

“ THE NECESSITY OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION IN INDONESIA “

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Abstract

Being multicultural is inevitable in Indonesia, and diversity is national identity. Diversity phenomenon, actually, It stated on national symbol “*Bhineka Tunggal Ika*” (it meant “Unity and diversity”). As the largest archipelago in the world, Indonesia's people has life in a diverse community. Indeed, multicultural issue is something important in Indonesia due to the uniqueness and cultural diversity in Indonesia. Even so, the issue of multiculturalism is still something new in Indonesia. This phenomenon cannot be separated from the influence of political and social change in Indonesia. Nevertheless, Indonesia needs to rethink about its own multicultural education concept. So this paper would describe the importance of national identity that offers multicultural education as an issue in education reform in Indonesia. Firstly, I will raise the issue of national identity as a reason that Indonesia needs multicultural education. Secondly, it will be described of historical view of the emergence of multicultural education in U.S. follow by Indonesian history on this issue. Thirdly, it will be offered the impact of social class to an education field in U.S. and Indonesia's phenomenon connecting with this issue. The last, it will discuss about how to maintain the diversity in Indonesia.

Keywords : Multicultural education, diversity, national identity

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1. Introduction

Talking about education reform, it's inevitable in society. Every century, the human life facing their own challenging. It's similar to Indonesia. For this reformation era, Indonesia need a formula to reform education.

As well as one part of the curriculum reforms in Singapore and Hongkong, that is cultivation of citizenship values and national identity (Gopinathan and Lee; 2013), I chose to emphasize national identity and offer multicultural education as an idea of education reform in Indonesia.

In this paper, I would describe some phenomenons that supporting this idea. At the first, I will raise the issue of national identity as a reason that Indonesia needs multicultural education. Second, it will be described of historical view of the emergence of multicultural education in U.S. follow by Indonesian history regarding this issue. Third, it will be offered the impact of social class to an education field in U.S. and Indonesia's phenomenon connecting with this issue. The last, it will discuss about how to maintain the diversity in Indonesia.

2. Why Multicultural Education Is needed in Indonesia ?

Multicultural education emerged from diverse courses, programs and practices. The multicultural educational system devise the educational institution to respond demands, needs and aspirations of the various groups of students (Bank, 2010; P.7). Another point that multicultural education is education for cultural diversity, or education for "people of colour" (Bank, cited Rahim, 2012). Consequently, not only a single identifiable course, but also the multiple education programs should be offered (Sleeter, 1996). The term Multicultural education has described a wide variety of programs and practices. This program is related to educational equity, gender, ethnic groups, language minorities, low income groups, and people with disabilities (Bank, 2010;P.7). As a world wide issue, On October 1994, Unesco has recommended the multicultural education as global commitment (Rahim, 2012).

In my view, being multicultural is inevitable in Indonesia, and that is national identity. We life in a diverse community. Indonesia is the largest archipelago in the world. It is located in South East Asian region, between the continents of Asia and Australia, and between the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean (Kementrian Sekretariat Negara RI, 2013, Albert, Trommsdorff, Mayer, & Schwarz, 2005). It is highly populated by around 222 million people in 2006 (kementrian sekretariat negara RI; ; 2013). Therefore, Indonesia becomes the world's fourth most populous nation after China, India and the US (Kementrian Sekretarian Negara RI,2013; Population Reference Bureau, 2003). Furthermore, Indonesia consists of 17,508 Islands (kementrian sekretariat negara RI; 2013) with 370 ethnic groups, around 370 languages (Amalee et al; 2007). According to Kementrian Kebudayaan dan Pariwisata (Maskur, n.d.) Indonesia has 125 faiths with six religions are acknowledged and approved by state, namely Islam (88%), Catholic and Protestant (8%), Hindus (2%), Budha (1%) and konhuchu (1%) (CIA cited in Albert, et all; 2005). For these reasons, it is relevant to conclude that Indonesia is very diverse in nature (Miksic et al; 2002; Kosasih, n.d.). To gives a clear condition of Indonesian multicultural nature, I created the chart below;

