

## Social Exclusion in the Education of Students with Religious Beliefs in Banyumas

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### Abstract

*Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 27 of 2016 provides access for students who practice a particular faith to receive an education that is equal to that of their peers. This study describes the implementation of this regulation in Banyumas Regency and the forms of social exclusion in the implementation of this regulation. The research approach used is descriptive qualitative with data collection techniques through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Informants in this study were determined using snowball sampling from students and education counsellors. Data analysis used the Miles and Huberman model. Data validity was obtained using researcher triangulation. The results show that since 2017, religious education has been implemented with support from MLKI and education counselors. The number of students who practice their beliefs has increased from 4 students initially to 10 students and 7 education counselors currently. However, the implementation process faces social exclusion barriers such as initial rejection of belief education, social stereotypes, forced use of certain religious symbols, and unequal access to textbooks, class placement, and assignments that conflict with students' beliefs in general subjects. This shows that there is still a dominance of the majority religion in the Indonesian education system. This study emphasizes the importance of socialization and enforcement of policies to guarantee equal education rights for students who practice beliefs. Therefore, the implementation of belief education requires collaboration from all parties in order to overcome obstacles and ensure that students can access education in accordance with their beliefs and human rights equally.*

**Keywords:** Education, Trust, Exclusive, Religious Beliefs

### 1. Introduction

Belief in God Almighty (*Kepercayaan terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa*) is legally recognized through Constitutional Court Decision Number 97/PUU-XIV/2-16, which complements the six-other officially recognized religions in Indonesia. As defined in Article 1 Point 18 of Government Regulation No. 37 of 2007 on the Implementation of Law Number 23 of 2006 on Population Administration, *kepercayaan* constitutes a declaration and practice of a personal relationship with God Almighty, grounded in conviction and manifested through devout conduct toward God Almighty, as well as the cultivation of noble character whose teachings are derived from the local wisdom of the Indonesian people. In broader terms, *kepercayaan* may be understood as a form of belief in God Almighty expressed through Indonesia's indigenous religious traditions. This recognition has had significant implications across the public sphere, including education, as belief-based education (*pendidikan kepercayaan*) may now be formally administered within educational institutions (Syamsiyah & Anya, 2024). This is consistent with Article 12 Paragraph (1) Letter a of Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, which stipulates that every student is entitled to receive religious education in accordance with their faith, taught by an educator of the same belief (Wahyudi, 2024).

The implementation of this policy is further operationalized through Permendikbud No. 27 of 2016 on Educational Services for Belief in God Almighty. Since its enactment, belief-based

education has also been established in Banyumas Regency, a region widely recognized as an *abangan* area with deeply rooted local belief traditions. According to Clifford Geertz (as cited in Amrozi, 2021), the concept of *abangan* refers to a segment of society that places greater emphasis on local spiritual and cultural dimensions, while remaining open to diverse belief systems rather than adhering to formal religious structures. Within this *abangan* region, belief-based education has thus far served 10 students across educational levels ranging from kindergarten to senior secondary school equivalents.

Banyumas Regency, despite its characterization as an *abangan* area, is not exempt from social exclusion. As reported by Sejati in *Tribun Jateng.com* (2024), a female student who practices *kepercayaan* was coerced into wearing a hijab at school, an incident that subsequently led to bullying by those involved. Etymologically, social exclusion refers to the condition in which individuals or minority groups are marginalized from access to social rights, including education. The case reported by *Tribun Jateng.com* in 2024 indicates that adherents of *kepercayaan*, as a minority group, experience marginalization in educational access. This is corroborated by the findings of Adzkiya & Fadhilah (2025), who documented that *penghayat kepercayaan* continue to face discrimination both in administrative matters and in social interactions. These circumstances underscore the urgency of investigating social exclusion in Banyumas, a region presumed to be tolerant of diverse belief systems.

Prior studies have also confirmed the persistence of exclusion experienced by *penghayat kepercayaan* students within educational settings. Haryono (2023) found that adherents of *kepercayaan* continue to face discrimination in educational dimensions, including issues related to electronic report cards and the absence of honoraria for *kepercayaan* education instructors in Semarang Regency. Ceprudin et al. (2024) similarly identified cases of exclusion within belief-based education, wherein general subject teachers exhibited hostility toward *penghayat* students, with consequences including the withholding of belief-subject examination materials from these students. A study conducted at SMK 1 Kasihan Bantul also identified structural obstacles in fulfilling belief-based education, including the absence of teaching materials and a clearly defined curriculum (Putri & Pringgowijoyo, 2020). Building upon prior research that has predominantly focused on administrative dimensions, this study aims to comprehensively examine the forms of social exclusion experienced by *penghayat kepercayaan* students in Banyumas Regency.

