

INTERNATIONALISATION AT HOME AND INBOUND STUDENT INTEGRATION: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR EMERGING-ECONOMY UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract: *Universities in emerging economies have shifted from sending students abroad to receiving them, yet two research conversations that should guide this shift rarely connect. Internationalisation at home (IaH) promises intercultural learning for the majority of students who never study abroad, while the literature on international-student adaptation treats incoming students mainly as a group that needs support. This conceptual article integrates the two. Through an integrative review of research on internationalisation, acculturation, and cross-cultural adaptation, and drawing on Berry's acculturation model, Searle and Ward's distinction between sociocultural and psychological adaptation, the job demands-resources model, and intergroup contact theory, it positions the integration of inbound international students as the mechanism through which IaH delivers its promise on non-Western campuses. The framework proposes that institutional IaH conditions enable inbound student integration; that integration builds campus interculturality, meaning frequent and genuinely reciprocal intercultural contact; and that campus interculturality is the shared mechanism linking institutional effort to two outcomes, namely adaptation and retention for international students and intercultural competence for home students. Cultural distance, English-medium instruction in non-native-English settings, a multicultural and religious host context, and limited resources are proposed as emerging-economy boundary conditions, with Malaysia used as an illustrative case. Eight propositions are advanced, together with a research agenda and practical guidance for university managers and policymakers.*

Keywords: *internationalisation at home; international students; cross-cultural adaptation; intercultural competence; emerging economies; higher education*

Introduction

Over the past three decades, internationalisation has moved from the edge of higher-education policy to its centre. What began as a loose set of activities is now treated as a strategic, institution-wide effort to build an international, intercultural, and global dimension into the purpose and delivery of higher education (Knight, 2004; De Wit et al., 2015). One clear consequence has been a redrawing of the global map of student mobility. Countries that were once mainly senders of students have become receivers, and several emerging economies now present themselves as regional education hubs. Malaysia is a good example. A series of national plans, including the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015–2025 (Higher Education), set explicit enrolment targets and framed the country's change from a sending to a receiving nation as an economic and reputational priority (Abd Aziz & Abdullah, 2014; Abdullah et al., 2021).

For most of that history, internationalisation has been measured by mobility, that is, by the number of students and staff who cross borders. Since only a minority of students ever study abroad, this focus leaves the majority untouched by the intercultural learning that internationalisation is meant to develop (Beelen & Jones, 2015). Internationalisation at home (IaH) emerged to correct the imbalance. Beelen and Jones (2015) define it as the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments. IaH therefore shifts attention from the mobile few to the campus itself as a place of global learning, and its promise is inclusive: intercultural competence for every student, developed at home (Leask, 2015; Almeida et al., 2019).

One resource for this promise has been left under-theorised, namely the inbound international student. On a receiving campus, international students are the most immediate source of cultural diversity available to home students, and their presence is what makes intercultural learning at home possible without a passport. The scholarship that studies these same students, however, tells a different story. Research on international-student adaptation, grounded in acculturation theory (Berry, 1997) and in the distinction between sociocultural and psychological adaptation (Searle & Ward, 1990), portrays inbound students as sojourners who face culture shock, language barriers, and academic and social difficulties that institutions must help them overcome (Cao et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2018). Here the international student is a group to be supported rather than a resource to be used.

The two conversations seldom meet. IaH research treats inbound students as an implied input to home-student learning, but it rarely asks whether, or under what conditions, their presence actually produces that learning. The adaptation literature studies inbound students' experiences closely, but it treats their integration as an end in itself, cut off from the institution's wider internationalisation goals. What falls between them is an account of how inbound student integration and IaH are linked, and of the mechanism that would turn the simple co-presence of international and home students into intercultural learning for both.

This gap matters most in emerging-economy universities, for two reasons. First, the leading IaH and adaptation frameworks were developed mainly in Western, Anglophone settings, and they travel imperfectly to non-Western hosts (Almeida et al., 2019; Qu et al., 2024). Campuses in emerging economies often teach through English-medium instruction (EMI) in societies where English is not the first language, they are themselves culturally and religiously plural, and they work under tighter resource constraints (Yassin et al., 2020; Xue et al., 2025). Second, the stakes are practical. Where integration fails, international students withdraw, which puts at

risk the very enrolment targets on which these systems have built their strategies (Sulong, 2022).

