein, lecturers should also check possible feelings of students which might interfere with the learning and should ensure that all students are feeling safe and comfortable with each other. Additionally, the platform, environment, and questions of the tasks given should be selected in a sensitive manner to dispel fear, anxiety and low self-esteem among students.

Despite numerous commendable observations, the results confirmed that although WPU students showed the eagerness to make fast progress, the UNAM students demonstrated a partial sense of urgency to finish the tasks. The findings from the UNAM students revealed that they were delayed by limited and slow internet connectivity. Moderators of this kind of project should ensure that the students involved in the collaborative activities have equitably access to the internet. This can help the assessors to understand whether the success or failure of the project can be attributed to technological knowledge, pedagogical knowledge gap, lack of resources, or lack of motivation among students.

5.3.4 Benefits of international collaborative learning

This study found that the UNAM-WPU international collaborative learning project benefited the students in several ways. One of those benefits was that students were able to compare and contrast the quality of education between the two universities. Also, the students learned to work together.
Generally, teachers’ collaborative learning is usually associated the improvement of students’ performance and better grades (Ronfeldt, Farmer, McQueen, & Grissom, 2015). However, in the 21st century, collaborative learning is aligned with the promotion of global competency skills. This study found that the WPU-UNAM collaboration aligned its objectives with the global competency skills (see Chapter 1). Furthermore, the study confirmed that the WPU-UNAM collaboration brings transformation among students in many ways, including critical thinking, innovation, culture of team work, mixed cultures or international engagement with other students, acceptance of using technology in the learning approach, gaining of first-hand experience by students, and learning new concepts on the subject matter. These same aspects were also found in Willard’s (2005) and Walker’s (2012) studies. Worth noting from this study therefore is that the WPU and UNAM collaboration undoubtedly built students’ global competency skills.

On the contrary, although the students confirmed the transformation that came with the WPU and UNAM collaboration, a thorough follow up study should be conducted to examine the applicability and the impact of the benefits of the WPU-UNAM collaboration skills in the students’ academic life.

5.3.5 Challenges experienced by students

Students encountered challenges during the international collaborative learning process ranging from limited internet connectivity, differences in time zones, differences in the curricula, lack of commitment among students, and delayed feedback from their fellow students. These challenges are discussed in the following subsections.
5.3.5.1 Differences in time zones

The issue of time zones was a challenge because students’ countries are not in the same time zone. The main challenge was that, when the WPU students were expecting feedback from the UNAM students, it was not possible to receive the feedback on time. For example, when it is day-time in Namibia, it is night time in New Jersey. Thus, differences in time zones contributed to the delays of feedback among students. However, students were advised to be patient and to work on their tasks during the times that suited them in order to minimise the challenges that came with those time differences. It may be more effective if the international collaborations are planned taking into consideration the strengths of collaboration among universities that fall within the same time zone to minimise the challenge of delayed feedback.

5.3.5.2 Differences in the curricula

Curriculum is another aspect that requires serious consideration. This study found that students’ challenges with the curricula related to the subject-content which were not the same. Le, Janssen and Wubbels (2017) allude that the nature of productive collaboration can be better understood and articulated when social goals and discourse practices interact with knowledge-building processes that lead to co-construction of understanding. Although the study revealed that students were advised to concentrate only on areas that were aligned to their subject-content, the commonality goals and discourse practices of the institutions involved are critical aspects. The institutions of higher education need to collaborate on specific tasks within the curricula that universities have in common. This may not only improve students’ performance but it can also enhance students’ global competencies that will prepare them to meet the demands of the 21st century.
5.3.5.3 Lack of commitment and delayed feedback

Collaborative assignments ought to receive equal support from all group members. However, some students were reported to be passive and taking long to give feedback to their peers during collaborations. These delays were attributed to time zones and poor internet access issues. However, lack of commitment among students was found to be another contributing factor. Lack of commitment does not only affect the smooth-running of the tasks, but can also cause frustration and apprehension among other students who are keen to complete tasks on time. Le et al. (2018) warn that when it comes to group work, some students may decide to participate less than others because the task is not perceived to be a true group task that requires the input of all group members. In such cases, lecturers in charge should try to embrace activities that encourage students’ higher level of participation.

5.3.5.4 Anxiety and low-self confidence

The results from students revealed that there was some sort of anxiety and low self-esteem among some of the UNAM students. These anxieties affected students’ motivation at the beginning of the collaboration. The anxiety and low self-esteem could be attributed to the psychological fear of interacting with peers from other universities from different educational, cultural, economic, linguistic, political, and geographical backgrounds.

