



# Community perception regarding noise pollution caused by the noisy exhausts of two-wheeled vehicles in Karawang Regency, Indonesia

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**Abstract.** The study aimed to identify public perceptions regarding the use of noisy exhausts on two-wheeled motor vehicles in Karawang Regency. It is motivated by the widespread use of noisy exhausts on motorized vehicles, particularly motorcycles, in various regions in Indonesia, including Karawang Regency. The issue needs to be examined by identifying public perceptions. This study was carried out from July 2025 to November 2025. It employs a qualitative approach based on descriptive analysis methods. The results show the need to implement an educational, persuasive, and humanistic approach in dealing with challenging youth behavior. Furthermore, serious law enforcement is needed with powerful support and initiative from the leader of the Karawang Regency regional government.

**Key Words:** environmental disturbance issues, qualitative approach, social problems.

**Introduction.** The use of noisy exhausts on motor vehicles, particularly motorcycles, has recently become a trend in various regions in Indonesia (Noval et al 2025). The majority of motorcycle users employing these noisy exhausts are young people (Yanuvianti et al 2020; Amalia & Brilianti 2024), both in rural and urban areas. The use of these noisy exhausts is a hobby for those who enjoy modifying their motorcycles for specific purposes or motivations. The deafening sound of motorcycle exhausts is often heard on the streets, both morning, afternoon, and evening, seemingly without regard for time. The motorcycle users' travel activities can be categorized as spreading noise pollution to the public, especially those living along main roads.

Theoretically, noise pollution can lead to physical and mental health problems. Long-term noise exposure can cause permanent hearing loss, high blood pressure, sleep disturbances, stress, and an increased risk of heart disease. Continuous noise can even affect the central nervous system and hormones. Furthermore, noise pollution can disrupt the concentration and productivity of workers, employees, and students. For example, in labor or educational environments, noise can disrupt concentration, reduce productivity, and increase errors (Lubis 2003; Lintong 2009; The Pesisir Selatan Regency Government 2025).

The noise pollution caused by noisy motorcyclists has recently become very disturbing and disruptive to the public. They apparently have no regard for other motorists and the surrounding community due to the noise pollution they cause. The noise from the exhaust not only disturbs the public's comfort but also violates applicable traffic regulations (Vernanda et al 2025). The police seem slightly careless and less assertive in dealing with these motorcyclists' activity. Local governments have yet to demonstrate their role in addressing this issue. The matter has apparently occurred in several regions in Indonesia, including Karawang Regency. If this problem continues unchecked, it is feared that mass public anger and vigilante action against these noisy motorcyclists will occur. It is a criminal act that can harm the community itself and further disrupt security and social order.

Based on the above description, a study is needed to outline the issues related to handling the usage of noisy motor vehicle exhausts, particularly in Karawang Regency, through identifying public perceptions. A literature search shows there have been no published studies on this issue in Karawang Regency. Research on a similar topic has been conducted in Jombang Regency (Firmansyah & Puspitosari 2022). However, the majority of existing studies discuss law enforcement against exhaust modification violations in other regions, such as Surabaya City (Firdiansyah et al 2024), Ponorogo Regency (Putra & Widodo 2024), and South Jakarta City (Safrudin & Sudarto 2024). This study aimed to identify public perceptions regarding the use of noisy exhausts on two-wheeled motor vehicles in Karawang Regency.

## **Material and Method**

***Time and location of the study.*** The study was conducted over six months, from July 2025 to November 2025, in Karawang Regency, West Java Province, Indonesia. Karawang Regency is located in the northern part of West Java Province, geographically found between 107°02'-107°40' East Longitude and 5°56'-6°34' South Latitude. Administratively, Karawang Regency borders the Java Sea to the north, Subang Regency to the east, Purwakarta Regency to the southeast, Bogor Regency and Cianjur Regency to the south, and Bekasi Regency to the west. Karawang Regency covers an area of 1,913.71 km<sup>2</sup>, or 5.40 percent of West Java Province.

In 2024, the population of Karawang Regency reached 2,581,245 people, consisting of 1,302,947 male residents and 1,278,298 female residents. The sex ratio of the Karawang Regency population is 102, which means the male population is more than the female population. The regency's population density per km<sup>2</sup> is 1,334.78 people. The largest population of the regency is in Klari Subdistrict, reaching 212 thousand people or 8.30 percent of the total population of Karawang Regency. Meanwhile, the smallest population is in Tegalwaru Subdistrict, reaching 41 thousand people or 1.60 percent of the total population of the regency. Based on age groups, the largest number of Karawang Regency residents is aged 30-34 years, with 219,541 people. This is followed by 212,349 people aged 35-39 years, and 205,517 people aged 25-29 years.

The majority of the population in Karawang Regency in 2024, worked as employees, with 539,264 people. Furthermore, the other largest occupation was own account worker, with 306,595 people.

The community's social life is supported by the availability of infrastructure, particularly roads. The length of roads in Karawang Regency in 2024 reached 1,940.59 km. Road management in Karawang Regency is carried out by various levels of government, with 50.99 km of state roads, 91.53 km of provincial roads, and 1,798.07 km of regency roads. Roads in this regency have a paved and concrete surface of 1,644.71 km, a gravel surface of 38.23 km, and a soil surface of 115.13 km. In 2024, roads in this regency were in good condition of 1,300.20 km, moderate condition of 176.92 km, damaged condition of 53.70 km, and severely damaged condition of 267.26 km (Central Statistics Agency of Karawang Regency 2025).

***Analysis.*** This study applies a qualitative approach based on descriptive analysis methods. To analyze the root causes of noisy motor vehicle exhausts in Karawang Regency, this study employs information from two groups of respondents: noisy exhaust users and community respondents affected by noise pollution. Other sources of analysis come from expert sources with expertise in transportation and traffic, and a deep understanding of the issues related to the management of noisy motor vehicle exhaust policies in Karawang Regency. The scope of analysis sources from various parties is expected to provide a complete understanding of the problem of noise pollution resulting from the use of noisy exhausts from motor vehicles.

***Data collection.*** The study utilized two sources: primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through questionnaires and in-depth interviews with respondents or informants according to predetermined targets. The sampling technique used a

combination of two methods: probability sampling and non-probability sampling. The probability sampling method employed is simple random sampling, while the non-probability sampling method used is incidental sampling and purposive sampling. The number of respondents for data collection through questionnaire distribution followed the principle of Roscoe (1975), which states that a reasonable sample size in a study is between 30 and 500. Likewise, if there are multiple categories, a minimum of 30 samples is taken from each category (Sugiyono 2014). Based on the description in the analysis section, a minimum of 30 respondents were selected for data collection from noisy exhaust users and community respondents affected by noise pollution, respectively.

