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Sexual Violence Law Reform: A Systematic Review

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ABSTRACT

Sexual violence law has expanded rapidly, but legal recognition does not automatically produce justice. This systematic narrative review synthesises legal and socio-legal evidence on criminal justice attrition, credibility discounting, forensic and investigative pathways, survivor-centred rights, digital sexual abuse, and Indonesian law reform. The review used a PRISMA-oriented, stratified synthesis of empirical studies, doctrinal-empirical scholarship, official law-reform reports, and legal instruments from 2010–2026. Forty-five author-reported evidence items were organised by evidentiary function rather than treated as equivalent proof of effectiveness. The synthesis shows that attrition is generated across reporting, investigation, prosecution, trial, and post-judgment remedies; that credibility assessments remain vulnerable to rape myths and behavioural stereotypes; and that forensic evidence systems, digital takedown mechanisms, restitution, and survivor information rights are implementation architecture rather than optional supports. Indonesia's Law Number 12 of 2022 is positioned as a comparative reform case because it links offence taxonomy with victim protection and restitution, yet its value depends on institutional capacity, fair procedure, data monitoring, and local service delivery. The review concludes that sexual violence law reform is strongest when criminalisation, survivor agency, evidentiary safeguards, and due process are designed as one accountable justice system.

1. Introduction

Sexual violence is a legal problem before it becomes a trial problem. It tests whether the state can translate sexual autonomy, bodily integrity, dignity, privacy and equality into institutions that people can safely use. A statute may define rape, sexual assault, harassment or image-based abuse with increasing precision, yet survivors may still encounter disbelief at the reporting desk, weak evidence preservation, fragmented medical referrals, adversarial trial practices, slow compensation and ineffective digital removal mechanisms. The central difficulty is therefore not simply whether sexual violence has been criminalised, but whether the legal system can move from recognition to delivery.

Global prevalence evidence explains why this question remains urgent. Sexual and intimate-partner violence affect large populations and generate health, social and legal consequences that extend well beyond the individual incident (World Health Organization, 2021). Population-level evidence has also shown the scale of intimate partner violence against women across countries (Devries et al., 2013). These findings do not by themselves tell legal systems how to prosecute, compensate or protect survivors, but they establish that sexual violence is not a marginal category of private harm. It is a recurrent challenge for criminal law, human rights law, evidence law, digital regulation, public health and social services.

International legal instruments increasingly reject narrow criminalisation-only models. The Istanbul Convention frames state obligations through prevention, protection, prosecution and integrated policies (Council of Europe, 2011). CEDAW General Recommendation No. 35 similarly places gender-based violence within state due diligence, including duties to prevent, investigate, punish and provide reparation (UN CEDAW Committee, 2017). More recent regional law has also moved toward stronger treatment of online violence, victim support and cross-border implementation obligations (European Parliament & Council of the European Union, 2024). These instruments matter because they define legal response as a chain of responsibilities rather than a single offence label.

Despite reform, criminal justice attrition remains the most persistent empirical warning sign. Comparative analysis across five countries found steep losses between victimisation, police reporting, prosecution, adjudication and conviction (Daly & Bouhours, 2010). Research on rape complaints in England and Wales shows that attrition is associated not only with evidence availability but also with the institutional interpretation of credibility, victim behaviour, suspect characteristics and case context (Hohl & Stanko, 2015). A recent systematic review similarly identifies barriers across reporting, investigation, prosecution

and sentencing, including distrust, internalised reactions, rape myths and perpetrator characteristics (Wieberneit et al., 2024).

The novelty of this review is not the familiar claim that legal reform is necessary but insufficient. That statement is now conventional. The contribution is a stratified legal-justice architecture that separates different evidence types and asks what each can legitimately support. Empirical case-flow studies support claims about attrition and institutional decision points. Doctrinal and socio-legal scholarship clarifies concepts such as credibility discounting, consent and sexual autonomy. Forensic and service studies explain the infrastructure linking care, evidence and prosecution. Law reform reports and legal instruments identify legal duties and feasible policy designs but do not by themselves prove effectiveness. Table 1 makes this evidentiary architecture explicit.

Credibility discounting is a key mechanism connecting attrition to doctrine. Legal scholarship argues that complainants in sexual violence cases may be disbelieved in patterned ways across police, prosecutorial and adjudicative settings (Tuerkheimer, 2017). This problem is not merely that individual officials hold prejudices. It is that legal institutions can reward scripts of the "real victim": immediate complaint, visible resistance, emotional consistency, sobriety, sexual respectability and unfamiliarity with the accused. Secondary victimisation can therefore be understood as epistemic injustice when survivors are treated as unreliable knowers of their own experience (Pemberton & Mulder, 2023).