5.3.5.5 The nature of the platform

The findings of the study showed that Facebook was an inconvenient tool to host the collaborative learning considering limited ICT resources. Another issue raised was the challenge regarding the impossibility of multiple users to work on same document at
the same time. These issues affected the progress of students’ work to be completed timely. It is essential that assignments hosted on social media such as Facebook should be thoroughly planned, enabling input of both students and lecturers to ensure efficient teamwork and to attain the intended learning outcomes. Most importantly, the collaborative learning should pay more attention to the process that shapes students’ perspectives rather than focusing on the assessment merits.

Furthermore, despite the shortcomings of using Facebook as a learning platform, the social platform is economical, widely spread and very flexible in terms of synchronous and asynchronous communication. Currently, most social media, including Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter and many more, have the weakness of accommodating a high volume of active members who dominate the discussions, while the passive members can become more dormant and sluggish. This is because the communication is conducted in text-message form, which limits other communicative hints such as body and verbal languages. Thus, a quiet student may not find it easy to replay immediately, or may simply be unsure of how to respond to a certain comment. For this reason, students should be closely monitored and continuously encouraged to return to the platform.

5.3.5.6 Access to internet

Limited internet connectivity and limited access to ICT facilities were the other constraints experienced by UNAM students. These issues affected the collaboration process and made the Facebook platform inconvenient for collaboration, particularly in remote areas with limited internet and network coverage. This study found that the issue of internet connectivity was addressed by UNAM by providing every registered UNAM student with a modem device (3G) during registration. However, when
students were interviewed on the efficiency of these devices, their responses indicated that the internet/modem devices were very slow and therefore unreliable in this regard. Wilder and Boer (2015) warns that when implementing a virtual project that relies on technology, one needs to make sure that all students have access to technology facilities. This means that the responsible department should ensure that the modem devices (3G) provided to UNAM students are loaded with internet data and that the internet connection speed is optimal throughout the collaboration process.

Currently, the University of Namibia has made strides to ensure that there is unlimited wireless internet access at all UNAM campuses. The internet can be accessed within the vicinity of all UNAM campuses. In the case of this study, the internet was the only issue noted amongst the students because the WPU-UNAM project was conducted with postgraduate students who were based outside the UNAM campuses. The students were mostly part-time students at the university and were full time employees in different regions of Namibia.

5.3.6 Challenges experienced by lecturers

Faculty members are faced with various obstacles when they are implementing collaborative learning. Le et al. (2018) stress that problems that teachers encounter are also likely to affect collaborating students. These obstacles may vary, depending on the nature of learning tasks, university calendars, students’ attitudes and behaviours, mode of collaboration, availability of relevant facilities, collaboration skills of both students and lecturers, as well as the geographical location of students and lecturers engaged in the collaboration. Thus, it is crucial to address the challenges beforehand.

Teachers are likely to face challenges while structuring collaborative activities such as monitoring students’ on-task behaviour, managing group-work time, providing
relevant materials, assigning individual roles, and establishing teamwork beliefs and behaviours (Gillies & Boyle, 2010). Worth noting from this study are the structural challenges experienced from the UNAM side and from the WPU side, which interfered with the collaboration process, including monitoring issues, delayed feedback and cultural difference issues (in term of priorities among students), overlapping of time, and the academic calendars of the universities that were not falling in the same months.

5.3.6.1 Group size issues

For the 2014 intake, all four groups of students worked on their tasks on the same Facebook page. The lecturers found it complicated for them to follow and monitor individual the students’ progress. At the same time, lecturers also noticed that it was confusing for students to work on their tasks in their respective groups on the same Facebook page. On the other hand, for the 2015 intake, lecturers considered structuring each group task on a separate Facebook page. The 2015 collaboration approach had many benefits for the collaboration which resulted in less challenges among students and made it easier for the lecturer to follow each student’s participation. However, it required each Facebook page to be dedicated to one lecturer for monitoring, which was a challenge as there were no sufficient lecturers available at the time. This challenge could have been addressed with proper planning prior to the collaboration for necessary arrangements.

The findings of the study also shown that, the hosting of international collaboration on social media platforms such as Facebook needs to incorporate sufficient and competent lecturers and monitoring of student group discussions. This is recommended on the grounds that incompetent staff may not adequately model appropriate collaborative
behaviour, and may affect the quality of the collaborative process (Van De Pol, Volman, & Beishuizen, 2011).