Research gap. No existing framework explains how inbound international student integration and internationalisation at home are connected, or identifies the mechanism that turns the co-presence of international and home students into shared intercultural learning. The leading IaH and adaptation frameworks were also built for Western, Anglophone systems, and they are not specified for emerging-economy hosts. **Contribution.** This article addresses the gap by connecting the two literatures. It treats inbound student integration as an antecedent of IaH outcomes, campus interculturality as the shared mediating mechanism, and features of emerging economies as boundary conditions. The aim is not to claim a wholly new phenomenon, but to make a link that both literatures have left implicit explicit and testable, and to specify it for emerging-economy universities.

The framework offers three contributions. In theoretical terms, it bridges the IaH and cross-cultural adaptation literatures through a shared mediating construct, campus interculturality, and it recasts inbound students from a support burden into the mechanism that delivers global learning for all. In contextual terms, it extends a largely Eurocentric IaH literature into emerging-economy settings by naming the boundary conditions, such as cultural distance, EMI in non-native-English environments, host plurality, and resource constraints, that shape when the framework holds. In practical terms, it turns the framework into a testable research agenda and into guidance for managers and policymakers who need internationalisation to deliver more than headcounts. The article then sets out its approach, reviews the conceptual background, develops the framework and its propositions, and discusses implications, limitations, and directions for future research.

Conceptual Approach

This is a conceptual article. Instead of testing hypotheses on primary data, it develops theory by drawing together two bodies of work that have grown up in parallel: research on internationalisation and IaH in higher-education studies, and research on acculturation and cross-cultural adaptation in cross-cultural and organisational psychology. In line with common practice for conceptual work, the article identifies a problem that no single literature resolves, uses complementary theories to construct an explanation, and states that explanation as a set of testable propositions supported by a visual model. The account is anchored in the emerging-economy context, and Malaysia's experience as a receiving hub is used for illustration throughout. The propositions are offered as a basis for later empirical testing, not as validated findings.

Conceptual Background

Internationalisation and Internationalisation at Home

Knight's (2004) widely used definition treats internationalisation as the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions, and delivery of higher education, and it separates internationalisation abroad (cross-border mobility) from internationalisation at home. De Wit et al. (2015) later broadened this definition, stressing that internationalisation should be intentional and should improve the quality of education and research for all students and staff rather than serve as an end in itself. IaH is the strand that puts the phrase "for all" into practice. Beelen and Jones (2015) define it as the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all

students within domestic learning environments, which locates internationalisation in the curriculum and the campus rather than in mobility. Leask (2015) likewise places the internationalised curriculum at the centre, covering content, teaching and learning, and the informal or hidden curriculum of campus life.

Later work has tried to specify what IaH requires in practice. Comparing perspectives from the Global North and South, Almeida et al. (2019) identify institutional strategising, an international curriculum, student integration, and inclusivity as baseline features of an IaH agenda. They name student integration as a component, yet they do not theorise the inbound student's role in it. Sierra-Huedo et al. (2022) draw existing cases into a general IaH framework that spans several institutional areas, and Qu et al. (2024) extend IaH analysis beyond Europe through a Chinese case, adding a campus dimension to the more familiar dimensions of organisation, curriculum, and people. Recent reviews describe both the rapid growth of the field and its continuing conceptual fragmentation, and they call for IaH theory to be localised beyond its European origins (Wang et al., 2025). Two limitations recur across this work. Inbound international students appear as an assumed resource rather than a theorised mechanism, and the frameworks are calibrated for well-resourced Western systems.

Inbound Student Integration and Cross-Cultural Adaptation

Research on international students' experiences supplies the theoretical precision about the inbound student that IaH research lacks, but it develops that precision apart from internationalisation strategy. Berry's (1997) acculturation model treats adaptation as the outcome of two independent orientations, namely maintenance of one's heritage culture and engagement with the host culture. These yield four strategies: integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalisation. Integration, which combines heritage maintenance with host engagement, is consistently linked to the most favourable adaptation. Importantly for the present argument, Berry treats acculturation as mutual, so outcomes depend not only on the newcomer's strategy but also on the openness of the receiving community. Searle and Ward (1990) separate psychological adaptation, meaning emotional well-being and satisfaction, from sociocultural adaptation, meaning the capacity to fit in and manage daily intercultural interaction. This distinction remains foundational, and a third form, academic adaptation, is often added in the student context (Cao et al., 2021).