Figure 2. Diversity of Indonesia

Indeed, multicultural issue is something important in Indonesia due to the uniqueness and cultural diversity in Indonesia. Even so, the issue of multiculturalism is still something new in Indonesia. Recently, several researchers and academic paper more and more discussed this issue in 2000s (Suparlan, 2002; Lubis, 2006; Syaifuddin, 2006; Amirin, 2012). This phenomenon cannot be separated from the influence of political and social change in Indonesia. Nevertheless, Indonesia needs to rethink about its own multicultural education concept.

3.The Historical Overview

Inspired by the history of multicultural education in Western countries, it made me think and reflect about my country. Suparlan (2002) said that multicultural in the USA and Europe evolved from the consciousness of one ethnic (means white people) into a multi- ethnic (received the diversity). Before occurred World War II, the People in the United states and Europe, seems knew just the only one society, it was "white people." The other ethnic is minority, powerless, subordinated, discriminated with limitation of rights. The prohibition to color discrimination started in 1960 after the human rights movement for equality in 1950s (Suparlan, 2002).

This is slightly different from the historical birth of Indonesia as a nation. At the beginning of rising Indonesian independence in 1945, Indonesian people realized that Indonesia is very diverse and multi-ethnic. Driven by the same agenda of being independent from the Dutch colonialism, some young Indonesians from a very diverse ethnicity background felt the need of one unified identity (Buwono x; 2008). On the 10 of October 1928, they gathered and made a declaration called *Sumpah Pemuda*. It is a declaration of unity, even though very diverse, Indonesia is one nation with one language. Since that day, "Indonesia" is a unifying identity of this archipelago.

Nationalism of Indonesian was emerged as a common bond against colonialism (Buwono x ; 2008). From this, union was born the state symbol "Bhineka Tunggal Ika " (means unity in diversity). This slogan is a reflection of the nation's identity, which is born from a diversity in ethnicities, religions, languages, cultures, and customs. This philosophy is quoted from Sutasoma Book. It was the ancient book from 14th century of Javanese heritage (Buwono x ; 2008; Miksic et al, 2002) .

Initial period of independence (1945-1965) . This time the leaders never accentuate ethnic identity and life in a simple life similar to common people) (Buwono X; 2008) . When the spirit of unity and diversity is still maintained by the leader and founder of this nation. There is a political upheaval that makes this period ended. It was ended before successfully placing the system to embrace all this diversity.

The next period is the period of development (1965-1997) or Orde Baru (new age) government. In this period, the central government developed of the country. However, in reality, the wealth of the district has to be taken to the center. Wealth is not returned to the district area, even the center government is dominated and owned by a group of people. (Buwono X; 2008). In addition, corruption, nepothisme, exploitation, in spite of ethnic dominance becoming the real problem due to the current ruler is very obvious leader featuring his Javanese (Buwono, 2008) . Thus, according to Khisbiyah (2000) " dictum of national unity (Bhineka Tunggal Ika or unity in diversity) occupies only cognitive awareness of societies and lip service to the leaders. It is not yet implemented a social in the daily lives of societies ". Furthermore, there was appeared various

protests and student movement, even the movement of requesting independent of some ethnic group (Buwono, 2008). This movement demanding political reforms and reject injustice, domination, exploitation, and discrimination. This period was ended with the resignation of the current rulers.