5.3.6.2 Lack of commitment and delayed feedback

As mentioned earlier, the study found that UNAM students were taking time to give feedback, which frustrated their international peers since their academic marks depended on these collaboration tasks. The findings from students interviewed from the UNAM side confirmed the issue of delayed responses. The delayed responses were associated with limited internet connectivity and different time zones. The issue of cultural differences in terms prioritisation among students was found to be another contributing factor for the delayed feedback. Le et al. (2018) concur that an individual student’s decision whether to actively participate in collaborative tasks or not depends on how much they value the importance of equal participation from all group members. These factors affect the lecturers’ management of the collaboration process. Thus, when the collaboration task leads to grades, there is a need to reconsider other forms of activities that will attract students’ participation. On the other hand, Popov, Brinkman, Biemans, Mulder, Kuznetsov and Noroozi (2012) allude to interaction problems during collaboration that are associated with lack of collaboration skills among students that hinder them from engaging in group work. It is therefore important that students be motivated and prepared for the collaboration tasks in advance for better collaboration outcomes. The results of this study are silent on whether lecturers and students had collaboration skills and the impact this might have had on the collaboration process. There is therefore a need to uncover this area in future studies.
Furthermore, this study has identified possible ways of addressing the issue of delayed feedback due to limited internet connection. These ways include ensuring availability of fast internet connectivity throughout the collaboration process. In this study, this was a challenge since the collaboration took place between part-time postgraduate students, most of whom were employed on a fulltime basis and lived in different regions, and the timeframe that was required to complete the study was limited. Such collaboration might be more effective for undergraduate students registered for fulltime studies, because Wi-Fi coverage is available at all UNAM campuses.

**5.3.6.3 Different academic calendars and overlapping of time**

Time overlap and different academic calendars are among the challenges that were often encountered during the UNAM-WPU collaboration. These issues did not only affect the progress of the tasks, but it caused inconveniences and frustrations among students. However, it is rare to find international universities (European/United States) that have the same academic calendars as the University of Namibia. In this light, universities in collaboration could have agreed to harmonise their schedules to accommodate both UNAM and WPU, and such inconveniences and frustrations could have been avoided.

**5.4 Linking TPACK framework to the findings**

The TPACK framework proposes six sets of knowledge (Graham, Borup, & Smith, 2012; Koehler, Mishra, Shin, & Graham, 2011) required when integrating technology into teaching. The sets of knowledge asserted in literature according to Mishra and Koehler (2009) are: content knowledge (CK), pedagogical knowledge (PK), technological knowledge (TK), technological content knowledge (TCK),
technological pedagogical knowledge (TPK), and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK).
Table 5.1: Analysis of data in relation to the TPACK Framework

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<th>TPACK Analytical Categories</th>
<th>Research Questions (RQ) addressing TPACK</th>
<th>Interview Questions (IQ) addressing TPACK</th>
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Table 5.1 illustrates the six sets of the TPACK knowledge combinations and how they were linked with the results of the study in line with the research questions and interview questions. The link between the six sets of the TPACK framework and the research questions and interview questions are discussed in more detail below.

5.4.1 Content knowledge (CK) of lecturers and students

Table 5.1 illustrates that the research questions and the interview questions were linked to the TPACK framework. The tasks required students to possess content knowledge of the subject matter. The participating lecturers and students were all educators by profession, which made them experts in their fields after having taught for many years. The students were able to complete the collaborative tasks with good grades/marks (see Figure 4.7).
5.4.2 Pedagogical knowledge (PK) of lecturers and students

Lecturers were not satisfied with the 2014 instructional strategy of the collaborative learning. Therefore, for the 2015 collaboration, they made efforts to restructure and reorganise activities. The reorganisation of the course on Facebook from 2014 to 2015 was a result of awareness and reflection on what went well and what needed to be done better to improve the pedagogical knowledge practices. As stated earlier, these lecturers had extensive teaching and training years of experiences. Thus, they chose Facebook to facilitate the collaborative learning as the better instructional methods.

5.4.3 Technological knowledge (TK) of lecturers and students

To execute collaborative learning on Facebook, there is a need to possess knowledge on the use of Facebook. Table 4.2 and Table 4.4 show that the students and lecturers who participated in the 2014 and 2015 collaboration were technologically literate. Students were pursuing studies in educational technology and lecturers had been in this field for many years. Thus, technological knowledge was not a challenge during the collaboration process. In addition, only one student complained about the cyber threats. The some students were able to use social media without facing any challenges because Facebook has features that one can set to privatise one’s account and limit such threats.