A large body of evidence ties these adaptation outcomes to social contact with the host community. Bethel et al. (2020) show that host-national connectedness mediates the effects of personal and contextual resources on international students' psychological adaptation, and Sheng et al. (2022) find that host-national friendship strengthens the benefits of academic adaptation, whereas reliance on co-national ties alone can limit psychological adjustment. Studies across many destinations report that sociocultural adaptation supports psychological adaptation, and that acculturation strategies favouring host engagement predict better adjustment (Gebregergis et al., 2025; Kocaturk et al., 2026; Lai et al., 2023). Adaptation also changes over time, often following a U-shaped pattern in which difficulties peak in the early months and then ease (Wang et al., 2018). To organise the many antecedents of adjustment, Cao et al. (2021) apply the job demands–resources (JD-R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), sorting predictors into demands, such as language difficulty and cultural distance, and resources, such as self-efficacy and social support. The JD-R lens is useful here because it lets us read what an institution provides, including curriculum, staff competence, support services, and structured contact, as resources that offset the demands of cross-cultural transition.

The Emerging-Economy Receiving Context

Emerging economies are rapidly growing, transitional markets with still-developing institutional infrastructures (Hoskisson et al., 2000). As higher-education hosts, they differ in important ways from the Western, Anglophone settings in which most adaptation and IaH theory was produced. Because emerging economies are diverse, this article uses Malaysia as an illustrative rather than a representative case, and it treats generalisation to other emerging-economy hosts as an empirical question (see Section 6). Malaysia shows the pattern clearly. Having set out to become a regional education hub, it attracts large and growing numbers of international students, and students from China form the single largest group (Abdullah et al., 2021; Mustapha et al., 2021). Its campuses combine EMI with a society in which English is usually a second or third language, so language works at once as the medium of instruction and as a barrier to everyday social integration (Yassin et al., 2020; Yushriman et al., 2024). The host society is multi-ethnic and mainly Muslim, which produces an adaptation context quite different from Western settings, one in which religious and cultural plurality can ease some aspects of belonging while complicating others (Xue et al., 2025; Singh et al., 2025). Systematic reviews of Chinese students in Malaysia record academic, sociocultural, and psychological adaptation challenges specific to this environment (Singh et al., 2025; Xue et al., 2025), and studies of international students more broadly report persistent language and communication barriers in Malaysian public universities (Yushriman et al., 2024). These challenges are not only a welfare concern. Where adaptation fails, students withdraw, which directly undermines national enrolment targets (Sulong, 2022; Yee et al., 2025). Hosts in emerging economies also tend to internationalise under tighter resource constraints than their Western counterparts, and this limits how much institutional support can be brought to bear on integration.

The framework also fits, and is supported by, an explicit national policy architecture. In Malaysia, at least four major policy instruments back the internationalisation agenda on which the framework rests (Table 1). The first is the National Higher Education Strategic Plan 2007–2020, which set the education-hub ambition and a target of 200,000 international students. The second is the Internationalisation Policy for Higher Education Malaysia (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2011). The third is the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015–2025 (Higher Education), which made global prominence a strategic priority and raised the international-enrolment target to 250,000 by 2025 (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2015). The fourth is the Malaysia Global Reach programme of soft-power outreach (Abd Aziz & Abdullah, 2014; Abdullah et al., 2021). These instruments are put into practice through a dedicated agency, Education Malaysia Global Services (EMGS), which coordinates international student services (Yushriman et al., 2024). Each instrument, however, is built around recruitment and mobility targets. None specifies how the resulting presence of international students is to be turned into intercultural learning or sustained integration, and that is exactly the mechanism the framework supplies. The policy environment therefore both motivates the framework and exposes the gap it addresses.

Table 1: Malaysian National Policy Instruments Supporting the Framework

Policy instrument	Focus and relevance to the framework
National Higher Education Strategic Plan 2007–2020	Set the education-hub ambition and the target of 200,000 international students, which establishes the receiving-host rationale for the framework.
Internationalisation Policy for Higher Education Malaysia (2011)	Malaysia's dedicated internationalisation policy, which frames mobility, quality, and international student affairs at the national level.
Malaysia Education Blueprint 2015–2025 (Higher Education)	Makes global prominence a strategic priority and raises the international-enrolment target to 250,000 by 2025.
Malaysia Global Reach programme	Soft-power outreach to attract international students and partners, which extends the hub strategy internationally.