The second major pressure point is evidence infrastructure. Sexual assault nurse examiner programmes, sexual-assault kit testing, chain-of-custody standards and investigator training are often described as operational matters, but they are legal justice mechanisms. Specialist forensic-medical response can shape case handling and evidentiary quality (Campbell et al., 2014). Untested sexual-assault kits reveal how administrative delay can become procedural injustice (Campbell et al., 2017). Modelling work on kit backlogs further shows that evidence policy requires explicit prioritisation rather than passive accumulation (Wang & Wein, 2018). Figure 3 later translates these findings into a legal pathway.

Technology-facilitated sexual violence creates a third challenge. Image-based sexual abuse has been conceptualised as a harm to sexual autonomy, privacy and dignity rather than as a narrow revenge-motivated distribution offence (McGlynn & Rackley, 2017). The continuum approach captures non-consensual taking, making, alteration, threats, voyeurism, upskirting, distribution and amplification (McGlynn et al., 2017). Empirical literature on technology-facilitated sexual violence confirms that digital tools can reshape both perpetration and harm (Henry & Powell, 2018). This matters for legal design because

laws limited to physical contact or perpetrator revenge motive are structurally underinclusive.

Indonesia provides a valuable comparative reform case. Law Number 12 of 2022 on Sexual Violence Crimes, often referred to as UU TPKS, moves beyond a narrow offence model by linking sexual-violence categories with victim protection, procedural handling and restitution (Republic of Indonesia, 2022). Its inclusion in this review is not a token national example. Indonesia illustrates the implementation question faced by many jurisdictions: whether broad legal recognition can be translated into trained investigators, accessible protection orders, digital evidence handling, reliable restitution, integrated services and fair proceedings. Figure 4 compares this reform logic with international and common-law models.

Accordingly, this review asks: how do legal systems respond to sexual violence, and what conditions make those responses more likely to deliver survivor-centred yet procedurally fair justice? The secondary questions are: which mechanisms address attrition; how do credibility and rape myths enter legal decision-making; how do forensic and digital evidence pathways shape outcomes; how should legal instruments and law reform reports be weighted; and how can Indonesia's UU TPKS be integrated into a global legal synthesis without overgeneralisation?

Table 1. Stratified role of evidence types in the review

Evidence stratum	Examples in this review	Appropriate inferential use	Main caution
Empirical case-flow and policing studies	Attrition rates, reporting barriers, police/prosecutor decisions, training effects	Outcome evidence; strongest for describing institutional leakage	Cannot alone resolve normative questions of rights and procedure
Forensic and service studies	SANE programmes, sexual-assault kit testing, evidence preservation, survivor support	Implementation evidence linking care, evidence and justice processes	Often jurisdiction-specific and may not include trial outcomes
Doctrinal and socio-legal scholarship	Consent, rape myths, credibility discounting, image-based abuse, due process	Conceptual and legal reasoning for reform design	Not evidence of effectiveness unless linked to empirical data
Law reform reports	Consultation-based recommendations, procedural reforms, digital-abuse offences	Policy feasibility and jurisdictional design options	May reflect local legal assumptions and political compromise
Legal instruments	Treaties, directives, statutes, survivor-rights laws, UU TPKS	Authoritative legal obligations and reform benchmarks	Contextual evidence only; not proof that implementation works

Source: Authors' synthesis.

Table 1 is used throughout the review to avoid the methodological error of treating statutes, empirical studies and legal commentary as equivalent evidence. The same stratification also structures Table 2, where included sources are classified by jurisdiction, design and legal function.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1 Review design. This article is a systematic narrative review of legal and socio-legal responses to sexual violence. It follows PRISMA 2020 for reporting logic and PRISMA-S for search transparency (Page et al., 2021). Search and selection procedures were organised to permit synthesis without meta-analysis because the evidence base combines empirical studies, legal scholarship, law reform reports and official legal instruments (Campbell et al., 2020).

2.2 Information sources and search logic. The review was designed for Scopus, Web of Science Core Collection, HeinOnline, PubMed, Google Scholar, official law reform commission sites, Council of Europe resources, EUR-Lex, United Nations records, WHO publications, Congress.gov and Indonesian legal-documentation repositories. The master search string combined sexual violence terms with legal-response terms and implementation terms: sexual violence OR rape OR sexual assault OR sexual offence OR image-based sexual abuse OR technology-facilitated sexual violence; AND law OR legal OR criminal justice OR prosecution OR policing OR court OR evidence OR legislation OR victim rights; AND attrition OR reform OR consent OR rape shield OR credibility OR rape myth OR forensic OR digital abuse. Full strings are reproduced in Supplementary Table 1.