After that, the next period is reformation era (1997-present). This period, Indonesia was hit by the multi-dimensional crisis of political, economic, social and cultural. As revealed by Kusumohamidjojo (Buwono X; 2008) that Indonesia's people are among the communities most problematic in the world. "Indonesian has had multicultural awareness since the beginning, however, its challenging to maintain and implement the idea in the established system. This phenomenon, I will offer through the graph below:

Figure.2. Indonesian Historical and political view

This phenomenon requires serious attention. Noble values in the philosophy of "Bhineka Tunggal Ika" must be maintained and implemented within Indonesian societies. Indonesia requires an educational system that implements acceptance of diversity to maintain harmony in society. This was basically in line with the spirit of the Legislation on National Education System (UUSPN; 2003). One of the dictums of UUSPN of 2003 specifies that the national education put one principle: "that education held in a democratic and fair and not discriminatory to uphold human rights, religious and cultural values, and diversity of the nation." (Aly; 2005). Nowadays, the people of Indonesia must find the right formula to maintain national integration. The symbol and spirit of "Unity and Diversity" is not enough. "Unity and Diversity" must be enforced and implemented, Indonesia becomes a truly multiculturalism society.

4.The Social Class Phenomenon

As mentioned above, multiculturalism covers discussion about social class, gender, ethnicities, races, religions and people with disability. This part will explore how social class affects education.

Anyon (1989) explained his research conducted in five elementary schools in United States. The first three schools are in a medium-size city district in northern New Jersey, and the other two are in a nearby New Jersey suburb. This research was conducted for approximately nine months (Sept 1978 - June 1979) by gathering the Ethnographical study. On his research, the author divided the school into four groups; working class school, middle class school, affluent professional school and executive elite school. As the result, there are some differences as hidden curriculum, as can see from the graft below;

Figure 3. Social Class in US Elementary school
(*Research in five school, sept 1978-june 1979, (Anyon, 1989)*)

From that picture, it has clearly seen that, the social class has influenced rules of the school unwittingly. Different social class background has developed their own situation and habit. Unfortunately, there are some discrimination and inequality for the lower class.

Talking about inequality in education, Indonesia had “dark history “ in a colonialism period for 350 years. The majority of people in Indonesia unable to obtain education. Only for royal family, they have a right to get education. Beginning in the 1922 (Djaja; 2009), Ki Hajar Dewantara (who is royal family in Indonesia and release his title of nobility to be equal with common people (Tsuchiya, 1992 :232) build the school of “Taman Siswa” for indigenous people of Indonesia. Taman Siswa is the first school for Indonesian. At the time, Taman Siswa has growth to several districts in Indonesia, begins in Yogyakarta, then Bandung, and Medan.

After Independent days (in 1945), the regulation of Taman Siswa becoming national policy in education. All of people have right to pursue education. Every one is equal in education with diversity of races, ethnics, religions, gender, even social class. Children have got the same education.

Prior to political reformation period (1998, until now) Indonesia has no similar issue discrimination with the U.S. problem. Although the number of poverty is still high, formaly education system almost the same in all around area. According to kompas (Suryawati, 2005), In 1970, there is 60 percent poverty in Indonesia. It was going decrease to 28,59 million people or 11,66 percent in 2012 (BPS,2013). However, in that condition every child formaly (from any race, ethnic, class social or religion) could get the equal education. Compare to U.S., Bank (2010) mention that child in U.S. is not a single, uniform system that is available to every child in the same way. Nevertheless, in Indonesia, they have uniform Curriculum and very centralistic. The central government sent the curriculum and guidance for teachers for around Indonesia. Although, I would say that this is a form of discrimination too in a substantive wise.

However, Indonesia has a big problem in implementing the curriculum and teacher behavior. Compare to the U.S., the majority of Indonesian schools are quite similar to “working class phenomenon.” Teacher's centre approached is widely used; children must follow teacher instruction, very limited discussion or initiative and creativity. I assume that this is a form of colonial legacy, or low teacher education, even ignoble competition and appreciation for the teacher. Regarding to teacher education, the government has made policy that teacher must have a university degree, but it is still in the process socialization. That regulation will be started in 2025.

As a part of social movement, nowadays (start in around 2000s) there are several private “new schools” in Indonesia. They are offering a range of innovations in education. Some of them are branch or franchise from abroad (such as High/ scope (USA), Montessori, Gymboree, Pribadi school (Turkey), Kinder lands, and so on). These schools are more creative, innovative and open minded. It seemed to be like more “working on the right place.”