Note. Four national policy instruments, put into practice through the Education Malaysia Global Services (EMGS) agency, support the internationalisation agenda. All of them are built around recruitment and mobility rather than integration.

The Disconnect and the Opportunity

Reading the two literatures side by side shows both the gap and the opportunity. IaH names the goal, intercultural competence for all students, and treats inbound students as an implied means, but it does not explain how their presence produces learning. The adaptation literature explains in detail what makes inbound students integrate, but it treats that integration as a final outcome with no link to the institution's internationalisation mission. Neither literature, on its own, explains what matters most on a receiving campus in an emerging economy, which is whether the co-presence of international and home students becomes genuine, reciprocal intercultural contact, and so learning, or stays as mere co-location. The framework developed below joins the two by making inbound student integration the antecedent, and reciprocal intercultural contact the mechanism, of IaH outcomes.

This link cannot be assumed, and a third body of evidence shows why. A substantial literature demonstrates that the mere co-presence of home and international students does not, by itself, produce interaction or learning. Culturally mixed campuses often show parallel rather than intersecting social worlds, and home students may respond to diversity with avoidance, or with what one study calls passive xenophobia, rather than with engagement (Harrison & Peacock, 2010; Volet & Ang, 1998). Diversity is a necessary but not a sufficient condition. What converts it into learning is structured, meaningful contact of the kind that campus interculturality describes. For this reason the framework does not treat the presence of international students as automatically beneficial. Instead, it sets out the institutional conditions and the contact mechanism under which co-presence becomes shared intercultural learning, which is the gap between diversity and interaction that this literature has documented.

An Integrated Conceptual Framework

The proposed framework (Figure 1) works as follows. Institutional IaH conditions enable the integration of inbound international students. That integration, in turn, generates campus interculturality, meaning the frequency and quality of meaningful, reciprocal intercultural contact on campus. Campus interculturality then serves as the shared mechanism that produces two sets of outcomes, one for international students and one for home students and the

institution. Features of emerging economies act as boundary conditions on these relationships. Table 2 defines each construct, and the sections below develop each component and state eight propositions.

Table 2: Definitions of the Framework's Core Constructs

Construct	Definition as used in this framework
Institutional IaH conditions	Institution-controlled resources that enable intercultural learning: an internationalised curriculum and pedagogy, intercultural staff competence, an inclusive campus climate and policy, and support for English-medium instruction and language.
Inbound student integration	The degree to which international students achieve academic, sociocultural, and psychological adaptation, reflecting an integration acculturation strategy rather than assimilation, separation, or marginalisation.
Campus interculturality	The frequency and, above all, the quality and reciprocity of meaningful intercultural contact and host–international connectedness on campus, as distinct from the mere co-presence of diverse students.
International student outcomes	International students' well-being, satisfaction, and retention (the inverse of withdrawal intention).
Home student and institutional outcomes	Home students' intercultural competence and global learning, together with the institution's internationalisation quality.
Emerging-economy boundary conditions	Contextual moderators that are pronounced in emerging-economy hosts: cultural distance, English-medium instruction in non-native-English settings, a multicultural or religious host context, resource constraints, and the policy environment.

Institutional IaH Conditions as Antecedents of Integration

The framework begins with what the institution controls. Drawing on the IaH literature (Beelen & Jones, 2015; Leask, 2015; Sierra-Huedo et al., 2022), and reading these elements as JD-R resources (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Cao et al., 2021), we group institutional IaH conditions into four sets: an internationalised curriculum and pedagogy, intercultural staff competence, an inclusive campus climate and supportive policy, and support for EMI and language. These conditions supply the resources that offset the demands of cross-cultural transition. An internationalised curriculum makes diverse perspectives legitimate content rather than incidental noise. Interculturally competent staff reduce the friction of academic adaptation. An inclusive climate signals that international students belong. Language support lowers the barrier that EMI raises in a non-native setting. Where these conditions are strong, inbound students should achieve better academic, sociocultural, and psychological adaptation.

Proposition 1. Institutional IaH conditions (internationalised curriculum and pedagogy, intercultural staff competence, inclusive campus climate and policy, and support for EMI and language) are positively associated with inbound international students' integration across the academic, sociocultural, and psychological domains.

