

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this project is to understand and study the real root causes for students' integration problem in Universiti Teknologi PETRONAS (UTP). Subsequently, outcome from the study will be used to develop and recommend workable solution as well as a structured framework to become a basis to move forward by improving the level of integration between races and international students in the University. To advance integration among students, all parties are needed to play their roles effective by providing structural support towards achieving the greater outcomes for any programmes to be conducted, amendments of policy, rules and regulations etc. Given the lack of empirical research supporting this area on students' integration, this project examines the association between the ethnic composition (by races) based on Academic departments or programmes, local and international students' interethnic friendships, social participation, and sense of belonging for the University. With regards to the two (2) surveys conducted, the outcomes offer the theoretical rationale for these associations and the coherence of the three (3) indicators. Multilevel analyses of data from the surveys of 500 students, 125 of whom were international students, demonstrate that Academic department or programme ethnic composition is associated with interethnic friendships and social participation for local students, but not for international students, whereas socioeconomic status is decisive for international students' interethnic friendships. Neither international's nor local's sense of belonging in Academic department or programme is associated with ethnic composition. Future research might clarify the distinctions between academic and social integration among students. Nonetheless, the literature is clear that campus relationships matter to student persistence.