This study investigates the implementation of belief-based education in Banyumas Regency and the forms of social exclusion experienced by *penghayat kepercayaan* within the educational context. The study aims to provide a comprehensive description of how belief-based education is implemented in Banyumas Regency and to identify the various forms of social exclusion encountered by these students. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on belief-based educational practices within a region characterized by *abangan* traditions. In practical terms, the findings of the study are expected to enrich scholarship in the sociology of education and to serve as a reference for educational policymakers in developing more effective implementation strategies for belief-based education. For educational institutions, this study may serve as a foundation for developing inclusive educational programs that accommodate religious and belief diversity. For the general public, this study aims to enhance understanding and awareness of the educational rights of *penghayat kepercayaan*.

## 1. Method

This Study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with the aim of gaining an in-depth understanding of the implementation of belief based education and the forms of exclusion experienced by *penghayat kepercayaan* students in Banyumas Regency. This approach was selected on the basis of its capacity to provide a comprehensive understanding of the meanings, experiences, and perspectives of the research subjects. This is consistent with the position advanced by Nurrisa et al. (2025), who assert that the qualitative approach emphasizes the description of phenomena through in-depth analysis. The researcher served as the primary instrument in both data collection and analysis. Research informants were determined using snowball sampling, a non probability sampling method conducted sequentially through referrals

from initial respondents to subsequent ones (Leanini, 2021). Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Data analysis was conducted using the Miles and Huberman model, which comprises three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Thalib, 2022). The validity of the data in this study as established through researcher triangulation, which involves the participation of more than one researcher in the processes of data collection and analysis (Susanto et al., 2023) thereby ensuring the credibility and validity of the findings.

## 2. Discussion and Result

### *Implementation of Belief-Based Education*

The teaching and learning process constitutes an effort to realize the functions and objectives set forth in Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System (*Undang-Undang Sisdiknas*), Article 3, and represents a fundamental necessity for every student. This equally applies to *penghayat kepercayaan* students, who require instruction aligned with their belief system. Since the issuance of Permendikbud No. 27 of 2016 on Educational Services for Belief in God Almighty, *penghayat kepercayaan* have been granted legal recognition and the opportunity to receive formal belief-based education. The core of this regulation pertains to the fulfillment of students' rights to profess their beliefs and express them freely, as well as the actualization of belief values in the context of nationalism (Sholakodin, 2021). In 2017, the Directorate of Belief in God Almighty and Tradition, under the Directorate General of Culture, Ministry of Education and Culture, issued a guideline module for the implementation of belief-based educational services within educational institutions. This guideline was developed to accommodate the educational needs of *penghayat kepercayaan* students who had not previously been adequately served.

Belief-based education in Banyumas Regency began to be implemented in 2017. At its initial stage, only four students were enrolled, drawn from the elementary school level in Kotaliman, Kalibagor, Banjarpanepen, and one vocational secondary school (*SMK*) in Sumpiuh District. By 2025, belief-based education had expanded to serve ten students across Banyumas Regency, spanning educational levels from kindergarten to senior secondary school equivalents, comprising one kindergarten student, four elementary school students, and five senior secondary school equivalents.

The implementation of belief-based education in Banyumas Regency is inseparable from the role of the Majelis Luhur Kepercayaan Indonesia (MLKI), which has played a significant part in realizing belief-based education. MLKI is an institution that serves as an umbrella organization for all *penghayat kepercayaan* in Indonesia and functions as the vanguard in the process of generational renewal among *penghayat kepercayaan* communities (Anandita & Kutaneegara, 2023). The role of MLKI extends beyond the realization of belief-based education; it also assists individuals requiring administrative support and works toward ensuring equal rights in the fulfillment of worship needs for *penghayat kepercayaan* adherents. Nevertheless, the implementation of belief-based education in Banyumas Regency has not always proceeded smoothly, as it has encountered various obstacles. In the early stages of implementation, resistance was encountered from several school principals as both private and public elementary schools in Banyumas.