Moreover, the relative advantage of choosing Facebook was evident in the success of the students as shown in the results from the collaboration (see Figure 4.7). Notably, the majority of students had personal Facebook accounts and only a few created the accounts to participate in the collaboration activity. Additionally, the choice of Facebook above other social media was informed by the fact that the majority of students already had Facebook accounts and that Facebook was easy to use.
However, students suggested that educators planning to use Facebook amongst other online platforms such as Edmodo and Moodle should ensure that all students have a good understanding on how Facebook works.

5.4.4 Pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) of lecturers and students

The use of Facebook was well received by most students, which was evident from the ratings given by students on the efficiency of using Facebook during international collaborative learning. The Facebook page was highly rated for being simple to use and for being the most widespread social media used by a large number of students and faculty members. In addition, the students acknowledged that Facebook can be a good tool for education and not only for socialisation. The instructional strategy model of the collaboration was visible and could be replicated easily by the Masters students in a school setting. This study recommends further exploration of Facebook as an important tool in the education process.

5.4.5 Technological content knowledge (TCK) of lecturers and students

Students demonstrated a high level of good ethics, team work, innovation, critical thinking, learning new strategies and new concepts of the subject matter, and interacting with students from different socio-economic backgrounds (educational, cultural, geographical, and religious backgrounds).

5.4.6 Technological pedagogical knowledge (TPK) of lecturers and students

In 2014, the students had worked on the activities on the same Facebook page, and they were not able to work smoothly on their group tasks concurrently. Thus, the students suggested that the learning tasks to be performed on Facebook should be easy to do and should not bring confusion. Despite this challenge, students remained
positive about the use of Facebook for international collaborative learning as it was a very useful initiative for them.

The study recommends that lecturers should use or choose the most appropriate instructional strategies and methods suitable for a particular learning task. This can be challenging if the approaches are incompatible from country to country.

5.5 Conclusions

Three major conclusions were drawn from this study and are presented below.

Firstly, the study found that Facebook can be used for international collaborative learning to promote students’ global competency skills. This conclusion emerged from the finding that UNAM and WPU educational postgraduate lecturers managed to implement a collaborative learning project for the 2014 and 2015 intake educational technology postgraduate students on Facebook. The study confirmed that the students completed the project and they were exposed to global competency skills such as: working with peers from different socio economic, cultural, geographical, and religious backgrounds; working as a team; being innovative; critical thinking; problem solving skills; and they learned new strategies and concepts of the subject matter. The student-teachers confirmed that they were able to follow the technological instructional strategies in the classroom.

Secondly, in order to implement an effective international collaborative learning strategy using Facebook, Mishra and Koehler (2009) propose that students and faculty members involved have to possess the six sets of knowledge (see Section 2.2). The intersection of CK, PK, TK, TCK, PCK and TPK is vital for ideal technology use in teaching and learning. It provides the essential learning conditions needed for
achieving the intended learning outcomes. The students in this study were able to show their extended teaching experience in the field. The extended experience and skills among the participants are an indication that technology, instructional strategies and content knowledge was not a major challenge for both students and lecturers.

Commendably, the UNAM and WPU conducted the collaborative learning project on Facebook optimally, though the collaboration could have been enhanced if these institutions had policies on internationalisation of higher education. This conclusion is drawn from the numerous challenges that emerged from the results, ranking from internet connectivity, differences in academic calendars and differences in subject content. These challenges could have been minimised if there were relevant policy frameworks at both universities.

Thirdly, the results revealed that the lecturers were in good communication to determine the necessary logistics and relevant instructional strategies. It is evident that a good working relationship between lecturers is crucial in achieving success. Therefore, it is important to establish a win-win method so that both institutions may feel a sense of accomplishment and benefit from collaborative learning. As a result, the common goal to be achieved by the collaboration was that each of the participants in the course should gain experience in engaging with an international partner(s), sharing culture and sharing educational challenges and solutions.