However, In general, these kinds of school are going to be chosen by middle and upper social class. One of the reason is because the tuition fee of these schools are highly and more expensive than the public school. Compare to public school, the government regulation is free for elementary and secondary school.

When I describe on a picture, this changing school phenomenon, can be seen from the graph below ;

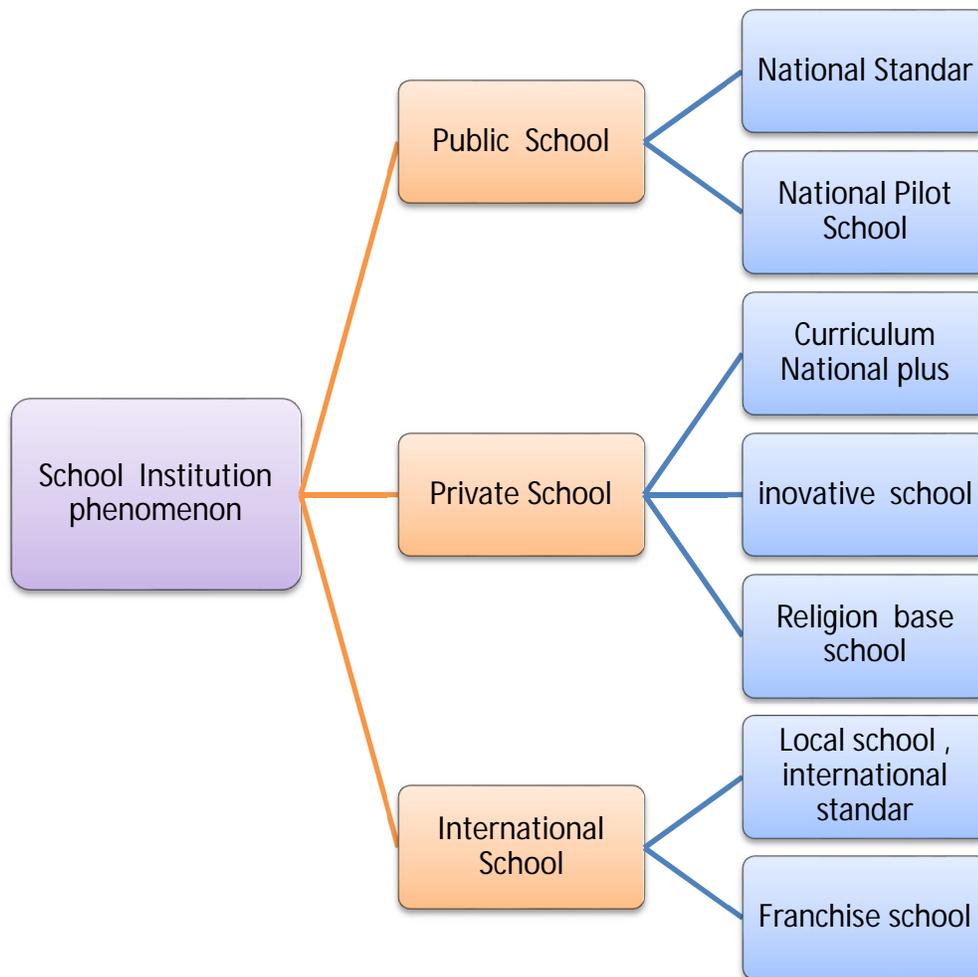


Figure. 4. The Changing of School Instution Phenomenon in Indonesia

For sure, this phenomenon is a good movement for Indonesia's future. Because more people have been opened their eyes and had a great awareness regarding the importance of education. In this phenomenon, the government and Indonesia society must be aware and learn from U.S., which has a problem of "hidden curriculum" causing by social class. However, It was a big challenging for government to intensify the public school quality and share this better education to whole Indonesian people all around the country. So, the high quality in education could be achieved by all students from all kind social classes, including students from disadvantages or lower community. The finest education is not belonging for people who could pay more only. Even so, best education is the right for all human beings without any restrictions and distinction.