In-depth interviews were conducted with expert informants with government or state authority in the field of transportation and road traffic, and who are well-versed in issues related to the management of noisy exhaust policies for motor vehicles in Karawang Regency.

Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained from scientific literature sources and publications from official institutions, including the Central Statistics Agency and local governments.

## Results and Discussion

### *Respondent characteristics*

*The respondent group of noisy exhaust users.* The number of respondents who use noisy exhausts whose information has been successfully obtained through the distribution of questionnaires is 32. All respondents are domiciled in the Karawang Regency area, which spans six subdistricts. The majority of respondents who use noisy exhausts come from the Klari Subdistrict area (43.74%) and the Majalaya Subdistrict area (40.62%) (Figure 1). Both subdistricts include urban areas with a high volume of motorized vehicles, where motorcycles dominate the main roads of the area. Meanwhile, the other respondents come from several subdistricts as peri-urban areas, with many residents commuting to connect residential areas with large industrial zones in Karawang Regency. Their activities rely on two-wheeled vehicles as the primary means of transportation.

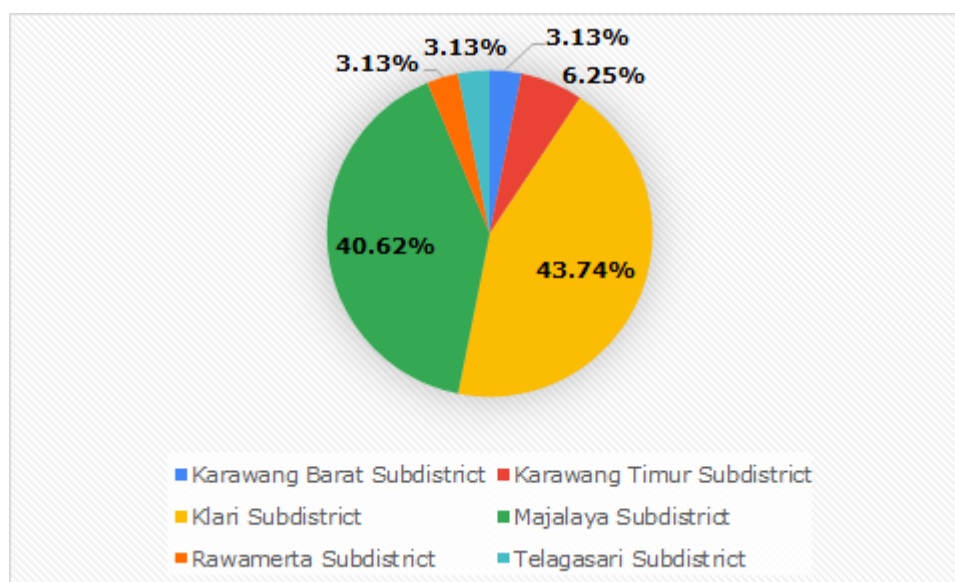


Figure 1. Distribution of residential areas of respondents who use noisy exhausts based on sub-district.

In terms of gender, the majority of respondents who utilize noisy exhausts are male (96.87%), while only 3.13% are female (Figure 2). Men generally preferred the activities involving tinkering with motor vehicles. In fact, the majority of mechanics in motor vehicle repair shops in Indonesia are male.

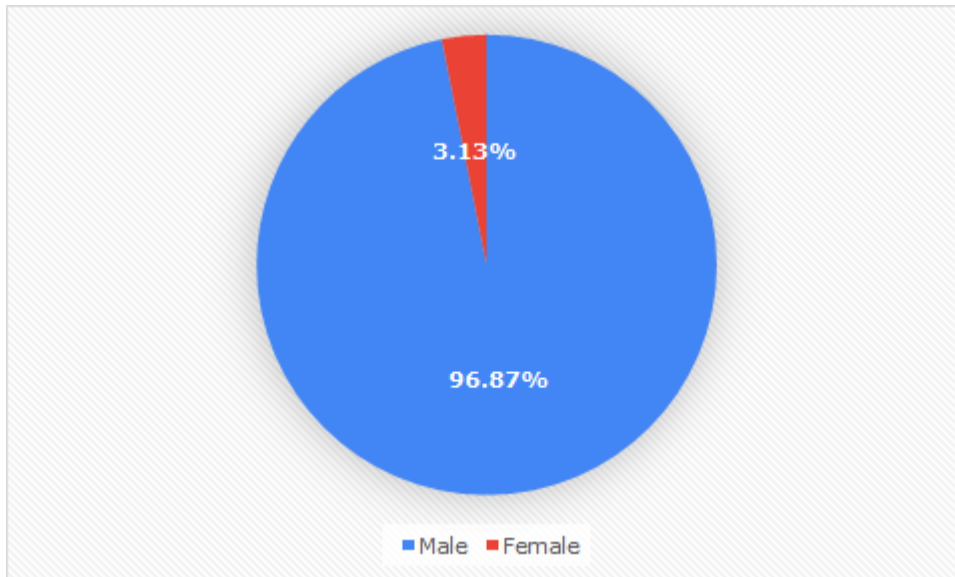


Figure 2. Characteristics of respondents who use noisy exhausts from a gender perspective.

Respondents who employed noisy exhausts were under 18 years old, 71.87%, while 25.00% were aged 18-25 years (Figure 3). Thus, the majority of them are Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012. Generation Z is the first generation to grow up with virtually unlimited internet access. They possess characteristics such as familiarity with information and cultures from various parts of the world (Sekolah Pelita Harapan 2024).

