

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

The principle of inclusive education emphasizes the importance of providing equal opportunities and access to learning for all students within the classroom setting (Nasir et al., 2025). In such environments, both teachers and schools are responsible for creating supportive conditions that enable students to learn according to their individual abilities, needs, and interests. While some studies define inclusive education primarily as the provision of special programs for students with learning difficulties or special needs (Samudra, 2019; Said et al., 2023; Susilawati et al., 2023; Sipahudin, 2024), the concept extends beyond that scope. Inclusive education also involves the development of learning environments that acknowledge and embrace diversity, including variations in culture, language, customs, physical and cognitive abilities, and social status (Nzuza & Sulaimon, 2025; Sherpa, 2019). In terms of the inclusive classroom practices are not solely focused on accommodating students with disabilities, but also on responding to the broader cultural and social diversity present among learners.

Globalization and increased international mobility have created increasingly diverse educational environments, particularly in international

schools that accommodate students from diverse cultural, linguistic, and religious backgrounds. This diversity provides significant opportunities for cross-cultural learning, but also requires schools to ensure that every student—regardless of cultural identity or learning needs—could participate and develop optimally. Therefore, the integration of multicultural values within an inclusive education framework is imperative. According to Banks (2015), multicultural education aims to help students “understand, accept, and appreciate cultural diversity,” so they could coexist peacefully and productively.

Multiculturalism in education is not simply about recognizing cultural differences, but also about instilling values such as respect, tolerance, justice, and empathy. Gay (2010) states that culturally responsive teaching serves to connect students' identities with the learning process so they feel recognized and valued. When linked to inclusive education, Slee (2018) emphasizes that inclusivity is not just about providing access for students with special needs, but also about creating an environment that embraces social and cultural diversity as a strength. Furthermore, the link between multiculturalism and inclusive education provides a foundation for strengthening peace education. According to UNESCO (2014), peace education aims to develop "skills, values, and attitudes that enable learners to live together harmoniously." This concept aligns with Galtung's (1969) view of positive peace, namely a social state that reflects cooperation, empathy, and justice. In the context of international elementary schools, peace education becomes increasingly important because students grow up in a multicultural environment that is vulnerable to misunderstandings, stereotypes, or intercultural conflict.

The implementation of inclusive education in Indonesia continues to face significant challenges, particularly concerning the insufficient development of tolerance, such as respect for and acceptance of differences among students. Instances of disrespect within educational settings—such as bullying, discrimination, injustice, and intercultural conflict—highlight a lack of tolerance and acceptance (Padmadewi et al., 2023). In the past five years, several serious incidents have occurred within educational institutions across the country. According to a report by Kompas.com, the Indonesian Education Watch Network (JPPI) noted a rise in school violence cases from 2020 to 2024 (Mashabi & Prastiwi, 2024). These incidents include bullying, discriminatory practices, and both physical and psychological abuse within school environments (UNESCO, 2019). One notable case, reported by detik.com, involved an elementary school student with a disability in Gorontalo who was subjected to bullying at school (Nawu, 2025). Similarly, news.okezone.com reported a case of a junior high school student in West Lampung who also became a victim of bullying (Widyanti, 2025). Thus, these reports collectively reflect a concerning reality the absence of deeply rooted values of respect for diversity and difference within school communities.

Multiculturalism serves as a strategic approach to prevent social divisions that may disrupt peace, by fostering tolerance and respect for differences within society. The concept of multiculturalism acknowledges the presence of individuals living in culturally and socially diverse environments, which include variations in ethnicity, religion, language, tradition, social status, and customs (Kymlicka & Banting, 2006; Gay, 2018). In the educational context, multicultural

values play a vital role not only in promoting acceptance and tolerance of diversity, but also in preventing social conflict and developing students' attitudes of peaceful coexistence. Upholding multicultural values is essential for cultivating a democratic school climate, encouraging tolerance for diversity, reducing discrimination and inequality, and nurturing harmonious social relationships (Harmi et al., 2022). Therefore, the integration of multicultural values in education encourages the internalization of principles such as fairness, empathy, solidarity, and tolerance, while also raising awareness of diversity and promoting egalitarian attitudes toward ethnic, cultural, and religious differences (Hanpalam, 2020).