Integration as an Antecedent of Campus Interculturality

Integrated international students are not only better adjusted; they are also more able and more willing to engage across cultural lines. Berry's (1997) integration strategy, by definition, combines heritage maintenance with host engagement, and host engagement is the behavioural basis of intercultural contact. Students who are academically adjusted have the confidence to take part. Those who are socioculturally adjusted can manage everyday interaction. Those who are psychologically adjusted have the emotional resources to reach out rather than retreat into co-national groups (Bethel et al., 2020; Sheng et al., 2022). Integration therefore raises both the frequency and, more importantly, the quality of intercultural contact on campus, which is what we call campus interculturality. When students are poorly integrated, they separate or withdraw, and their diversity stays latent: present in the enrolment figures but absent from the lived experience of the campus.

Proposition 2. Inbound international student integration is positively associated with campus interculturality. Integration raises the quality and reciprocity of intercultural contact, not merely its frequency, which distinguishes genuine engagement from the co-presence that diversity alone produces.

Campus Interculturality as the Mediating Mechanism

Campus interculturality is the conceptual bridge between the two literatures and the core of the framework. Its status as a mechanism rests on intergroup contact theory. Allport (1954) argued that contact between groups reduces prejudice and builds mutual understanding when it takes place under favourable conditions, namely equal status, common goals, cooperation, and institutional support. Pettigrew and Tropp's (2006) meta-analysis confirmed that contact generally improves intergroup attitudes, with the strongest effects when these conditions are met. Notably, those enabling conditions are the same institutional IaH conditions set out in Proposition 1, which is why the model treats them as antecedents of the whole system. When institutional conditions foster integration, and integration produces genuine contact rather than co-location, that contact becomes the process through which institutional effort is turned into learning and adaptation for both parties. Campus interculturality therefore mediates the relationship between institutional IaH conditions and the outcomes that follow.

Proposition 3. Campus interculturality mediates the relationship between institutional IaH conditions and (a) international students' adaptation outcomes and (b) home students' intercultural competence, so that institutional conditions translate into outcomes mainly to the extent that they generate meaningful intercultural contact.

Dual Outcomes: Home Students and International Students

The distinctive claim of the framework is that one mechanism yields two families of outcomes, and in doing so it aligns the goals of the two literatures. On the IaH side, campus interculturality is the means by which the presence of international students becomes intercultural competence for home students, which is the promise of internationalisation for all, delivered without mobility (Beelen & Jones, 2015; Leask, 2015). Contact theory supplies the logic: what develops home students' global and intercultural capabilities is not the number of international students, but the quality of contact with them (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). On the adaptation side, the same reciprocal contact that teaches home students also supports international students' well-being, satisfaction, and, in the end, retention, because host-national connectedness is among the most robust predictors of psychological adaptation and of the

intention to stay (Bethel et al., 2020; Sheng et al., 2022), and its absence is linked to withdrawal (Sulong, 2022).

Proposition 4. Campus interculturality is positively associated with home students' intercultural competence and global learning, and thereby with the institution's internationalisation quality.

Proposition 5. Inbound international student integration, both directly and through campus interculturality, is positively associated with international students' well-being, satisfaction, and retention, and negatively associated with withdrawal intention.

Reciprocity: Mutual Adaptation and Host Receptivity

Because acculturation is mutual (Berry, 1997), the framework is not a one-way street in which only the newcomer adapts. The receptivity of home students and staff, that is, their openness to engagement and their willingness to adjust how they communicate and teach, feeds back to shape international students' integration. A campus that is high in interculturality is one in which home students and staff also change, and that changed host environment makes further integration easier, which sets up a reinforcing cycle. This reciprocal path sets the framework apart from deficit models that place all of the adjustment work on the international student, and it fits plural, multi-ethnic host societies, where intercultural negotiation is already part of daily life (Xue et al., 2025; Singh et al., 2025).

Proposition 6. Campus interculturality reciprocally strengthens inbound international student integration through host receptivity, that is, through the mutual adaptation of home students and staff, forming a reinforcing cycle over time.

Emerging-Economy Boundary Conditions

The strength of the framework's relationships is not constant across settings. It depends on features that are pronounced in emerging-economy hosts. Cultural distance between international students and the host society, and EMI in a non-native-English environment, act as demands that weaken the link between institutional conditions and integration. The greater the distance and the language barrier, the more institutional support is needed to reach the same level of integration (Yassin et al., 2020; Yushriman et al., 2024). The host's multicultural and religious character moderates the framework in more complex ways, easing belonging for students who share aspects of the host culture while complicating it for others (Xue et al., 2025; Singh et al., 2025). Finally, resource constraints and the surrounding policy environment govern how fully institutional IaH conditions can be provided in the first place (Abd Aziz & Abdullah, 2014; Sulong, 2022). Naming these boundary conditions is what adapts a largely Western framework to emerging-economy realities.