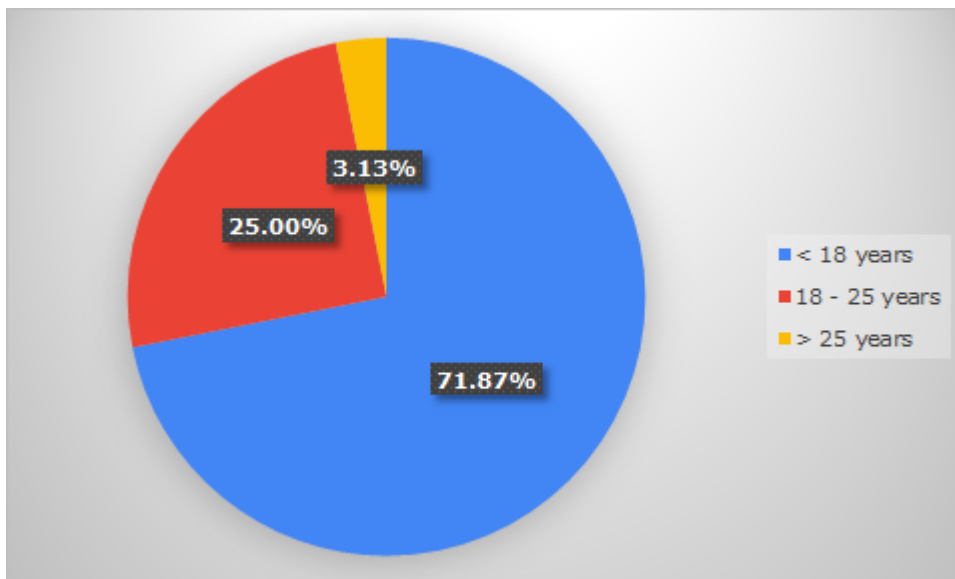


Figure 3. Characteristics of respondents who use noisy exhausts based on age range.

Most of the respondents were students (71.87%), and 15.63% worked as laborers (Figure 4). The education level of most respondents was Senior High School/Vocational High School (62.50%), and 34.37% of respondents had Junior High School education (Figure 5). In other words, the respondents who use noisy exhausts are mostly educated young people, but their education is middle to lower.

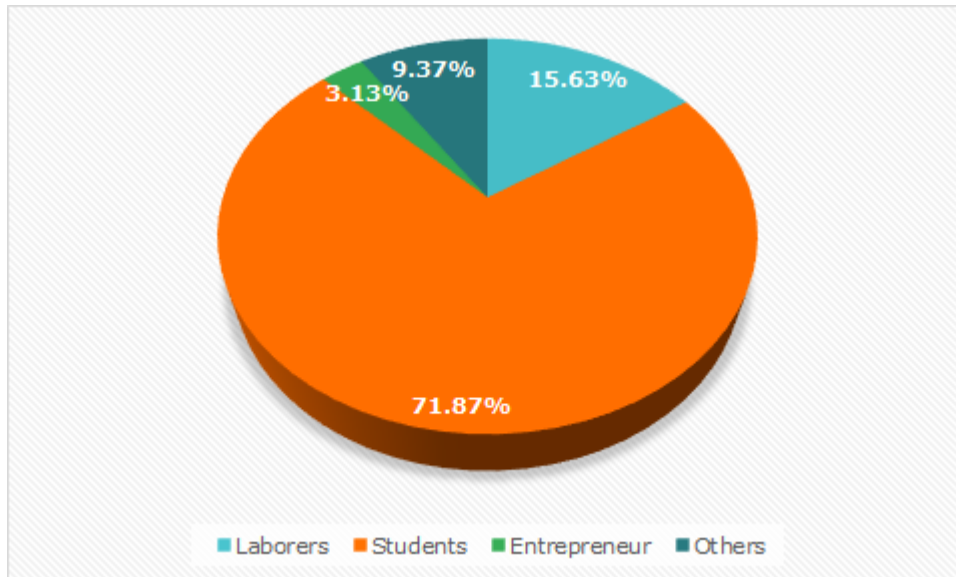


Figure 4. Characteristics of respondents who use noisy exhausts based on occupation.

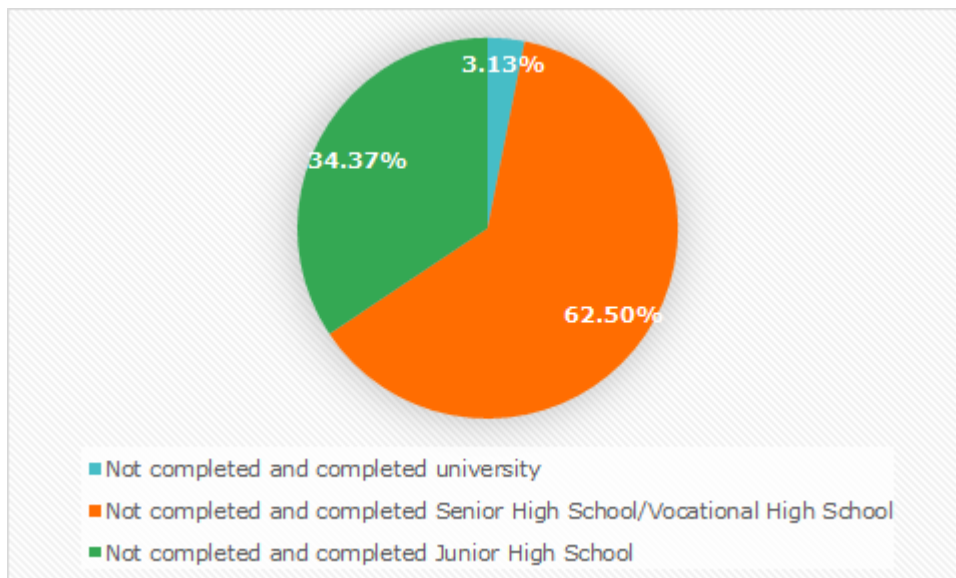


Figure 5. Characteristics of respondents who use noisy exhausts based on education.

Another important piece of information is the income of respondents who use noisy exhausts, so that researchers obtain the information concerning their purchasing power, particularly toward modifying their vehicles and buying non-standard exhausts. However, the researchers overlooked this aspect of information collection, which is a limitation of this study.

*The respondent group of residents affected by noise pollution from noisy exhausts.* The 35 respondents were also collected through questionnaires. They reside in seven sub-districts in Karawang Regency. The majority of respondents reside in Majalaya Subdistrict (20.00%), Klari Subdistrict (17.13%), and Karawang Timur and Telukjambe Timur Subdistricts with 14.29% each (Figure 6). These sub-districts also constitute industrial and residential zones connected by national and district roads, through which residents frequently travel for their socio-economic activities.