5. Maintain the Diversity: Return to National Identity and Maintain the diversity

As mentioned above, Indonesia has been accepting diversity even when other countries struggling with discrimination and racism. In historical view, Indonesia had a good starting foundation in favor the diversity and exalting human values, receive the diversity and differences.

Indeed, Indonesian still need to learn from another country to maintain the diversity. However, this condition not makes us pessimistic, but Indonesian should be positive to reach the future. Life in diversity is inherent in our soul and passion. People in Indonesia have had “Bhineka Tunggal Ika” (means unity and diversity) and “Panca Sila” (means five Pilar nation; believe in God, justice and civilization of humanity, unity of Indonesia, democracy led by the inner wisdom of deliberations of justice, social justice for all Indonesian people) as symbol and national foundation in multicultural life. I think we should back to our identity to develop our own multicultural view. “Bhineka tunggal Ika” is not enough only as national symbol. The implication of this symbols in needed. The school curriculum should be adopted this issue to the class. The diversity of cultures, religions, races, ethnics, and languages, should be offered to the students.

The atmosphere of the school must bu prepared to support this issue. Bank (2010) mention about the dimensions of multicultural education such us content integration, knowledge construction, prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy and empowering school culture. A major goal of multicultural education is to help student to develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to function within their own ethnic (microculture), the nation (macroculture), other ethnics, and the global community. So the implication of the teaching should be; more caring, interconnection, sensitivity to the needs of others, more personalized learning approach, more sensitive learning styles and characteristics, and have knowledge of the characteristics of groups (Bank, 2010;P.15).

Another point to support this idea is the social system and community movement to maintain our multicultural. In general at least there are four main kind of group people could arrange multicultural in a Social movement; the constituent base, the power holders, the activist, and the general publics (Sleeter, 1996). All of part of this society altogether must have work together and make cooperation for the better future. The social change of community cant be parcially but shoud do all together.

Regarding to Althusser (1970) there is no productivity without support from the elements of the productivity itself. Any kind of the productivity can't determine by “top down” decision; it must be built from the bottom. So that inspire how to implement “ Bhineka Tunggal Ika” in the whole nation. That is not constructed from the top, but should be starting from the bottom with supporting from all elements.

6. The Closure

Indeed, the cultural change needs a time. It's clearly seen from the historical view in Western country. They need around 50 years (1960s - nowadays) to change. Nowadays, they still in progress establishing this issue. So does Indonesia, for sure, it will need a long time to change. However, it has never been better than at no time trying to develop a new education reform.