2.3 Search status and audit trail. The revised manuscript retains the author-reported PRISMA counts from the attached draft because the underlying RIS/CSV export files were not supplied with the manuscript package. To protect research integrity, the counts are presented as author-reported and should be checked against archived database exports before journal submission. This approach is more transparent than presenting unverifiable database results as independently rerun searches.

2.4 Eligibility criteria. Sources were eligible when they addressed sexual violence and at least one legal or institutional response: reporting, attrition, police investigation, prosecution, trial, consent reform, evidence rules, forensic evidence, survivor rights, restitution, protection orders, digital takedown, or implementation. Purely clinical studies without legal implications, general gender-based violence sources without sexual-violence specificity, editorial opinion without extractable legal reasoning, and unverified advocacy materials were excluded.

2.5 Source stratification. To address the reviewer concern that evidence types were previously blended, each included item was assigned to one of four analytic strata: empirical outcome evidence, forensic/service evidence, doctrinal-socio-legal analysis, or legal-policy instruments. Table 1 defines the inferential role of each stratum. The synthesis distinguishes evidence of effectiveness from evidence of legal authority, policy feasibility and conceptual clarification.

2.6 Study selection. The author-reported process identified 480 records, removed 134 duplicates or ineligible records, screened 346 titles and abstracts, assessed 97 full texts and retained 45 items for stratified synthesis. The full-text exclusion categories were no legal outcome, wrong source type, insufficient method detail, no sexual-violence specificity and duplicate contextual instruments. Figure 1 reports the flow diagram and explicitly labels the figures as author-reported until export files are archived.

2.7 Data extraction. The extraction fields were citation, jurisdiction, legal system, source type, population or institution, legal mechanism, outcome domain, key finding, limitation, implementation condition, fair-trial implication and relevance to Indonesia or comparable lower-resource settings. The additional fair-trial and jurisdictional fields were added during revision to address the reviewer's comments about due process and transferability.

2.8 Quality and risk-of-bias appraisal. Quantitative empirical studies were assessed for sampling transparency, outcome definition, confounding, missing data and reporting clarity. Qualitative studies were assessed for recruitment rationale, reflexivity, analytic transparency and data support. Doctrinal and socio-legal scholarship was assessed for accuracy of legal sources, clarity of normative assumptions and engagement with counterarguments. Law reform reports were appraised for consultation transparency, evidence base, implementation plan and jurisdictional specificity. Legal instruments were treated as authoritative context, not effectiveness evidence.

2.9 Synthesis method. Findings were grouped by legal function: attrition, credibility and rape myths; consent and trial safeguards; forensic and investigative infrastructure; survivor-centred rights and remedies; technology-facilitated sexual violence; and implementation capacity. The synthesis followed SWiM principles by describing grouping logic, direction of evidence, certainty limits and why pooling was inappropriate (Campbell et al., 2020).

2.10 Reporting ethics. This review used published sources and official legal materials and did not involve human participants. The revision used generative AI only for editorial structuring, figure drafting and language polishing; substantive interpretation remains subject to author verification against the cited literature.