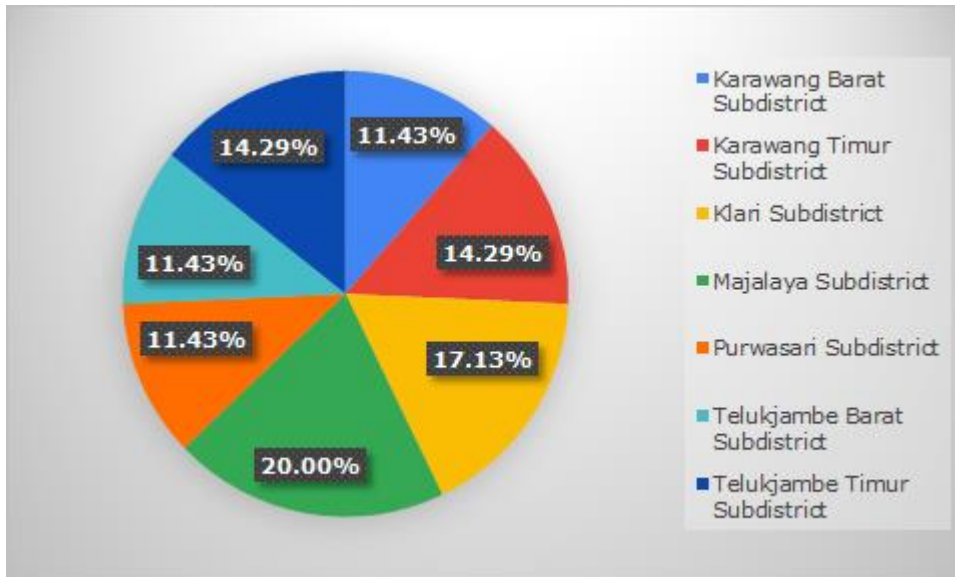


Figure 6. Distribution of residential areas of communities respondents affected by noise pollution based on sub-district.

Based on gender, respondents from the community affected by noise pollution were predominantly female (68.57%), while male respondents were 31.43% (Figure 7). More than half of the respondents were housewives and traders, with 28.57% each (Figure 8). Housewives spent most of their time at home taking care of the household. Moreover, the majority of the traders also sold their goods along the main roads in their area.

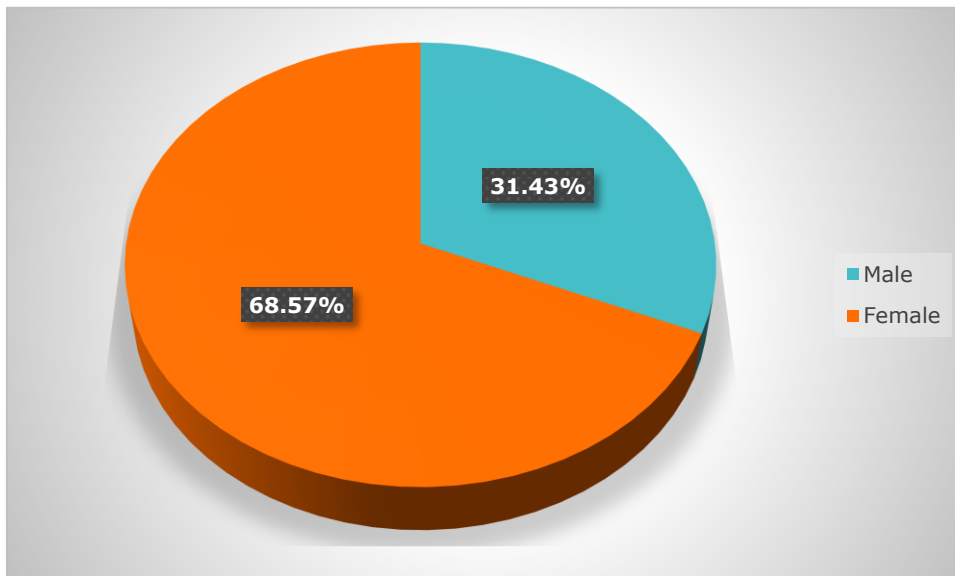


Figure 7. The characteristics of respondents in communities exposed to noisy pollution from a gender perspective.

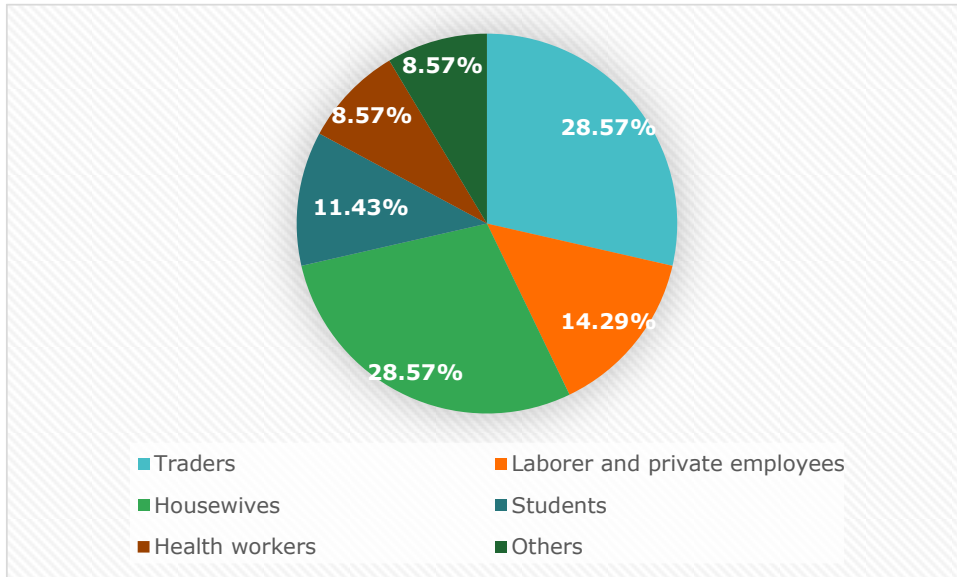


Figure 8. Characteristics of communities respondents exposed to noisy pollution based on occupation.

The majority of respondents were over 35 years old (51.43%), and those between 18 and 25 years old (22.86%) (Figure 9). Meanwhile, the respondents' educational level was quite good, with the majority having a senior high school/vocational high school education (65.71%) and a university education (20.00%) (Figure 10). The educational characteristics of the respondents provide confidence that they have sufficient understanding to give an objective assessment of the use of non-standard exhausts from a social and legal perspective.