Proposition 7. Cultural distance and EMI in non-native-English settings moderate, and weaken, the relationship between institutional IaH conditions and inbound student integration, so that stronger institutional conditions are needed to achieve integration as distance and language barriers increase.

Proposition 8. The host society's multicultural and religious context, together with resource constraints and the policy environment, moderate the strength of the

framework's relationships, and so bound the conditions under which inbound integration translates into IaH outcomes.

The Integrated Framework

Figure 1 summarises the framework. Read from left to right, it traces a path from what the institution provides, through the integration of inbound students, to the reciprocal intercultural contact that makes up campus interculturality, and finally to the dual outcomes that meet the goals of both the IaH and the adaptation literatures. The reciprocal loop (Proposition 6) and the emerging-economy boundary conditions (Propositions 7 and 8) place the model in its intended context. Table 3 restates the eight propositions for reference.

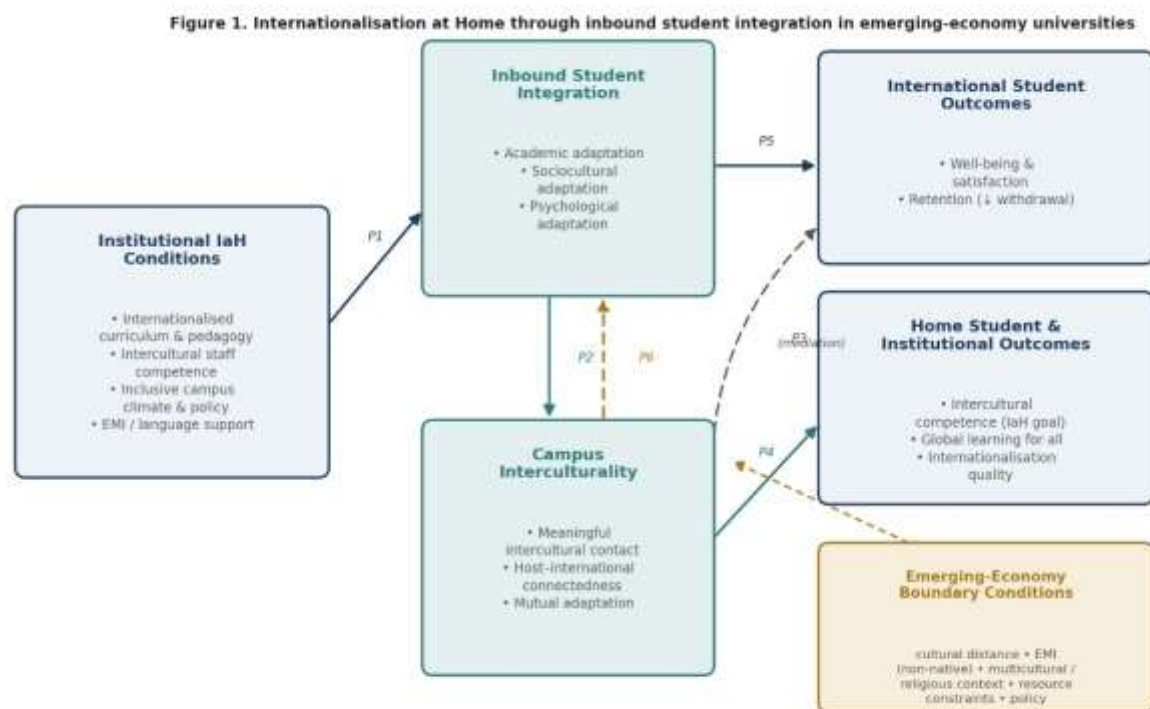


Figure 1: An integrated conceptual framework of internationalisation at home through inbound student integration in emerging-economy universities.