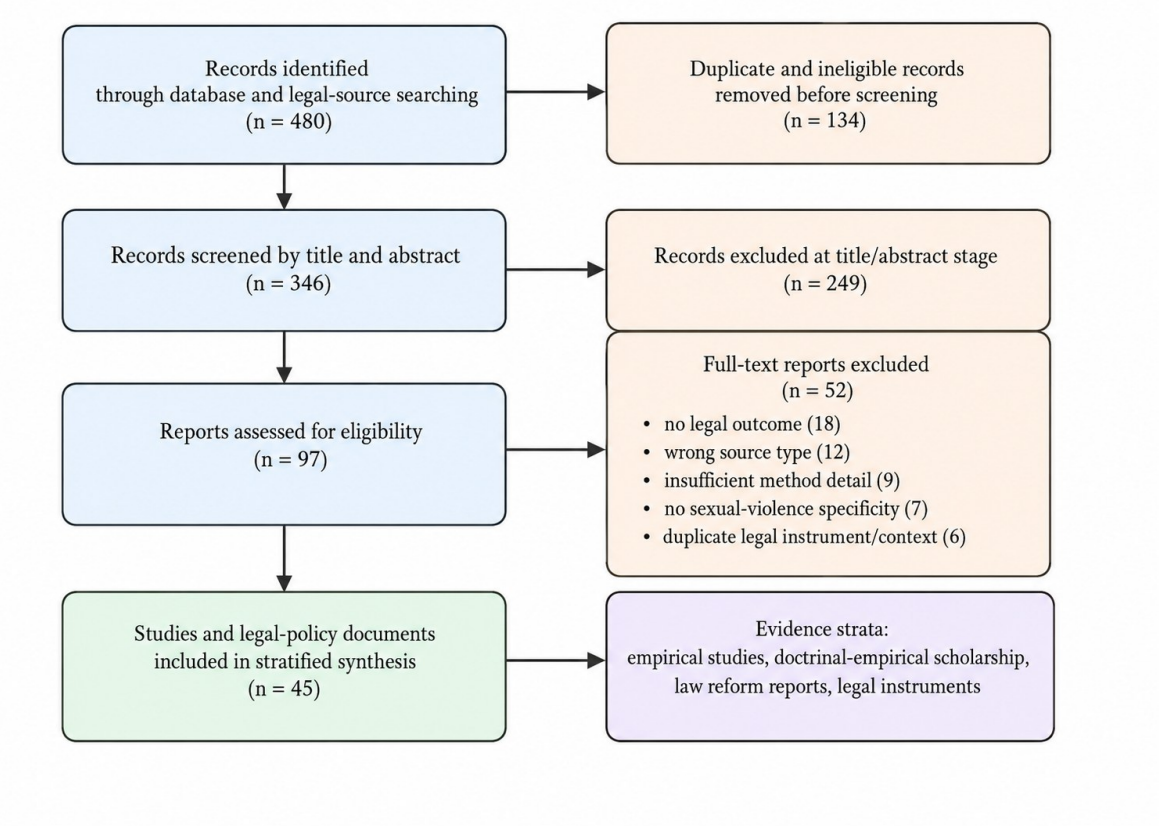


Figure 1. PRISMA-oriented screening flow for the final revised manuscript.

Figure 1 is cited here to clarify that the manuscript no longer hides the audit limitation: it presents author-reported counts while requiring archived exports before submission. Figure 1 is also used in the Results to connect the final evidence map with the screening pathway.

3. Results

3.1 Study selection and evidence composition. The final revised synthesis retained 45 author-reported evidence items. These items were not treated as one undifferentiated pool. Instead, they were classified by their role in legal inference: empirical outcome evidence, forensic and service evidence, doctrinal-socio-legal analysis, law reform reports and legal instruments. This restructuring directly responds to the methodological concern that the earlier draft blended statutes, reports and empirical studies as if they carried the same evidentiary weight.

Figure 1 shows that most exclusions occurred before full-text assessment. The most important full-text exclusion reasons were absence of a legal or institutional outcome, insufficient method detail and lack of sexual-violence specificity. The review therefore

privileges sources that can illuminate legal response, not sources that merely discuss sexual violence as a social or clinical phenomenon. Table 2 summarises the core included sources anchoring the synthesis.

Table 2. Core sources by evidence type, jurisdiction and legal contribution

Source	Design/source type	Jurisdiction	Legal domain	Main contribution
Daly & Bouhours, 2010	Comparative empirical analysis	Five common-law jurisdictions	Attrition	Multi-stage case loss after reporting
Hohl & Stanko, 2015	Police/prosecution study	England and Wales	Rape complaint attrition	Credibility and case-context variables shape outcomes
Wieberneit et al., 2024	Systematic review	Western jurisdictions	Reporting to sentencing barriers	70 barriers across criminal justice stages
Machisa et al., 2023	National cross-sectional study	South Africa	Rape case attrition	Expands attrition evidence beyond common-law high-income contexts
Tuerkheimer, 2017	Legal doctrinal analysis	United States	Credibility discount	Explains structural disbelief in sexual-violence law
Pemberton & Mulder, 2023	Criminological theory	Comparative	Secondary victimisation	Frames institutional response as epistemic injustice
Campbell et al., 2014	Multi-site empirical study	United States	SANE programmes	Links specialist forensic response to case outcomes
Campbell et al., 2017	Policy research synthesis	United States	Untested kits	Defines kit backlogs as systemic evidence failure
McGlynn & Rackley, 2017	Legal conceptual analysis	United Kingdom/comparative	Image-based abuse	Reframes digital sexual harm around autonomy and dignity
Henry & Powell, 2018	Literature review	International empirical literature	Technology-facilitated abuse	Maps empirical evidence on digital sexual violence
Council of Europe, 2011	Treaty	Europe	Integrated obligations	Prevention, protection, prosecution and policy integration
Republic of Indonesia, 2022	National statute	Indonesia	UU TPKS	Offence taxonomy, protection, restitution and procedural response
Victorian Law Reform Commission, 2021	Law reform report	Australia	Justice-system reform	Procedural and survivor-centred reform package
Law Commission of England and Wales, 2022	Law reform report	England and Wales	Intimate image abuse	Comprehensive digital-abuse reform model
Soleto et al., 2024	Comparative legal study	Five EU states	Compensation	Shows weak implementation of compensation rights