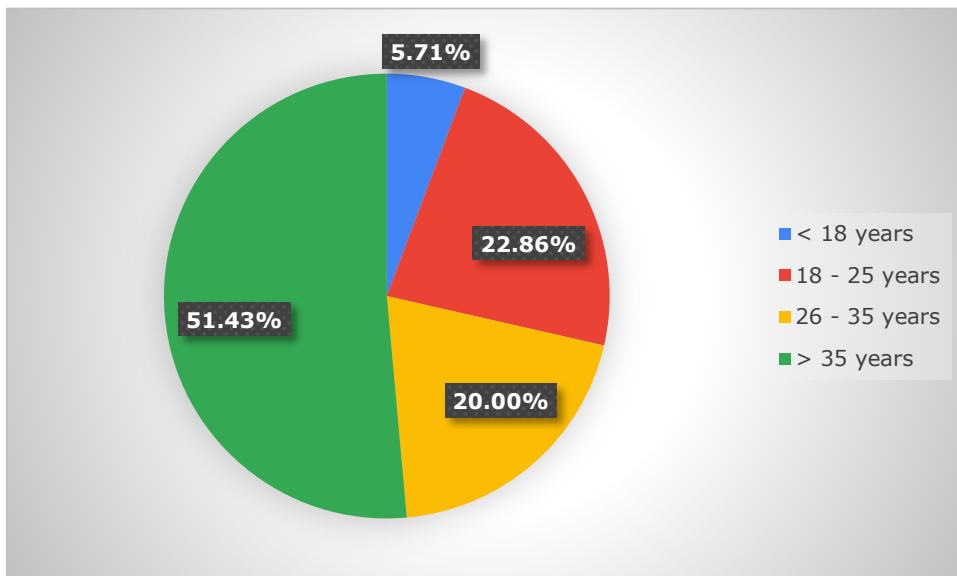


Figure 9. Characteristics of communities respondents affected by noise pollution based on age range.

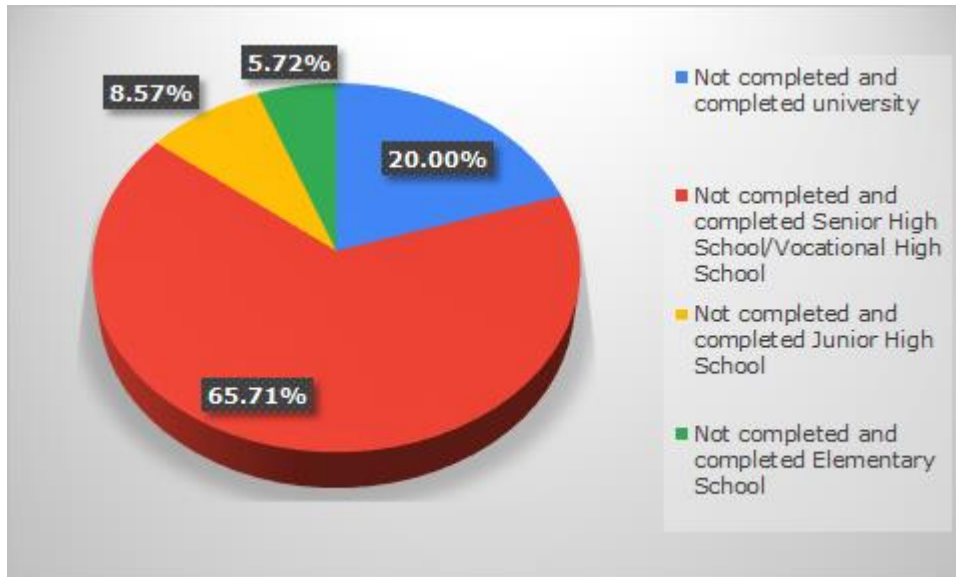


Figure 10. Characteristics of communities respondents affected by noise pollution based on education.

**Survey results from noisy exhaust users.** Half of the respondents (50.00%) stated that they had not employed a noisy exhaust on their motorcycle for long (Figure 11), namely for less than a year. However, 25.00% of them, respectively, had operated their noisy exhaust for quite a long time (between 1-3 years), and had used their noisy exhaust for a long time (more than 3 years).

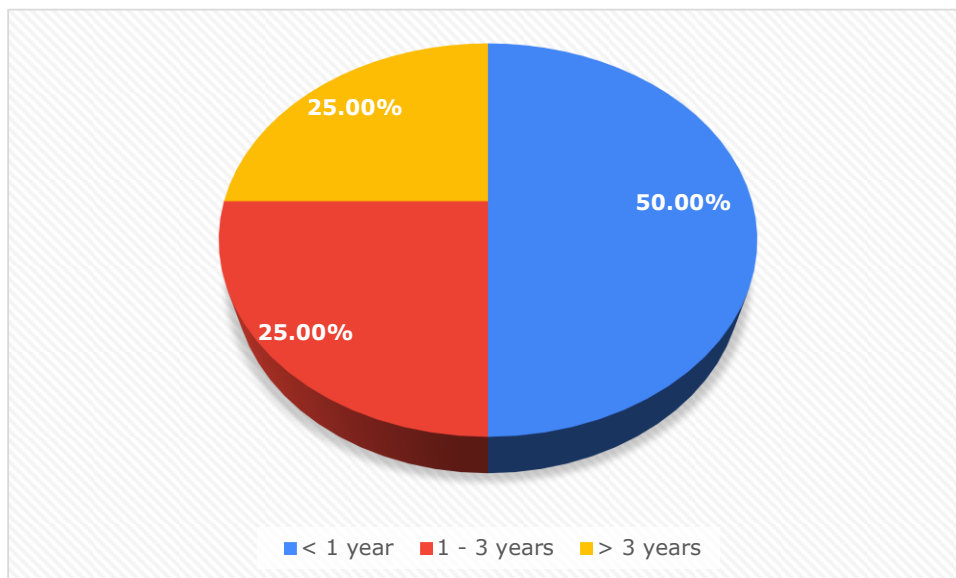


Figure 11. The length of time respondents have used noisy exhausts.

As many as 40.63% of respondents who used noisy exhausts stated that the reason they utilized noisy exhausts was that they had a hobby of modifying their motorcycles (Figure 12). Their hobby may be supported by their parents, either intentionally or unconsciously, through the extra money they give to their children. It is confirmed by the fact that more than half of these respondents are students who still depend on their parents for their livelihood (including their financial resources). Furthermore, some of them may already be working and have their own money to pursue their motorcycle modification hobby. They sometimes prioritize their egos and ignore advice from others (perhaps their parents) that the money they earn should be used for productive activities (investing) or saving for the future. It may reinforce the consumption theory (in macroeconomic theory) that, as residents of developing countries, Indonesians tend to

have a higher marginal propensity to consume than residents of developed countries. Consequently, they tend to prioritize consumption over saving (Rahardja & Manurung 2019).