In the instructional process, *penghayat kepercayaan* students are accompanied by an instructor, referred to as a *penyuluh*, who functions analogously to a teacher. According to Wicaksono et al. (2024), the educational personnel who provide services to *penghayat kepercayaan* students are designated as "*penyuluh penghayat kepercayaan*" (belief education instructors). These instructors are categorized into two types: educational instructors (*penyuluh pendidikan*) and general instructors (*penyuluh umum*). Educational instructors focus on delivering belief-related learning materials within formal educational institutions. General instructors are required to fulfill certain prerequisites, including certification and the completion of a two month technical guidance program (*Bimbingan Teknis/BIMTEK*). General instructors, by contrast, focus on educational outreach in the broader public sphere and are not required to undergo the two month BIMTEK program.

As of 2025, approximately seven belief education instructors are recorded as active in Banyumas Regency. These instructors play a pivotal role in supporting *penghayat kepercayaan* students throughout their learning process within formal schools. The scheduling of belief-based instruction is aligned with the Islamic religious education timetable in the classroom, ensuring that *penghayat kepercayaan* students are not marginalized by the majority's religious class activities. This is consistent with the findings of Lutfy & Nanik (2023) regarding synchronized scheduling between majority religious activities and belief-based instruction, both of which are conducted on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Belief-based instruction is generally conducted in the school library rather than in a standard classroom. In certain instances, however, learning activities are also held off campus, namely at *sanggar* (traditional cultural studios) or meeting venues of *kepercayaan* community associations (*paguyuban*).

The preparation of belief-based learning materials by educational instructors is not carried out independently in isolation; rather, it is aligned with themes found in the learning materials of other general religious subjects. This presents a distinct challenge for educational instructors, namely how to adapt and integrate belief values so that they remain relevant to the prevailing learning themes. To address this challenge, educational instructors must maintain intensive coordination with school authorities in order to ascertain the religious education themes being taught or planned for a given semester. In this way, instructors are able to prepare belief-based learning materials that are coherent and complementary to other religious subject materials, thereby achieving comprehensive and meaningful learning for students. The four core themes of belief-based education are as follows:

**1) Spiritual Dignity (*Martabat Spiritual*)**

This theme explores the teachings of local or ancestral wisdom. It encompasses three primary dimensions: the relationship between human beings and the Creator (*manunggaling kawula gusti*); the relationship between human beings, their fellow humans, their inner selves, and the universe (*memayu hayuning bawana*); and the relationship between human beings and the afterlife (*saka marang ing dumadi, bali maring tuhane*).

**2) History of Belief (*Sejarah Kepercayaan*)**

Analogous to general historical studies, this theme addresses the origins, development, and historical values of the belief system practiced by each *penghayat kepercayaan* student, as well as exemplary figures and narratives pertaining to integrity, struggle, education, and humanitarianism.

**3) Moral Character (*Budi Pekerti*)**

This theme encompasses moral values, ethics, and virtuous conduct expected to manifest in students' daily lives. Students are taught the importance of politeness, honesty, responsibility, maintaining harmony with others, and respecting social values and norms within their environment.

**4) The Omnipotence of God (*Kemahakuasaan*)**

This theme addresses the concept of God and the teachings of belief in God Almighty (*Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*), including the essence of God Almighty, conceptual frameworks of the Divine, the foundations of belief in God Almighty, the expression of gratitude toward God Almighty, and belief in God Almighty as a guiding principle of conduct in life.

These four themes are subsequently developed and adapted to each educational level, ranging from kindergarten (*Taman Kanak-Kanak/TK*) and elementary school (*Sekolah Dasar/SD*) through junior secondary school (*Sekolah Menengah Pertama/SMP*), vocational secondary school (*Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan/SMK*), and senior high school (*Sekolah Menengah Atas/SMA*).

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At present, instructional practice for *penghayat kepercayaan* students draws upon two types of book as primary teaching resources. The first contains general belief based educational materials covering the established core themes. The second is more specific in nature and contains the belief practices observed by each *paguyuban*, such as prayer procedures and funeral rites in accordance with their respective traditions. The use of textbooks as instructional tools can facilitate students' comprehension of subject matter; likewise, for instructors, the availability of textbooks supports the development of instructional models (Hotimah, 2023). Nonetheless, instruction continues to rely heavily on books compiled by individual *paguyuban*, as comprehensive official teaching materials issued by the government remain unavailable, and the distribution of printed textbooks for belief-based education in Banyumas remains uneven.