Source: Authors' synthesis.

Table 2 is central because it separates sources that show empirical outcomes from sources that supply legal authority or doctrinal reasoning. This separation allows the later discussion to use Table 2 without overclaiming that a treaty, statute or law reform report proves practical effectiveness.

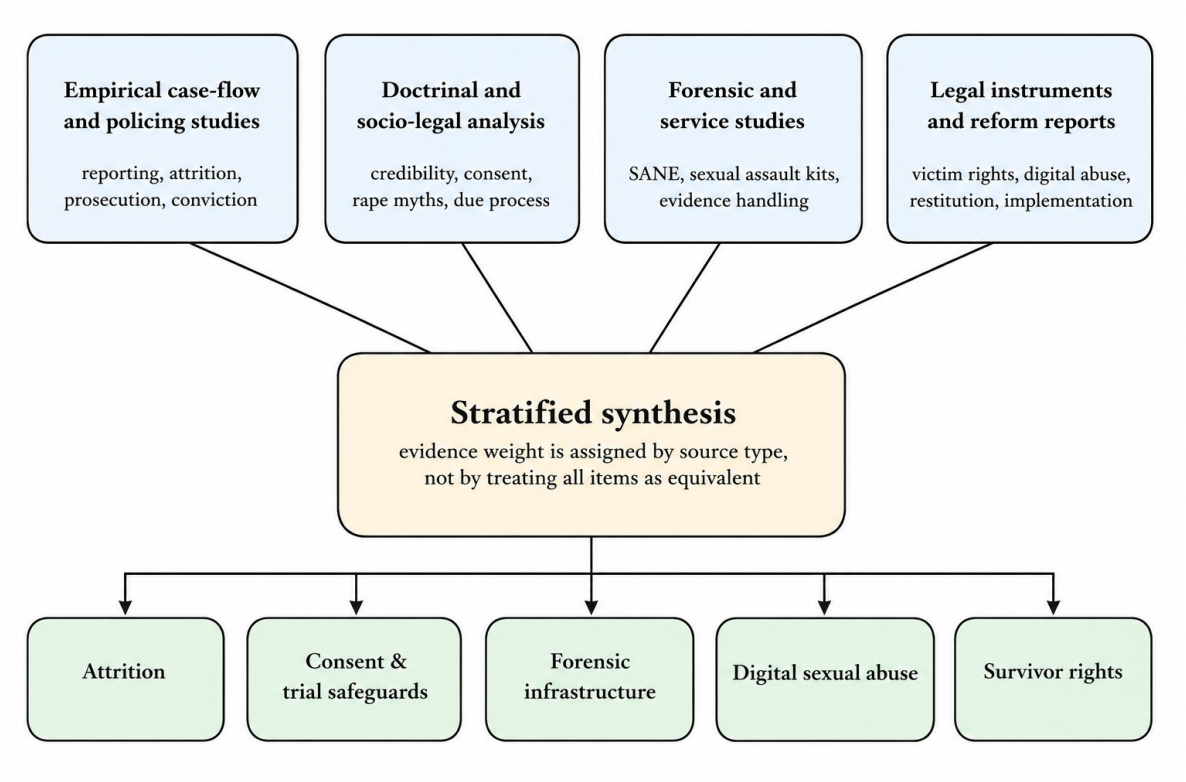


Figure 2. Stratified evidence architecture used to prevent inappropriate blending of evidence types.

Figure 2 visualises the revised analytic design. As Figure 2 shows, the review does not move directly from legal instruments to conclusions about effectiveness; instead, it passes each source through a role-specific evidentiary filter.