Discussion and Implications

Theoretical Implications

The framework makes three theoretical moves. First, it connects two literatures that have grown up separately, using campus interculturality and intergroup contact theory to specify the mechanism that IaH research assumes and that adaptation research overlooks. Second, it recasts the inbound international student. Rather than a support burden or a passive input, the integrated inbound student is the antecedent of the reciprocal contact through which internationalisation produces value for everyone on campus. In this way a well-being agenda and an academic-quality agenda become two outcomes of the same institutional investment. Third, by making the mutual nature of acculturation explicit through a reciprocal path, the framework moves away from deficit models and gives a more accurate account of how integration actually unfolds in plural societies. Taken together, these moves extend a Eurocentric IaH literature into emerging-economy settings and give the adaptation literature the strategic anchor it has lacked.

Practical and Policy Implications

For university managers, the framework moves the main lever of internationalisation from recruitment to integration. Enrolling international students produces IaH outcomes only when their presence becomes meaningful contact. The practical priority, then, is to build the conditions that enable such contact, including internationalised curricula, interculturally capable staff, an inclusive climate, and language support, and to create structured opportunities for equal-status, cooperative interaction between home and international students rather than leaving contact to chance. Because the model treats host receptivity as a lever, efforts to develop the intercultural openness of home students and staff are investments in international students' integration, not separate activities. For policymakers in emerging economies that pursue education-hub strategies, the framework implies that enrolment targets are necessary but not sufficient. Without institutional investment in integration, recruitment gains are eroded by withdrawal, and the intercultural learning that justifies internationalisation to domestic stakeholders never appears. Quality-assurance and funding mechanisms that reward integration outcomes, and not only international headcounts, would align institutional behaviour more closely with national aims.

Limitations and Future Research

As a conceptual contribution, the framework awaits empirical scrutiny, and its propositions are offered as testable claims rather than findings. Several directions follow. The constructs can be measured with established instruments, including sociocultural and psychological adaptation scales, intercultural-competence measures, and measures of contact quality. The mediating structure (Propositions 3 to 5) suits variance-based structural equation modelling, while the reciprocal path (Proposition 6) calls for longitudinal or cross-lagged designs that can capture the proposed cycle over time. Because the model spans institutional and individual levels, multilevel designs that nest students within programmes or institutions would represent it most faithfully. One conceptual caution follows from this. The antecedent chain, running from institutional conditions to inbound integration, and one of the outcomes, home students' intercultural competence, concern different populations that are linked only through the shared mechanism of campus interculturality. Empirical tests must therefore model the international-student and home-student populations together, rather than treat the framework as a single-population path model. The dual-outcome claim accordingly invites dyadic or matched designs that measure home and international students on the same campuses. The boundary conditions (Propositions 7 and 8) are natural candidates for multi-group comparison across host countries, disciplines, and institutional types, and for replication beyond the Malaysian setting used here for illustration, including other Southeast Asian, Middle Eastern, and African hubs. Qualitative work would add depth to the account of what meaningful contact means to students in specific plural, EMI settings. Finally, future studies should attend to the risks the framework simplifies. Contact can reinforce rather than reduce bias when Allport's conditions are absent, and integration can be pursued as assimilation rather than as genuine, mutual integration.

Conclusion

Universities in emerging economies have become receivers of international students without a theory that connects those students to the inclusive promise of internationalisation at home. This article has offered such a theory. By treating inbound student integration as the engine of IaH, campus interculturality as the reciprocal mechanism that turns co-presence into learning, and features of emerging economies as boundary conditions, the framework unites two literatures and recasts the international student from a cost to be managed into the means by which internationalisation delivers value for all. The eight propositions provide a roadmap for

empirical work, and the framework gives managers and policymakers a clearer target: not how many international students a campus enrolls, but how well their presence is turned into shared intercultural learning.

Table 3: Summary of Propositions

P1.	Institutional IaH conditions are positively associated with inbound student integration (academic, sociocultural, psychological).
P2.	Inbound student integration is positively associated with campus interculturality (the quality and reciprocity of contact, not merely its frequency).
P3.	Campus interculturality mediates institutional IaH conditions and (a) international students' adaptation and (b) home students' intercultural competence.
P4.	Campus interculturality is positively associated with home students' intercultural competence and institutional internationalisation quality.
P5.	Inbound integration, directly and through campus interculturality, is positively associated with international students' well-being, satisfaction, and retention, and negatively with withdrawal intention.
P6.	Campus interculturality reciprocally strengthens integration through host receptivity, forming a reinforcing cycle.
P7.	Cultural distance and EMI (non-native-English) weaken the link between institutional conditions and integration.
P8.	Host multicultural and religious context, resource constraints, and the policy environment moderate the framework's relationships.

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