5.6 Recommendations

The following recommendations warrant consideration, and they are divided into two categories, i.e., recommendations for practice and recommendations for future research.
5.6.1 Recommendations for practice

The researcher makes the following recommendations for practice:

1. The results indicated that 8 of 12 participants/students were working as Secondary School teachers (Grade 11-12), while none were Pre-lower or Upper Primary teachers. It is therefore recommended that Pre-lower and Upper Primary teachers should be encouraged to engage in trainings that allow them to gain knowledge and skills in the field of educational technology, exchange ideas with international teachers to find solutions to the educational problems that they have in common.

2. The study confirms the absence of an internationalisation of higher education policy, therefore, the researcher recommends that UNAM and WPU should develop a policy in this area to inform and provide guidance for internationalisation activities at both universities. Willems and Bateman (2009) note the “dearth of policy to promote the responsible and critical uses of such emergent technologies in academia.”

The study also confirms that UNAM and WPU have an eLearning policy which has minimal emphasis on the use of social media. The responsible centre/unit should revise this policy to ensure that it incorporates the use of social media in eLearning.

3. Students were anxious when they started the dialogue with international students. Therefore, this study recommends that students should be provided with an opportunity to know each other on a similar Facebook page to enhance their learning opportunities and to familiarise themselves with each other.
LaRue’s (2012) study confirmed incidences whereby Facebook was used by students to work on their learning activities. LaRue’s study revealed that students were provided with time to familiarise themselves with modes in which the information would be distributed. LaRue observed that this familiarisation gave the students flexibility, allowed peer teaching, and enhanced teamwork, critical thinking, and problem solving (LaRue, 2012).

4. Some students expressed concerns with security and privacy issues when they were working on their activities on Facebook, particularly those who never had Facebook accounts, but created them for the collaboration project. In the literature reviewed in this study, it was found that this issue was associated with limited exposure to Facebook or limited social media literacy (Haipinge, 2013). Haipinge (2013) confirms that critical media literacy is needed to help students to deal with the large amounts of information they interact with, and also to share educational content on social media. It is therefore recommended that lecturers should ensure that all students possess the necessary knowledge to work on tasks on social media such as Facebook.

5. Based on the gap identified, the researcher recommends that the institutions should consider the online international collaborative learning (OICL) framework as shown in Figure 5.1 (designed by the researcher). This framework can be used at institutions of higher education to implement OICL.
The institutions of higher learning should consider the following implementation guidelines for the OICL framework prior to the collaboration:

- **Collaborating institutions:** Institutions of higher learning are important source of innovation. Therefore, it is crucial for the universities/colleges that are forming partnership to identify institutions that are compatible that will enable innovation and global competencies. This process should be carried out even before even considering on how the collaboration might be, time, the impact it might has on the university and the country at large.
• **Time zone:** after identifying the relevant institution of higher education, it very important to determine differences in the time zones of the two countries for better planning. This aspect is very crucial to consider because it also has a major impact on the action plan collaboration. In cases where time zones are different, the universities should find strategies to find time windows to interact, this can be outside the normal working hours.

• **ICT facilities:** after flexibility is established in terms of time zones, there available facilities to facilitate the initiative. There should be available and accessible computers, smart phones or any other mobile devices with unlimited internet connectivity throughout the entire collaboration process.

• **Staff/Faculty Members:** when there are available ICT facilities, it advisable to have faculty members who can administer the collaboration. Faculty members usually already have workloads. Therefore, establishing and reconcile faculty members’ sense of responsibility during this process is crucial. Having experienced faculty members in the collaboration, particularly when is hosted online is equally important.

• **Students ‘ownership:** While it is important to have experienced and sufficient faculty members to administer the process, students readiness to engaged into the process is equal significant. Students might come with various expectations and intentions about their engagement into collaboration. These might affect the process positively or negatively. Therefore, Faculty members should be mindful of students’ expectations and intentions, and take them serious. Faculty members should ensure that students are engaged at all stages so that they can develop a sense of ownership towards the entire initiative.
• **Curricula:** While students’ sense of ownership, expectations and intentions are important, considering issues of curricula is equal crucial. Universities should ask questions such as: What do we have in common? How our curriculum different from that of our collaborating partners? What are some methods we can consider to ensure inclusivity in the collaboration?

• **Academic calendars:** if the collaborating universities’ academic calendars are different, universities should agree on the Plan of action to implement the project.

• **Timeframe:** Faculty members anticipating to host online international collaborative learning should ensure that students are given enough time to complete tasks while taking into consideration unforeseen circumstances.

• **Monitoring strategies:** before starting with the online collaborative learning, universities should ensure that there are enough faculty members to closely monitor students’ online progress.