3.2 Attrition as a multi-stage institutional pattern. Attrition was the most consistent empirical theme. The evidence indicates that the legal system loses sexual violence cases at multiple points: non-reporting, police classification, investigative discontinuance, prosecutorial filtering, plea negotiation, trial acquittal and post-judgment remedy failure. The comparative figures reported by Daly and Bouhours remain a benchmark because they show that a small fraction of victimisations result in conviction for the original offence (Daly & Bouhours, 2010). The more recent systematic review by Wieberneit and colleagues confirms that barriers do not sit only with survivors; they are distributed across institutional stages (Wieberneit et al., 2024).

3.3 Credibility discounting and rape myths. A second pattern is that credibility remains a gatekeeping device. The earlier draft treated credibility largely as one theme among others. The revised synthesis positions credibility as a mechanism that operates across reporting, investigation, prosecution and trial. The credibility discount explains why delayed reporting, inconsistent affect, prior relationship, intoxication, absence of injury or continued contact can be interpreted against complainants even when these factors are

not legally determinative (Tuerkheimer, 2017). The institutional harm is intensified when survivors are treated as unreliable knowers of their own experience (Pemberton & Mulder, 2023).

3.4 Consent reform and fair-trial tension. Consent-centred law reform and restrictions on irrelevant sexual history can reduce reliance on myths, but these reforms must be designed with careful relevance tests and transparent judicial reasoning. The review therefore avoids one-sided claims that survivor-centred procedure always points in the same direction. Trial safeguards can reduce secondary victimisation while still preserving the accused person's ability to challenge material evidence. Rape-myth education and jury guidance may help, but their design requires empirical and doctrinal scrutiny (Hudspith et al., 2024).

3.5 Forensic and investigative infrastructure. Forensic pathways emerged as a practical bridge between survivor care and legal proof. Specialist SANE programmes can improve the quality of evidentiary collection and case processing (Campbell et al., 2014). Untested sexual-assault kit backlogs show that collecting evidence without timely testing can reproduce institutional betrayal (Campbell et al., 2017). The review also identifies training and interview quality as implementation variables, because poorly framed questions can reinforce disbelief, whereas specialist interview methods can support better accounts (Gajadhar & Bull, 2023).

3.6 Digital and image-based sexual abuse. The digital evidence base strongly supports moving beyond the label "revenge porn." That label is too narrow because it privileges one motive and one distribution pattern. Image-based sexual abuse should be conceptualised around non-consensual creation, taking, alteration, possession in defined circumstances, threats, distribution and amplification (McGlynn & Rackley, 2017). The continuum approach also captures upskirting and other forms of sexualised visual intrusion (Lewis & Anitha, 2022). Table 3 later specifies the legal design implications.

3.7 Survivor rights, remedies and restorative options. Survivor-centred justice is not synonymous with prosecution at all costs. The evidence supports rights to information, protection, medical care, evidence preservation, privacy, participation, restitution and recovery support. At the same time, compensation rights can be ineffective when they are procedurally complex or poorly enforced (Soleto et al., 2024). Restorative or transformative practices may have a role only when voluntariness, safety, power imbalance and survivor agency are protected (Wemmers et al., 2022).

3.8 Indonesia as a comparative implementation case. UU TPKS is significant because it integrates offence categories with victim protection and restitution rather than treating sexual violence only as a crime-label problem (Republic of Indonesia, 2022). The

comparative question is implementation. The law's effectiveness will depend on police training, prosecutor guidance, judicial consistency, local service access, digital evidence capacity, restitution mechanisms and national monitoring. Figure 4 shows that UU TPKS has strong legal-design coverage in several domains but still requires institutional measures to become measurable legal protection.