A concrete manifestation of multiculturalism in education could be seen through its integration within inclusive education practices. Achieving this requires a learning approach that ensures equitable access for all students, regardless of their cultural or social backgrounds (Sherpa, 2019). In this context, teachers are expected not only to deliver academic content effectively but also to serve as facilitators who foster and sustain a peaceful, inclusive, and supportive classroom environment for every learner. Furthermore, when inclusive education is enriched with multicultural values, it could significantly enhance the quality of the learning environment, promoting harmonious interactions and contributing to the development of peaceful and meaningful educational experiences for all students.

Building upon the growing awareness of multiculturalism and inclusive education, several previous studies have explored the strategies and approaches employed by teachers to foster inclusive learning environments. Much of the

existing research has focused on effective instructional methods, pedagogical approaches, and learning media that support inclusive classroom practices (Damyanov, 2024; Nzuza & Sulaimon, 2025; Padmadewi et al., 2023, 2024). However, there remains a research gap in exploring how multicultural values are embedded within inclusive education. A review of relevant literature indicates that while numerous studies address teaching strategies in multicultural settings, the integration of multicultural values into inclusive education requires deeper investigation. Existing studies primarily emphasize aspects such as understanding multiculturalism and religious moderation (Harmi et al., 2022), examining teachers' roles and attitudes toward multicultural education (Akkaya et al., 2021; Ilmi et al., 2021; Lim & Kester, 2023), and the application of teaching practices that incorporate multicultural elements to promote respect and tolerance within diverse educational contexts (Nuryadi et al., 2020; Özkan, 2022).

A number of existing studies on multiculturalism within inclusive education primarily focus on the micro level of teaching practices. In contrast, the present study seeks to broaden the perspective by examining the macro level, specifically exploring how multicultural values could be effectively utilized to promote peace-related values and attitudes in inclusive educational settings. This research also aligns with the goals of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, which emphasizes the need to address social inequalities and ensure equitable and quality inclusive education for all learners, regardless of their backgrounds or individual circumstances (Rambla & Langthaler, 2016). Achieving this vision demands ongoing and sustainable efforts that go beyond classroom strategies. Furthermore, investigating the role of multicultural values as a means to foster

respect for diversity, strengthen social cohesion, reduce discrimination, and cultivate peaceful values within inclusive educational environments remains a significant area that warrants further exploration. Therefore, the aims of the study were to examine how multicultural values could meaningfully contribute to promoting peaceful attitudes and a harmonious educational climate in alignment with the principles of SDG 4.

1.2 Problem Identification

Education is an effort to support individual development and lead to a better process. Inclusive education is one of the programs that serves not only students with special needs but also students with diverse backgrounds, so that all students could receive learning equally without unfair treatment. In the concept of multiculturalism refers to the phenomenon where the individual has different perspectives, such as race, social class, ethnicity, beliefs, religion, and cultures or tradition, began live together (Aslan, 2022). In this context, the integration of multiculturalism in education offers the changing of educational structure that provide all students' differences to have equal opportunity in education service, gain academic successfully, and also support the peaceful values in educational environment.

As part of the problem identification, it has been found that the phenomenon, which occurred in an educational setting, has seen an increase in violence cases in schools over the last five years (Mashabi & Prastiwi, 2024; Nawu, 2025; Widyanti, 2025). Based on the phenomenon, it indicates a serious problem which exposes unfavorable school atmosphere for the students. Therefore, it is crucially needed that the school includes students and teachers in

the community to foster an understanding of multicultural values and peaceful attitudes as a core part of education to prevent violence in the school setting. Multiculturalism could help in avoiding violence, such as discrimination, bullying, and abusiveness that happens in the educational environment

(Harmi et al., 2022). In other words, the concept of multiculturalism provides an understanding of how individuals navigate diversity, differences, and plurality (Marom, 2016) where tolerance and respect are essential to prevent violent attitudes in educational settings. Therefore, integrating multicultural values is expected to support the promotion of peace values and attitudes, while also fostering social cohesion and minimizing discrimination to create an inclusive and peaceful educational environment.