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Figure

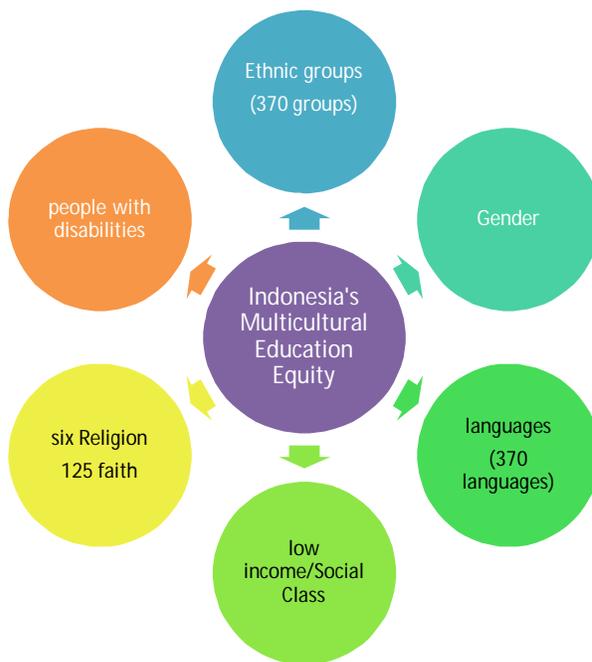


Figure 1. Diversity of Indonesia

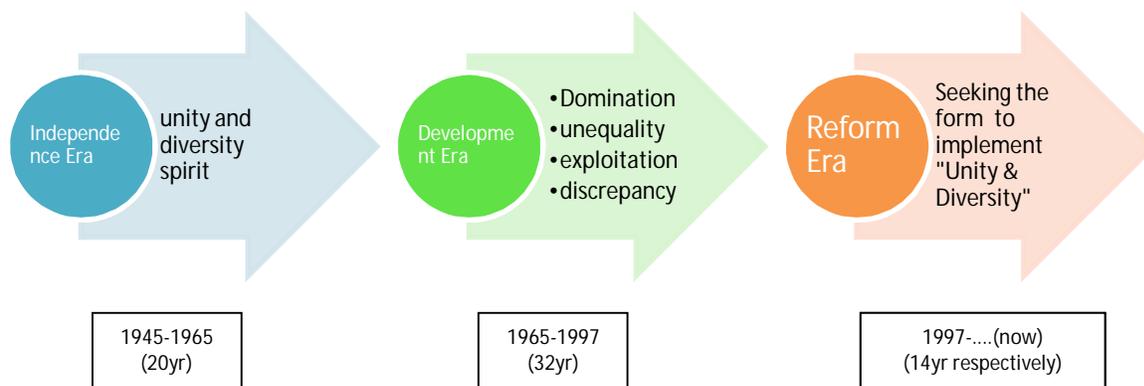


Figure.2. Indonesian Historical and political view