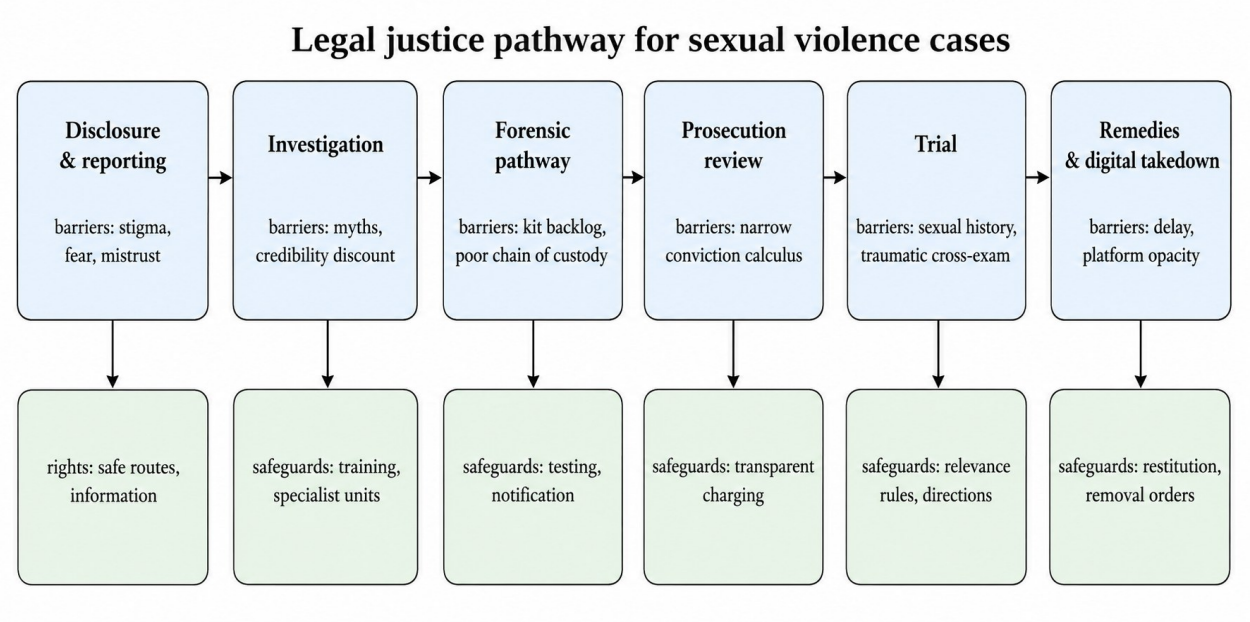


Figure 3. Legal justice pathway for sexual violence cases.

Figure 3 summarises why attrition cannot be solved by a single reform point. The same Figure 3 also clarifies that survivor-centred practice and fair procedure must be built into every stage of the pathway rather than added after prosecution has already failed.

Table 3. Legal implications and safeguards by synthesis theme

Theme	Core finding	Legal-design implication	Fairness/implementation caution
Attrition	Case loss occurs before and after reporting	Use stage-specific indicators: reports, investigated files, charges, trial outcomes, remedies	Avoid using conviction rate as the only success measure
Credibility discounting	Victim behaviour is often read through stereotyped expectations	Training, written charging reasons, rape-myth directions, relevance control	Do not replace disbelief with automatic belief; maintain material testing of evidence
Consent and trial reform	Consent law can be undermined by adversarial stereotype use	Affirmative consent standards, sexual-history limits, judicial management	Safeguards must preserve defence rights and clear relevance analysis
Forensic evidence	Evidence collection without testing or follow-up weakens trust	Kit tracking, preservation, survivor notification, specialist forensic care	Avoid implying that absence of forensic evidence equals weak credibility
Digital sexual abuse	Motives and technologies vary rapidly	Technology-neutral offences, takedown orders, platform duties, image alteration coverage	Avoid overbroad offences that criminalise consensual conduct
Survivor remedies	Rights without access become symbolic	Legal aid, restitution enforcement, compensation, protection orders	Remedies should not depend only on conviction
Indonesia/UU TPKS	Integrated statutory design	Police/prosecutor guidelines, service	Do not assume national statute

	requires local implementation	coordination, monitoring data	produces uniform district practice

Source: Authors' synthesis.

Table 3 extends the evidence map into a legal reform agenda. It also anchors the Discussion by identifying the due-process and implementation cautions that were underdeveloped in the earlier draft.