### *Periodization of Social Exclusion in Education*

Based on the results of interviews and observations conducted with research information, comprising *penghayat kepercayaan* students and belief education instructors in Banyumas Regency, it is evident that these individuals experience exclusion within the educational domain. Social exclusion refers to the neglect of rights that an individual or group is entitled to within the public sphere (Salooje, as cited in Ashar & Hairudin, 2025). Meanwhile, according to Maulana (2023), social exclusion in education constitutes a condition in which individuals or groups within society are denied equal opportunity in education as a result of economic, social, cultural, and structural factors. Both definitions reinforce the contention that one's status as a *penghayat kepercayaan* may render them susceptible to the neglect of their educational rights. The following presents the periodization of social exclusion experienced by *penghayat kepercayaan* students in accessing education in Banyumas Regency.

#### *1) Early Implementation Period (2017)*

Belief-based education in Banyumas began to be implemented following the issuance of government policies specifically regulating educational services for *penghayat* students. This policy was regarded as a means of fulfilling the right of *penghayat* to receive education, a right that had previously been extremely difficult to exercise prior to the policy's enactment (Noviana, 2023). Before the existence of formal regulation, *penghayat* students frequently experienced social exclusion, including the non-recognition of their belief identity in school documents and difficulties in obtaining instruction aligned with their convictions. With the implementation of this policy, schools in Banyumas began to open space for *penghayat* students to pursue belief-based education in accordance with their teaching.

The implementation of belief-based education in Banyumas Regency was not without resistance in several areas. This reflects social exclusion in the form of barriers encountered by *penghayat* students in accessing belief-based education. This is consistent with the findings of Adnan et al. (2023), who found that belief-based education had not been adequately realized due to a number of challenges and obstacles. A comparable pattern of rejection was also documented in Magelang Regency from 2016 to 2022, attributable to the absence of the belief subject from the national education data system (*data pokok pendidikan*) (Kholidudin, as cited in Prasetyo et al., 2024). These findings collectively indicate that insufficient socialization of belief-based education has occurred across multiple regions, resulting in implementation delays and outright rejection, ultimately restricting *penghayat* students' access to belief-based education.

The implementation of belief-based education did not proceed uniformly across schools, particularly in Banyumas. Several schools in the regency continued to resist or actively impede the provision of belief-based education. This condition signifies that *penghayat kepercayaan* students in Banyumas experienced exclusion within the educational environment, as they were denied both a space for learning and instruction consonant with their convictions. This aligns with findings of Adnan et al. (2023), who documented that belief-based education had not been properly implemented due to

persistent challenges and obstacles. This situation underscored that belief-based education at that time remained difficult to establish, owing to resistance from school parties who continued to hold the stigmatized view that *kepercayaan* does not constitute a religion in the conventional sense.

### 2) Period 2018-2024

Following the initial resistance encountered during the implementation of belief-based education, *penghayat kepercayaan* students in Banyumas continued to experience social exclusion in other forms during the 2018-2024 period. Despite having been formally recognized and accommodated within the formal education system at the policy level, social exclusion remained a recurring experience for these students. One prominent form of social exclusion during this period was the coerced use of the hijab by *penghayat* female students, which was still frequently occurring in several schools in Banyumas.

Several schools in Banyumas continued to treat the wearing of the hijab as obligatory, as this requirement was embedded in the school regulations that had been shaped by the dominant religious majority. Based on interview findings, *penghayat* female students experienced exclusion when they did not wear hijab at school. They reported feeling coerced by certain parties, including teachers and peers to comply with this requirement. This left *penghayat* female students without the space to freely express their identities and compelled them to conform to rules incongruent with their convictions. This corresponds with the findings of Pasrin et al. (2022), who documented the coercion of non-muslim female students into wearing the hijab due to longstanding institutional regulations. This condition demonstrates that school regulations that fail to account for diversity of belief effectively reinforce social exclusion and disregard students' rights to practice their convictions freely within the educational environment.

On a social level, *penghayat kepercayaan* students also experienced exclusion related to societal stigma. They were labeled as deviant or ill-behaved on the grounds of being perceived as irreligious, a characterization attributed not only by fellow students but also, on occasion by school personnel. This stigma is closely tied to the prevailing religious norms in Indonesian society, which presuppose adherence to a formal religion, the possession of a holy scripture, and the performance of prescribed acts of worship. *Penghayat kepercayaan*, by contrast, are perceived as deviating from these norms by virtue of their distinct forms of worship and differing conceptualizations of the divine. This is consistent with the findings of Trinugraha et al (2023), who identified stigma directed at *penghayat* arising from differences in ritual practices and theological concepts relative to those of the religious majority. Accordingly, the labeling of *penghayat kepercayaan* students as ill-behaved cannot dissociated from the socially reproduced stigma that has been transmitted across generations within Indonesian society.