1.3 Research Limitation

This research focuses on investigating the multicultural values integrates in inclusive education as a part of promoting a world peaceful education environment. In other word, the used of English as medium of instruction also become a limitation investigation, where the English could be part of cross-cultural understanding in supporting multicultural values integration. Specifically, this study explores how the multicultural values perceive and implemented in the classroom setting, in English teaching and learning process, how the school policies and curriculum support the integration of multiculturalism, how could multicultural values be integrated to promotes peaceful values and attitudes through inclusive education, and how to design inclusive multiculturalism and world peace education frameworks that could be implemented to promote social cohesion and minimize discrimination.

This current study used a mixed-method research design, which involves qualitative and quantitative approach to explore on how multicultural values are integrated in inclusive education, especially in promoting the peaceful values and attitudes, as well as fostering social cohesion and minimizing discrimination to

promote peaceful environment in educational settings. The qualitative data was conducted by employing interviews, field notes, observations, and document analysis techniques to obtain a deeper understanding of the data, particularly how multicultural values integrated in inclusive education settings. Meanwhile, in quantitative approach, data was collected from questionnaires which are distributed to the teachers, where it explored about teacher perspective and experiences of how they integrate multiculturalism in inclusive class settings. Moreover, the results of the questionnaires are also used for improving the design of world peace education framework that produced in this study.

1.4 Research Questions

Referring to the background of the research and problem identification previously, this study formulates four specific questions as the research questions, are as follows:

1.4.1 How do teachers and students implement multicultural values in the English teaching and learning process?

1.4.2 How do the school policies and curriculum support the integration of multicultural values in inclusive education?

1.4.3 How could multicultural values be integrated into school policy, curriculum, and co-curricular activities to promote peaceful values and attitudes in inclusive education settings?

1.4.4 How to design inclusive multiculturalism and world peace education framework that could be integrated to promote social cohesion and minimized discrimination?

1.5 Research Objectives

The purposes of this study are formulated based on the research questions above.

The following research objectives are as follows:

- 1.5.1 To identify how the teachers and students perceive and implement multicultural values in the English teaching and learning process.
- 1.5.2 To find out how the school policies and curriculum support the integration of multicultural values in inclusive education.
- 1.5.3 To investigate how multicultural values could be integrated into school policy, curriculum, and co-curricular activities to promote peaceful values and attitudes in inclusive education settings.
- 1.5.4 To explore how designing inclusive multiculturalism and world peace education framework that could be integrated to promote social cohesion and minimized discrimination.

1.6 Research Significance

The results of this research are expected to serve beneficial impact for various aspects, including theoretically and practically significance.

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

The present research findings provided a scientific concept and theoretical basis for many colleges in the educational context and future

research on multiculturalism integration, inclusive education, and a peaceful educational environment. Specifically, this present research contributes to the context of how English language instruction is effectively promote multicultural values integration in teaching and learning process. Moreover, the study also provides

theoretical practices in constructing school policies and curriculum that support multiculturalism, the effectiveness of integrating multicultural values to promote peaceful values and attitudes, and the design of world peace education frameworks based on multiculturalism and inclusive setting. In addition, the results of this study are also beneficial as a scientific source for future research, especially in the same research topics in inclusive and multiculturalism settings.

1.6.2 Practical Significouldce

1.6.2.1 Teachers

In the practical significouldce, teachers obtain practical insight in understanding how multicultural values are integrated in inclusive education, especially in the context of English language instruction. The results of this research also provide perspective of multicultural values implementation in inclusive setting, give valuable insight into school policies and curriculum, and offer world peace education frameworks that are applicable to integrate in classrooms or school settings in order to promote social cohesion and minimize discrimination in educational fields.