• **Assessment strategies:** subject-lecturers from the collaborating universities should agree on a standardised criterion that will be used to assess students’ tasks.

A clear policy that incorporates the study recommendations will result in the institutions focussing on empowering staff to promote global competencies at the higher institutions of learning.

**5.6.2 Recommendations for future research**

The researcher recommends the following for future research.
Firstly, in Table 4.2, the results indicated that eight (8) of the twelve (12) participants were Secondary School teachers (Grade 11-12), while none were Pre-lower or Upper Primary teachers. Therefore, factors that motivate Secondary School teachers to enrol for the Educational Technology course should be uncovered. It is equally important to explore factors that prevent the Pre-lower and Upper Primary teachers to enrol for a Master’s degree in Educational Technology. After all, the Pre-lower and Upper Primary teachers are dealing with minor learners that need to be introduced to safe use of technology at a tender age. Thus, Educational Technology training for Pre-lower and Upper Primary teachers and Secondary School teachers is equally important.

Secondly, Figure 4.1 shows that more male students enrolled for Educational Technology than female students in the 2014 and 2015 academic years. Further exploration should be done to examine factors that motivate more male students to enrol in the Education Technology course than female students.

Thirdly, the international collaborative learning has been found to build students’ global competency. Thus, there is a need to examine the applicability of such skills and the impact these skills may have had on the schools/workstations of the students who were involved in the collaboration under study.

Lastly, the study confirmed that there was lack of commitment, delays in giving feedback from the UNAM students’ side, and cultural differences in terms of prioritisation, which frustrated their international peers. At the same time, it was found that the delays were also caused by the limited access to ICT facilities. Thus, it is not yet clear whether the delays were caused by the limited ICT facilities or by cultural differences among students. In addition, this study is silent on whether students had collaboration skills or not. Thus, the researcher recommends a study to determine the
level of students’ collaboration skills and how this may affect the collaboration process.

5.7 Limitations of the study

The study encountered three major challenges during the data collection phase.

The population of the study was made of two categories (students and lecturers), and it was a challenge to locate students since they were from different UNAM campuses, spread across the country and abroad, and teaching at different schools. Additionally, the contact numbers of some students that the researcher obtained from the faculty officer were no longer in use. As a result, it took more time than was planned for the researcher to complete the data collection process.

The research instruments’ reliability and validity was another challenge. When the researcher started with the interview process, some research questions prepared for students were not understood by the participants. This could be because the research instruments were not tested or pilot-tested prior to data collection. This resulted in delays, whereby the researcher had to stop the data collection process to amend the research instruments and then continued later when all questions had been reframed. This was done to ensure the reliability and validity of the research instruments.

Another challenge experienced was that the researcher was a participant/student and the supervisor of this study was among the lecturers who were interviewed. This minimised objectivity in the study, but it was somewhat rectified and balanced with views from fellow classmates and another cohort, and the other lecturer. The aim was to learn from the experience to make it better.
The last challenge experienced was that, when data collection resumed, it was discovered that some research participants had deactivated their Facebook accounts. This meant that even the activities that they had generated on Facebook in general had been deactivated, and the researcher and participants could not have access to such information except Facebook administrators. This affected the findings of the study in terms of generalisation of the findings concerning the Facebook activities.

5.8 Conclusion

Literature from various sources regarding international collaboration in higher education and the use of Facebook for education was thoroughly reviewed and a gap was identified, making this study necessary. Additionally, the perceptions of WPU and UNAM lecturers and students (and the Facebook page activities) were examined regarding the collaboration that was conducted between the two universities to promote students’ global competency skills. Important conclusions were drawn from the study.

UNAM and WPU should seriously consider the benefits of internationalised curricula which integrate the national context as well as the international experiences to enhance students’ global competency skills. Similarly, an exploration of social media packages other than Facebook is worthwhile to see what works best. Based on the conclusions of the study, the researcher gave recommendations for strengthening virtual international collaborative learning practices in higher education and areas that require further exploration were highlighted.
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APPENDIX A: STUDENTS’ INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview guide for the postgraduate students’ perceptions on the use of Facebook for collaborative learning to promote global competency at the University of Namibia and University of New Jersey.

Introduction

This interview guide is designed to find out your authentic perceptions on how you have used Facebook as a platform for a collaborative project among postgraduate participants of the University of Namibia and the William Paterson University of New Jersey in the Educational Technology project. This is not a test or any means of interrogating you. There is no correct or incorrect answer to the questions I will ask you. Your responses will never be linked to your name. Therefore, the principles of confidentiality and anonymity will be strictly adhered to. The information obtained will be only disseminated for the significance and purpose of this study.