### 3) Current Period (2025)

Nearly a full decade has elapsed since belief-based education was first established in Banyumas Regency. Yet *penghayat* students remain subject to social exclusion in their immediate environment. Beyond the initial resistance and the coercion of religious symbols experienced in earlier periods, contemporary forms of social exclusion include the conduct of belief-based classes in school libraries, limited distribution of instructional materials, the assignment of general subject tasks imbued with majority religious content, and the stereotyping of *penghayat* students as primarily suited for participation in Javanese cultural competitions.

The placement of belief-based education classes in school libraries is indicative of social exclusion in educational access, as it reflects the absence of adequate and appropriate classroom facilities for *penghayat kepercayaan* students. This situation becomes increasingly uncondusive when instructional schedules coincide with recess periods, during which other students frequently use the library for reading, thereby disrupting the concentration and learning environment of *penghayat* students. This is corroborated by the findings of Fathonah & Isemeirita (2023), who demonstrated that a

conductive classroom placement of belief-based education classes in the library constitutes a form of exclusion that adversely affects the quality of learning for *penghayat* students.

Limited distribution of instructional materials represents another form of exclusion in educational access. The scarcity of printed teaching materials remains prevalent in schools located in the peripheral areas of Banyumas Regency. *Penghayat kepercayaan* student in the Purwokerto urban area, which falls within Banyumas Regency have comparatively better access to instructional books, whereas students in the regency's peripheral areas have yet to receive physical copies of teaching materials. This parallels the findings of Putri & Pringgowijoyo (2020) regarding the unavailability of supporting textbooks for belief-based education in Bantul Regency as of 2020. This distributional disparity reflects an inequality in public educational facilities between Purwokerto and the surrounding peripheral areas, which in turn contributes to unequal educational quality and learning opportunities for students in those regions.

In addition to exclusion in the implementation of belief-based education, *penghayat* students also experience social exclusion within the broader educational context. Based on interview findings, exclusion occurs within general subjects classes outside the scope of belief-based education. *Penghayat kepercayaan* students report experiencing exclusion when required to complete assignments that are distinctly associated with a particular mainstream religion, including the phrasing of assignments and tasks in general classrooms that entail the reading of the scriptures of specific religion. This situation indicates the dominance of the majority religious perspective within the school's instructional framework, thereby indirectly creating a space of exclusion for *penghayat kepercayaan* students. While the integration of majority religious values into the curriculum has been advocated as a means of strengthening students' moral and ethical character (Ardilah, 2024), the divergence between these two conditions reveals a tension between the pursuit of majority religious value integration and provision of equitable education for all students, including *penghayat kepercayaan*.

The prioritization of *penghayat* students' participation in Javanese script and traditional song (*tembang*) competitions reflects a more complex form of social exclusion within the educational system. Although superficially appearing to constitute recognition of *penghayat* students' superior proficiency in Javanese cultural heritage, this practice in fact perpetuates social categorization and stereotyping that constrains students' freedom of expression. Social categorization is the process by which individuals partition the social world into distinct categories based on particular attributes ascribed to themselves or others (Ristiandar & Nurchayati, 2023). The social categorization imposed upon *penghayat* students generates the stereotype that they are inherently more capable in Javanese script and *tembang* competitions, by virtue of the use of these cultural media in belief-based education. This results in the restriction of *penghayat* students' roles and identities, while simultaneously reducing other students' opportunities to participate in such competitions. This demonstrates that social exclusion may appear constructive on the surface while fundamentally perpetuating the categorization of individuals based on stereotypes within the educational environment.