1.6.2.2 Educational Institution

The discovery of this current research is intended to be used as

input and evaluation for the educational institution in providing world peace education environment by exploring the values of multiculturalism in

inclusive settings and in the context of English language instructions. Moreover, the world peace education framework also supports educational institutions in developing a peaceful education environment based on multiculturalism and inclusive setting.

1.6.2.3 Other Researchers

As the practical significance, the other researchers could use this research findings as a reference in the context of exploring the values of multiculturalism in inclusive education setting in order to promote a peaceful education environment.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

1.7.1 Conceptual Definitions

1.7.1.1 Multiculturalism Values

Multiculturalism could empower society and maintain all the diversity by eliminating social injustice and discrimination (Akkaya et al., 2021). There are the concept of multiculturalism situation, including (1) multiculturalism as a society, which connect to ethnicity, religious, and/or heterogeneity of cultures in a society; (2) multiculturalism is an ideology approach, means multiculturalism represents of respect and tolerance to cultural diversity; and (3) multiculturalism as a set of policies, which states that the purpose of multiculturalism is used as a shield or rules to exterminate the obstacles that occur in cultural differences and maintain

social justice (Kymlicka and Banting, 2006). Additionally, as a dimension of supporting multicultural values in education, (Banks & McGee Banks, 2010) stated there are five point that need to consider as supporting multicultural values in education, namely: (1) content integration, (2) the knowledge construction process, (3) prejudice reduction, (4) an equity pedagogy, and (5) empowering school culture and social structures. Therefore, the concept of multiculturalism is essential to fostering respect and tolerance for each other and building a peaceful society among cultural differences in educational settings.

1.7.1.2 Inclusive Education

Inclusive education means providing equal academic access and opportunities, including facilities and treatment that are fitting and meaningful for learners, in order to achieve equality and justice in an academic environment. It is also supported by (Padmadewi et al., 2023), who define inclusion as the equality of acceptance of cultural and background diversity, fostering respect, empathy, and care for one another. In other words, inclusive education emphasizes that all students in a school environment could fully access and build their potential and also perceive the academic facilities without exception (Susilawati et al., 2023).

1.7.1.3 Peace Values and Attitudes

As defined by (Demir, 2011), peace is related to the feelings of love, respect, understanding, absence of violence, tolerance, solidarity, happiness, conscience, reconciliation, trust, and harmony. In other words, peace values are a positive value that creates a harmonious and

comfortable environment. Moreover, peaceful attitudes reflect how individuals demonstrate attitudes and behaviors that support the realization of a peaceful life. It involves avoiding conflict and developing an awareness of the importance of harmonizing with others (Fabio & Croce, 2024) Therefore, peace education has an important role in fostering the values to engage constructively the students in empowering their conflict resolution skills, respect, and accepting individual diversity.

1.7.2 Operational Definitions

1.7.2.1 Multicultural values

In this study, the multicultural values are defined as the operational definition, where this study utilizes the multiculturalism concept based on five dimensions of supporting multicultural values in education, namely: (1) content integration, (2) the knowledge construction process, (3) prejudice reduction, (4) an equity pedagogy, and (5) empowering school culture and social structures (Banks & McGee Banks, 2010). The underlying theory is used to identify the integration of multicultural values in inclusive bilingual education through class and school observation, analyze several related documents (school policy and curriculum), conduct interviews with the school principal and teachers to gain a deeper understanding of the multicultural values integration in inclusive education.

1.7.2.2 Inclusive Education

As the operational definition of inclusive education, this study employs inclusive education as the research setting. Inclusive education

demonstrates that the process of academic activities fosters equal opportunities for all learners, including students from diverse cultural backgrounds, who aspire to equality and justice within an academic environment. In this context, inclusive education refers to the school's efforts to provide equal academic opportunities for all learners in an inclusive environment.

1.7.2.3 Peace Values and Attitudes

In this operational definition, peace values and attitudes are the results of data on how multicultural values integrated into inclusive education could effectively promote peace values and attitudes in their environment. Furthermore, at this point, the researcher conducts exploration by employing class and school observation, analyzing several related documents (school policy and curriculum), and conducting interviews with class teachers and school principal.