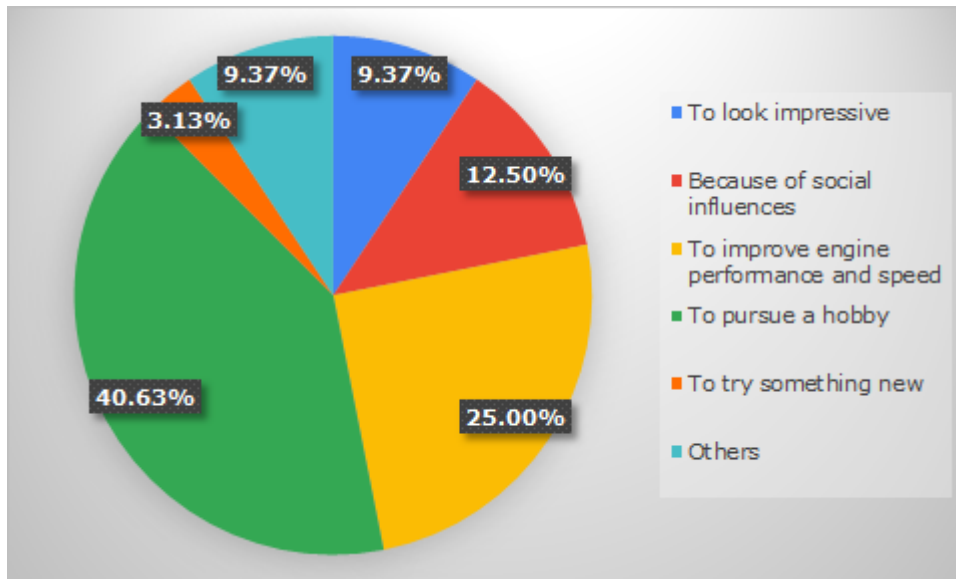


Figure 12. Reasons for using noisy exhausts on respondents' vehicles.

Another reason why people employ noisy exhausts is to maximize their motorcycle engine performance (25.00%). It is because most of their motorcycles have small engine capacity, yet they desire maximum vehicle performance. It may be due to their need to speed up and reach their destinations (school or work) quickly. They often ignore (have very little empathy for) the feelings of the people around them due to the noise they produce. Furthermore, maximizing the performance of these small-capacity vehicles can result in wasted fuel. Unfortunately, some of the fuel they use is subsidized by the government. In 2024, the government provided a fuel subsidy of IDR 56.1 trillion for Pertalite (a fuel commonly used by vehicles, including motorcycles, in Indonesia) (Irawati 2025). In other words, the use of noisy exhausts indirectly wastes significant state funds on unnecessary activities. It is in line with the survey results that 31.25% of respondents who operate noisy exhausts utilize government-subsidized fuel, namely Pertalite (Figure 13).

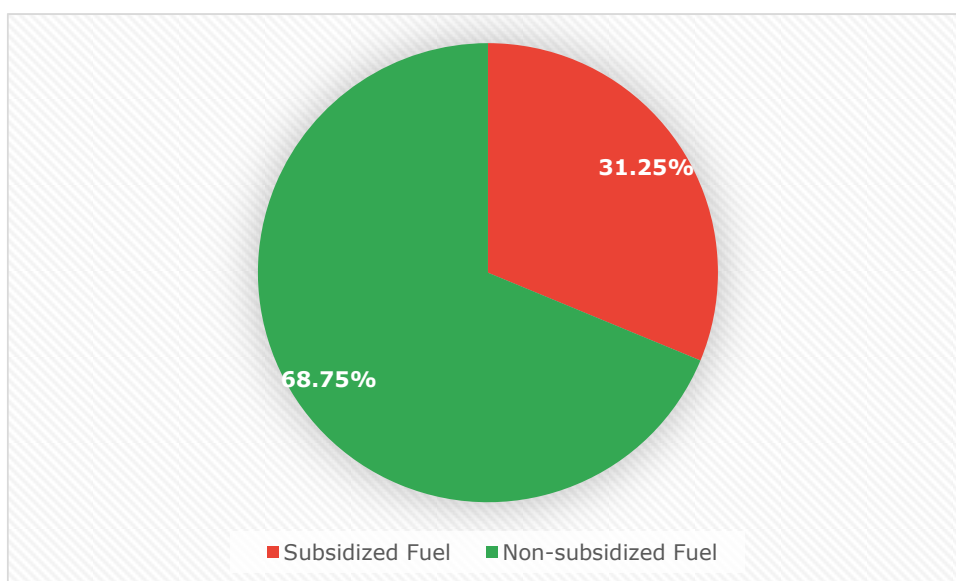


Figure 13. Composition of fuel use by noisy exhaust users.

Meanwhile, the further reason respondents cited for using noisy exhausts was that they were influenced by their social environment, following the latest vehicle modification trends (12.50%) (Figure 12). They followed the trend of using noisy exhausts due to the influence of their friends and social media. This reason is relevant, as the majority of respondents are young students, including Generation Z, who are exposed to global cultural influences due to the robust influence of communication and information technology. They are generally exploring for their identity, often psychologically unstable, and unwilling to miss out on current trends.

In fact, noisy exhausts are used by motorcycles to compete in racing circuits. International motorcycle racing is indeed popular among young people, specifically when one of these series is held in Indonesia. As a result, they at least imitate the riding styles of their idolized motorcycle racers. It is exacerbated by the marketing pattern of Indonesia's favorite motorcycles, which hire famous motorcycle racers and their idols to serve as brand ambassadors for the motorcycle manufacturers' products.

The majority of respondents who use motorcycles with noisy exhausts do not have a driver's license (71.88%), and only 28.12% of the respondents have a driver's license (Figure 14). It indicates that the noise pollution caused by noisy vehicle exhausts is the work of drivers who violate the law, particularly Law No. 22 of 2009 concerning Traffic and Road Transportation. It requires firmness from the traffic and transportation authorities in Karawang Regency against these violators, so that the law can be enforced, and they do not act arbitrarily.