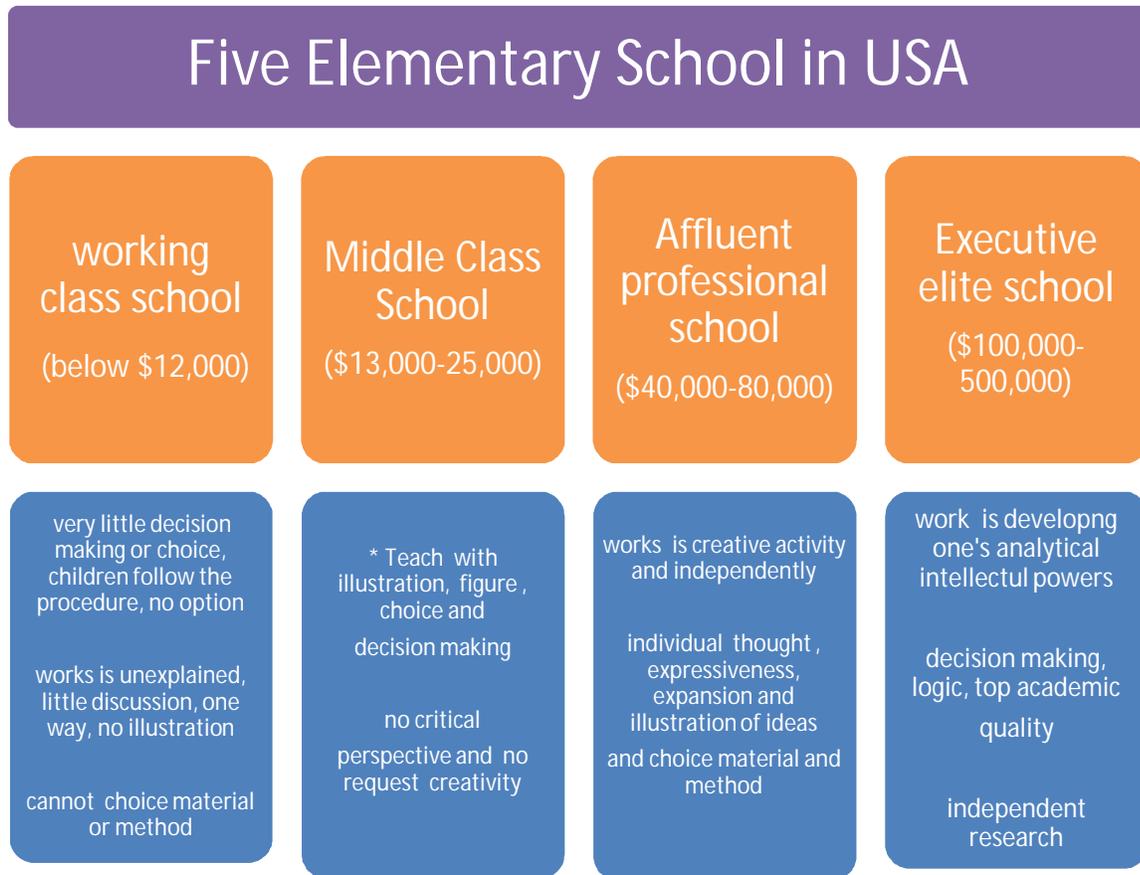


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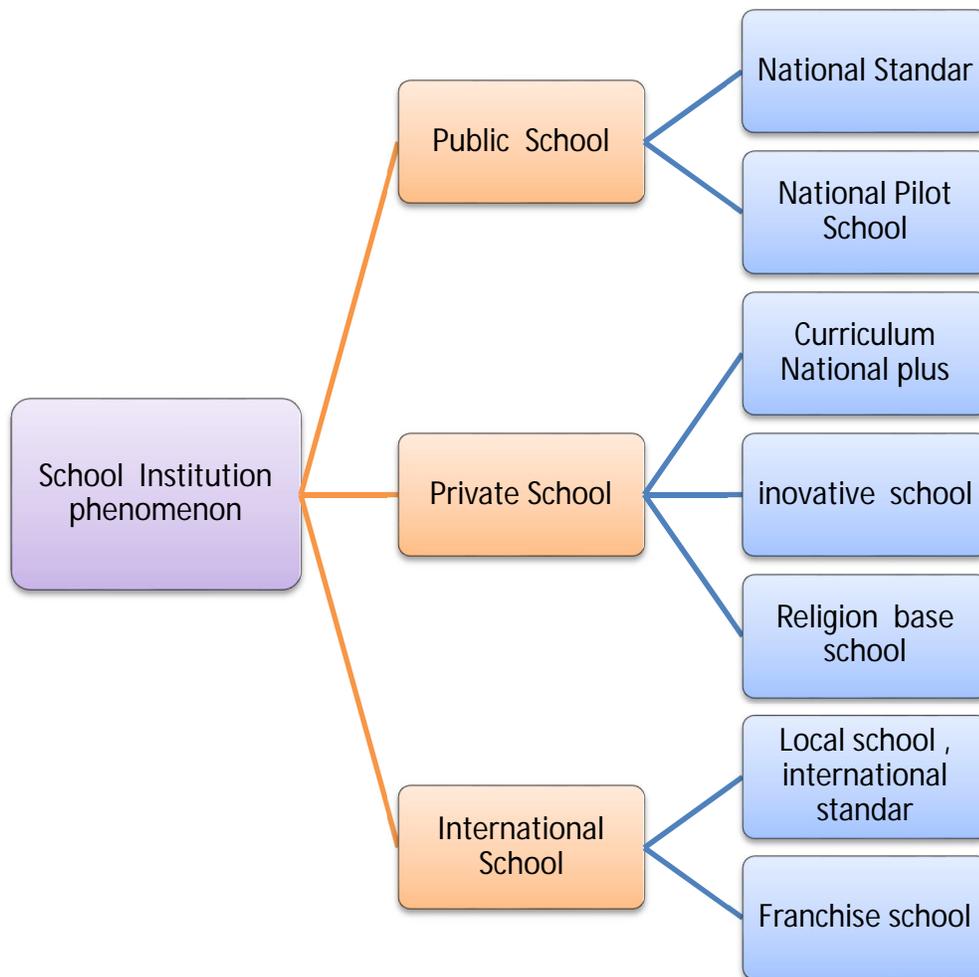


Figure. 4. The Changing of School Instution Phenomenon in Indonesia