Demographic Information of the participant

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Area /Subject taught</th>
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Participant’s perceptions on the use of Facebook in collaborative learning

1. What was your general impression on the collaborative learning project?

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2. As a student who participated in the international collaborative learning project on a Facebook page, what did you experience/learn from this exercise in terms of the following:

1. General communication with your international peers

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2. Cyber safety and cyber ethics

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3. Opportunities within Facebook platform international collaborative learning

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3. What benefits did you gain from this international collaborative learning project?

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4. What challenges did you encounter during the UNAM-WPU collaborative learning project?

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5. How did you overcome the challenges encountered during the UNAM-WPU collaborative learning project?

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6. What can you recommend for lecturers who would like to use Facebook as a platform for international collaborative learning project?

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7. What recommendations do you have for participants who are using Facebook as a platform for international collaborative learning projects?

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End of the interview
APPENDIX B: LECTURERS’ INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview guide for the lecturers’ perceptions on the use of Facebook for collaborative learning to promote global competence between the postgraduate students at the University of Namibia and the William Paterson University of New Jersey.

Introduction

This interview guide is designed to find out your authentic perceptions on how you have used Facebook as a platform for collaborative learning between the postgraduate participants of the University of Namibia and the William Paterson University of New Jersey in the Educational Technology project. This is not a test or any means of interrogating you. There is no correct or incorrect answer to the questions I will ask you. Your responses will never be linked to your name. Therefore, the principles of confidentiality and anonymity will be strictly adhered to. The information collected will be only disseminated for the significance and purpose of this study.

Duration of the interview: 45 minutes

Demographic Information of the participant

1. Gender: Male □ Female □

2. Name of the University □

3. Highest Qualification □ Specialisation □

Lecturers’ perceptions on the use of Facebook for collaborative learning

4. How was the collaborative project between the UNAM-WPU postgraduate participants structured?
5. As a lecturer who moderated the collaborative learning activities between the UNAM-WPU postgraduate participants, what did you consider when you were planning for this project?

6. Are there any institutional guidelines or policy on internationalisation of higher education using social media or any other e-learning tools at your university? If Yes, What are they saying on this aspect? If not, what are you recommending in this regard?

7. How was the nature of Facebook activities of the students during UNAM-WPU Teacher Collaboration on the Facebook Page?

8. What participants’ attitudes and behaviours did you observe during this collaborative learning project?
9. What global competency skills did you observe as a lecturer during the UNAM-WPU collaboration that students gained from this exercise using Facebook?

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10. What challenges did you encounter during the UNAM-WPU collaborative learning project?

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11. How did you overcome the challenges encountered during the UNAM-WPU collaborative learning project?

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12. How was the UNAM-WPU collaborative learning project monitored?

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12.1 How was the UNAM-WPU collaborative learning project assessed?

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12.2 Did the UNAM-WPU collaborative project attain the intended outcomes?
12.3 If yes, how was the outcome for each intake (UNAM participants only)?

12.3.1 Are they available and accessible by the researcher?

12.3.2 May I please have a copy of the UNAM participants’ results?

13. What can you recommend to your fellow lecturers who are collaborating or willing to collaborate with international universities using social media such as the Facebook platform?

End of the interview
APPENDIX C: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Ethical Clearance Reference Number: FOE/308/2017 Date: 10 October, 2017

This Ethical Clearance Certificate is issued by the University of Namibia Research Ethics Committee (UREC) in accordance with the University of Namibia’s Research Ethics Policy and Guidelines. Ethical approval is given in respect of undertakings contained in the Research Project outlined below. This Certificate is issued on the recommendations of the ethical evaluation done by the Faculty/Centre/Campus Research & Publications Committee sitting with the Postgraduate Studies Committee.

Title of Project: Promoting Global Competence At Higher Education Institutions: The Use Of Facebook In Collaborative Learning For Postgraduate Students: A Case Of University Of Namibia And William Patterson Uni-Versity, New Jersey.

Researcher: Julia Lettie Kashimba

Student Number: 200600591

Faculty: Faculty of Education

Supervisor(s): Dr. Perien Joniell Boer

Take note of the following:

(a) Any significant changes in the conditions or undertakings outlined in the approved Proposal must be communicated to the UREC. An application to make amendments may be necessary.