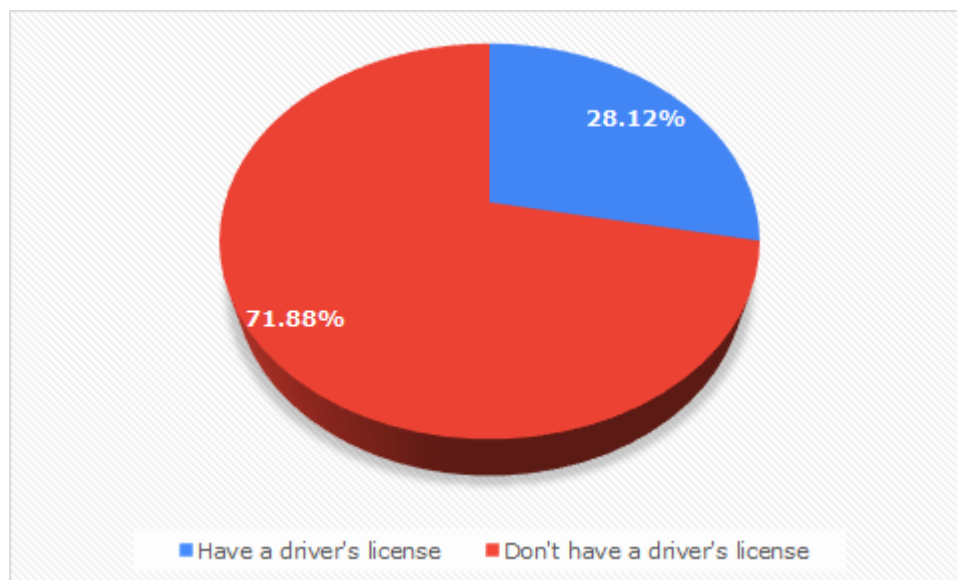


Figure 14. Driver license ownership of noisy exhaust users.

In fact, they have already been subject to legal and social sanctions (40.62%), such as ticketing and fines, and having their noisy exhausts removed from their motorcycles. Likewise, they have also received social sanctions in the form of warnings from the community (25.00%) (Figure 15). However, they often refuse to change or stubbornly continue using noisy exhausts on their vehicles. It requires repeated character education from stakeholders, for example, through outreach activities.



Figure 15. Sanctions for users of noisy exhausts.

Although there were respondents who were hesitant and had other reasons for participating in the counseling and removing their noisy exhausts, basically, the majority of them were willing to participate in the counseling and replace them voluntarily (56.25%) (Figure 16). Other respondents were willing to replace their exhausts, but under duress or with conditions, for example, if the exhaust was replaced, the procurement of the new exhausts must be financed by another party. It shows that they still have acceptable intentions and have the opportunity to change their vehicles to utilize standard exhausts. Therefore, an educational and persuasive approach is still possible to be carried out so that they can realize their driving behavior, which has been erring and has contributed to noise pollution in the community environment.

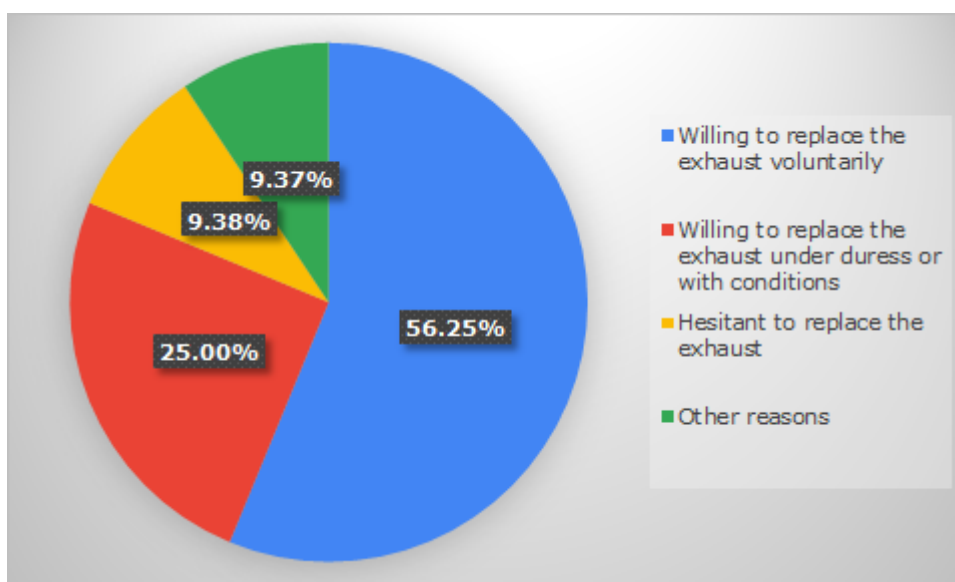


Figure 16. Willingness to replace their noisy exhausts.

*Survey results from the respondents exposed to noisy exhausts.* Regarding the frequency of exposure to noisy exhaust, more than 85% respondents reported attending the noise very frequently and frequently (Figure 17). They generally reside in houses beside main roads where motor vehicles often pass through. Meanwhile, considering the respondents' gender characteristics (Figure 7), the majority of respondents affected by noise pollution were women. The large number of female respondents in this study indicates that women have a high level of concern or anxiety about noise pollution caused by non-standard

exhausts in their neighborhoods. Women are particularly disturbed by the noise because they are likely to be at home more often (primarily housewives) than men, who are likely to be outside their house for work (earning a living).

Furthermore, based on the respondent characteristics in Figure 8, one of the largest groups of respondents is housewives. They are particularly disturbed by the noise from motor vehicle exhaust. Given that they may have small children or even infants, their children are particularly disturbed by the noise. In addition, they are very concerned about the long-term impact of exposure to noise on their children.

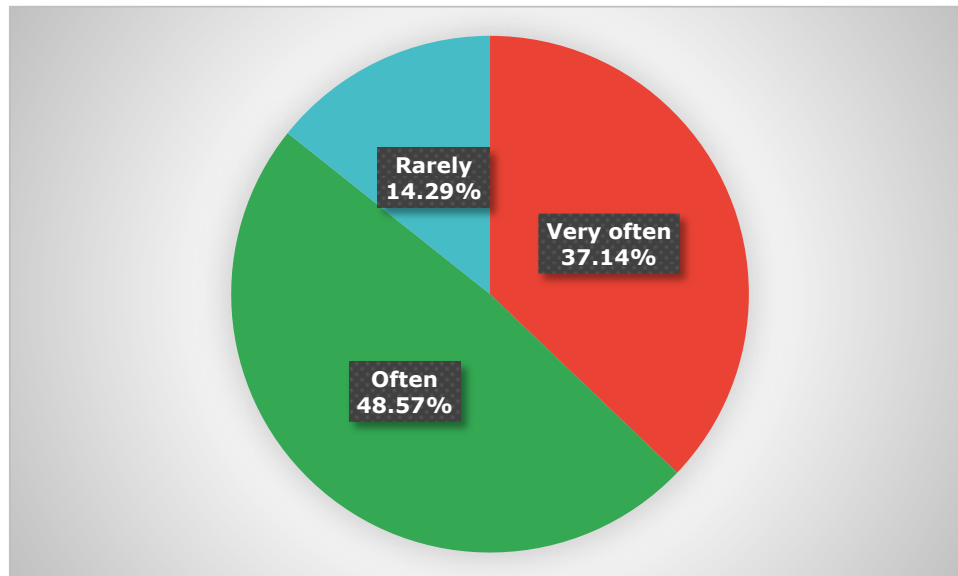


Figure 17. The intensity of public exposure to noise pollution from noisy exhausts.