### *Majority Dominance and the Reproduction of Stigma in Education*

The experiences of *penghayat kepercayaan* students in Banyumas Regency cannot be separated from the dominance of the majority group, which is reproduced through educational institutions. This dominance does not invariably manifest in physical coercion; rather, it more frequently operates through symbolic violence embedded in everyday school practices. This is consistent with the findings of Fadhilah & Munjin (2022), which demonstrate that group dominance operates through the capital of symbolic power, enacted via teaching materials, images in printed textbooks, and classroom instructional methods practices that unwittingly serve the interest of the majority group in maintaining its position and standards of life. This mechanism may also be understood as a hidden curriculum. According to Caswita, as cited in

Khoiriah & Deriwanto (2022), the hidden curriculum refers to a curriculum that is not formally taught and exists outside the written curriculum, yet is capable of influencing changes in students' values, perception, and behaviors. Based on the research findings, the hidden curriculum in Banyumas manifests through the recitation of prayers specific to a particular religion and the assignment of majority religious scripture reading by teachers in general classrooms. These findings indicate that the dominance of the religious majority in Banyumas reproduces a hidden curriculum.

The reproduction of stigma toward *penghayat kepercayaan* within schools is inextricably linked to deeply rooted stigma in society at large. Sholakodin (2022) found that the formalization of *penghayat kepercayaan* identity continues to face serious obstacles, including discrimination and exclusion by other groups. This stigma subsequently permeates the school environment through teachers and fellow students. Trinugraha (2022), in a study of *Kawruh Jiwo* Students in Surakarta, found that societal stigma directed at *penghayat kepercayaan* produces rejection, social ostracism, and the restrictions of interaction, as they are perceived as peculiar and assumed to engage in mystical or shamanistic rituals. This demonstrates that educational institutions, which ought to be neutral with respect to prejudice, instead become arenas in which stigma is reproduced and legitimized. This aligns with the research findings, which indicate that during the early period of belief-based education implementation, certain students were labeled as ill-behaved by their peers on the grounds of being perceived as non-religious, a reflection of the same stigma that circulates in wider society.

Majority dominance in education is underpinned by policies that have historically positioned *kepercayaan* outside the framework of equal legal recognition. Neohai (2023) contends that the Ministry of Education and Culture has itself contributed to the perpetuation of discrimination against *penghayat kepercayaan* by compelling them to engage in education incongruent with their convictions as exemplified by the case of student at SMK 7 Semarang who were required to participate in Islamic prayer. A comparable case was identified in Banyumas, where *penghayat* students were assigned tasks grounded in the majority religion. This indicated that educational discrimination against *penghayat* is not a localized problem but rather a reflection of the state's failure to achieve inclusive education for *penghayat kepercayaan*. This is consistent with the findings of Seo et al. (2024), who established that minority groups frequently experience social stigma and even prohibition of their religious practices, while the potential for majority dominance across various aspects of life including education frequently culminates in the marginalization of minority religious groups. Accordingly, the educational discrimination experienced by *penghayat kepercayaan* does not constitute a mere technical implementation failure but rather reflects the state's broader failure to guarantee equal rights for all its citizens.

### 3. Conclusion

The implementation of belief-based education in Banyumas Regency, as mandated by Permendikbud No. 27 of 2016, has been in operation since 2017. Beginning with four students, the program has expanded to serve ten students as of 2025, spanning educational levels from kindergarten to senior secondary school equivalents. This implementation is supported by MLKI Banyumas Regency and seven educational *penyuluh pendidikan*. The instructional process is conducted in alignment with the general religious education timetable, taking place in school libraries or *kepercayaan* cultural studios (*sanggar*), with learning materials organized around four core themes: Spiritual Dignity (*Martabat Spiritual*), History of Belief (*Sejarah Kepercayaan*), Moral Character (*Budi Pekerti*), and the Omnipotence of God (*Kemahakuasaan*). Throughout its implementation, the program has been persistently accompanied by social exclusion that has both evolved and remained entrenched over time. During the early period of 2017, exclusion manifested in the form of institutional resistance to the implementation of belief-based education policy. The 2018-2024 period was characterized by the coerced adoption of majority religious symbols, most notably the hijab, and the stigmatization of *penghayat* students as ill-behaved. As of 2025, social exclusion continues to occur in the form of the placement of belief-based classes in school libraries, unequal distribution of instructional materials, the assignment of majority religion-oriented tasks within general subject classes, and stereotyping in the prioritization of competition participation. Despite the existence of policies regulating educational services for

*penghayat* students. The forms of exclusion experienced by these students reveal an intersection of policy factors, educational infrastructure, and social relations that remain dominated by a majority centric worldview, thereby producing layered experiences of marginalization for *penghayat* students in their efforts to access quality education consonant with their convictions.

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