(b) Any breaches of ethical undertakings or practices that have an impact on ethical conduct of the research must be reported to the UREC.

(c) The Principal Researcher must report issues of ethical compliance to the UREC (through the Chairperson of the Faculty/Centre/Campus Research & Publications Committee) at the end of the Project or as may be requested by UREC.

(d) The UREC retains the right to:

(i) Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance if any unethical practices (as outlined in the Research Ethics Policy) have been detected or suspected,

(ii) Request for an ethical compliance report at any point during the course of the research.

UREC wishes you the best in your research.

Prof. P. Odonkor: UREC Chairperson

Ms. P. Claassen: UREC Secretary
APPENDIX D: APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

August 31, 2018
Dr. Charles Chata
Deputy Director for Academic, Research and Innovation
UNAM Katima Mulilo Campus

Dear Dr Chata

Subject: A request for approval to carryout research on “Promoting Global Competence at Higher Education Institutions: The Use of Facebook in Collaborative Learning for Postgraduate Students: The Case Study of the University of Namibia and William Patterson University, New Jersey”

I, Julia Lettie Kashimba, student number 200600591, studying for a Masters of Education (Educational Technology) at the University of Namibia under the supervision of Dr. Perien Jonieli Boer. I am hereby requesting for permission from your good office to conduct a research study that requires me to access the particulars (names and contact details) of postgraduate students enrolled for a Masters of Education during 2014/2015 academic year. This permission is needed for the researcher to obtain postgraduate students’ details from the office of the Assistant Faculty Officer. These particulars will enable the researcher to trace students’ current location in order make the necessary arrangements for interview purposes.

The purpose of the study is to examine the UNAM Master of Education (Educational Technology), postgraduate students’ perceptions on the collaborative learning they participated with the students from William Patterson University, New Jersey.

The main research question is: What are the UNAM and WPU lecturers and postgraduate students’ perceptions on the collaborative learning using Facebook as platform?

Secondary questions:
1. What benefits did the UNAM-WPU lecturers and postgraduate students identify when using Facebook to build their global competency skills?
2. What challenges did the UNAM-WPU lecturers and postgraduate students identify during the collaborative learning on Facebook?
3. What can be done to ensure the promotion of international collaborative learning at the University of Namibia using social media such as Facebook platform?

The interview will take approximately 40 minutes per student.
I have attached the following documents for further clarifications:

- Copy of the Certificate of Ethical Clearance,
- Students’ Informed consent letter, and
- Students’ Interview protocol

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Yours' sincerely,

Julia Lettie Kashimba
Postgraduate Student, University of Namibia
Student Number: 200600591

Approved
03/09/18
Deputy Director
Informed consent letter for inviting you to participate in a research study

Dear potential research participant,

You are cordially requested to allow me to interview for the study that I am planning to embark upon as part of my Master of Education degree academic fulfillment in the Department of Curriculum Instruction and Assessment Studies (CIAS) at the University of Namibia under the supervision of Dr. Perien Joniell Boer.

The purpose of the interview is to gather your authentic perceptions on the collaborative learning you have participated with your international fellow students from William Patterson University, New Jersey.

The interview take approximately 40 minutes and the interview questions will be based on the following research questions:

The main research question is: What are the UNAM and WPU lecturers and postgraduate students’ perceptions on global competence when used Facebook as platform?

Secondary questions:
1. What benefits did the UNAM-WPU lecturers and postgraduate students identify when using Facebook to build their global competency skills?
2. What challenges did the UNAM-WPU lecturers and postgraduate students identify during the collaborative learning on Facebook?
3. What can be done to ensure the promotion of international collaborative learning at the University of Namibia using social media such as Facebook platform?

Please note that this will not be sort of a test or any way to interrogates you. There will no correct or right answer to the question. The principles of confidentiality and anonymity will be strictly adhered. Remember that your responses will never being linked to your name. You also have the rights to participate or not to participate in the interview and to withdraw from the interview at any time you may feel so. Significantly, the information collected during this study will be only disseminated for the purpose of this study.

The confirmation regarding this research interview, can be done by signing below:

ACCEPTED ................................

May you require further clarifications, please contact me at +264 81 2975 981 or email: jikashimba@gmail.com

Your participation in this research interview will be highly appreciated.

Yours’ sincerely,

Julia Lettie Kashimba
Postgraduate Student at the University of Namibia