When respondents were asked about the impact of non-standard exhaust noise on them, they reported experiencing physical impairment (57.14%) and mental and cognitive impairment (42.86%) (Figure 18). The physical impairments they experienced were generally hearing loss and sleep disturbances. Furthermore, the mental and cognitive impairments they experienced generally included impaired concentration (especially when communicating), annoyance, and anger, which can cause stress and mood disturbances.

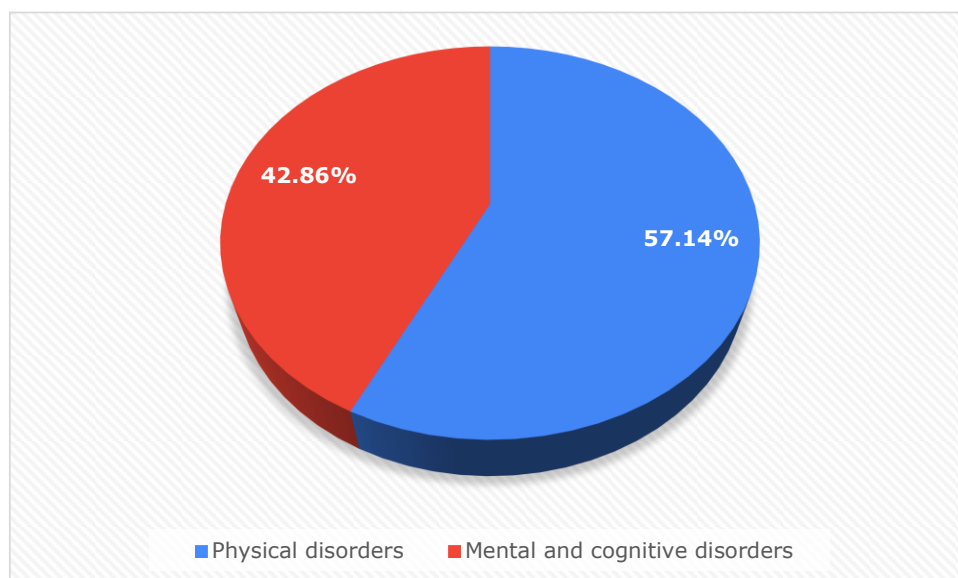


Figure 18. The impact experienced by the community's respondents who are affected by noise pollution from noisy exhausts.

Regarding law enforcement against noisy exhaust users for noise pollution from their vehicles, more than 70% of respondents stated that they were still less satisfied, if not satisfied, with the actions of the authorities (Figure 19). It was based on public findings that many motorized vehicles, especially motorcycles, utilize noisy exhausts that still pass by seemingly freely. They also saw the authorities as being less than firm against these violators, in line with the lack of raids against them. The authorities also lacked the ability (even difficulty) to control the trade in noisy exhaust products, particularly through online trading.

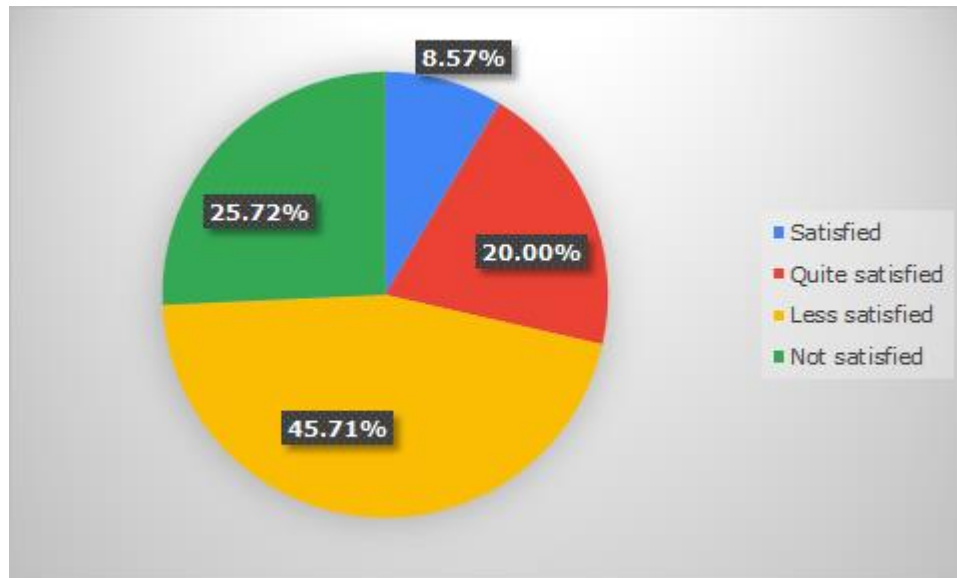


Figure 19. The community's satisfaction level with law enforcement by the authorities.

**Conclusions.** The issue of handling the use of noisy exhausts in a region essentially reflects the ability of the local authorities to address other social problems. Given that one social issue is closely related to others, addressing social issues must be holistic and integrated.

This study identified public perceptions regarding the use of noisy exhausts on two-wheeled motor vehicles in Karawang Regency, examining both perspectives: those using noisy exhausts and those exposed to noise pollution from these noisy exhausts. It was found that although noisy exhaust users often annoy others with their behavior, they still have the opportunity to change (based on their good intentions), replacing them with standard exhausts. An educational, persuasive, and humane approach is necessary for them, especially when dealing with young people who are full of turmoil, still have unstable personalities, etc. While their resistance may still be strong in addressing noisy exhausts, it would be beneficial for authorities (local governments, police, and relevant stakeholders) to patiently and consistently implement the educational, persuasive, and humane approach through good synergy between the related parties.

From the perspective of the public perception exposed to noise pollution, it emphasizes the importance of law enforcement for users of noisy exhausts. Therefore, problems in law enforcement activities, both issues involving inter-institutional issues (such as sectoral egos, etc.) and internal issues (such as the rigidity of top-down decision-making), must be resolved immediately. The most effective solution to overcome this is the emergence of leadership from the regional government head of Karawang Regency. Of course, this can enlist the support of the government above (the West Java Provincial Government), especially the leadership of the current governor of this province (Mr. Dedi Mulyadi), who is very concerned about environmental sustainability, including the neighborhood comfort that is free from noise pollution.

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**Conflict of interest.** The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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