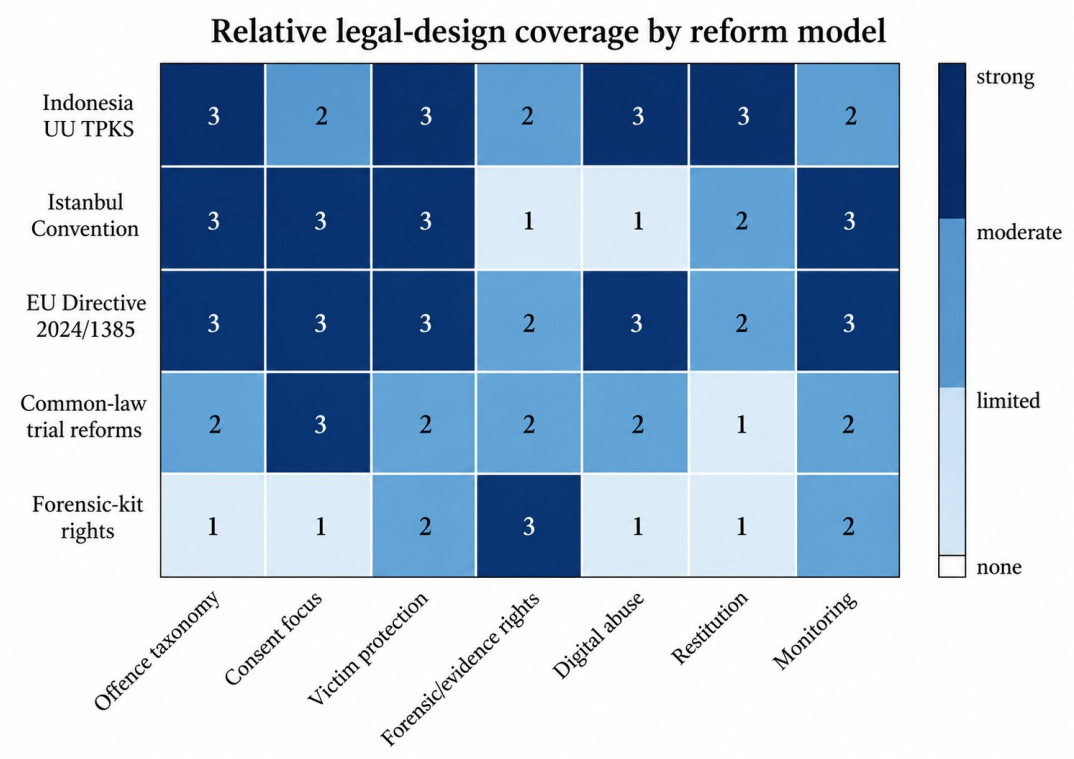


Figure 4. Qualitative comparison of legal-design coverage across reform models.

Figure 4 integrates Indonesia into the comparative analysis rather than mentioning UU TPKS only as an isolated example. The purpose of Figure 4 is not to rank countries but to identify where legal design is relatively strong and where implementation evidence is still needed.

4. Discussion

This review reframes sexual violence law reform as the design of a justice architecture. The strongest reforms do not merely add offences. They connect offences with safe reporting, trained investigation, evidence preservation, survivor information rights, fair trial management, remedies, digital enforcement and data monitoring. The central contribution is therefore a method for weighing legal evidence: empirical studies show where legal systems fail; doctrinal analysis clarifies why concepts are underinclusive;

forensic studies show how infrastructure affects justice; and legal instruments define duties but do not prove implementation.

The revised synthesis strengthens novelty by moving beyond the broad proposition that law is necessary but insufficient. The more specific argument is that sexual violence law fails when it lacks connective tissue. Attrition is not one event; it is cumulative leakage across institutions. Credibility discounting is not one prejudiced judgment; it is a pattern of evidentiary interpretation. Digital abuse is not an online variant of the same offence; it changes evidence, visibility, repetition, platform responsibility and survivor control. UU TPKS is not only a national statute; it is a test of whether integrated offence and protection design can be operationalised in a plural legal and administrative setting.

Due process is a serious counterargument, not an obstacle to be dismissed. Survivor-centred reforms may conflict with procedural safeguards if they restrict meaningful challenge to material evidence, overextend presumptions, or prioritise conviction metrics over proof. The legal goal should not be to make sexual violence cases easy to convict. It should be to make them fair to report, competent to investigate, evidence-based to prosecute, respectful to try and meaningful to remedy. That balance requires relevance rules, judicial control, reasons for discontinuance, defence access to material evidence and protection against irrelevant humiliation.

The review also qualifies criminalisation. Recent critiques of carceral feminism warn that punitive expansion can reproduce harm when it is disconnected from social support, prevention, housing, migration status, poverty, disability and racialised policing (Loney-Howes et al., 2024). This does not mean criminal law should be abandoned. It means criminal law should not be the only measure of justice. Restorative and transformative options may supplement justice in carefully designed circumstances, but they require voluntariness, risk assessment and survivor control (Rossner & Taylor, 2024).

Jurisdictional transferability is another limitation. Much of the detailed attrition and trial literature comes from common-law or Western jurisdictions. South African evidence helps broaden the map (Machisa et al., 2023), and Indonesia's UU TPKS adds a Southeast Asian reform context. Still, legal transplant claims must be cautious. A rape-shield model from one adversarial system may not transfer directly to civil-law, hybrid or plural legal systems. A digital takedown mechanism may require platform cooperation and cyber capacity that are unevenly distributed.

For Indonesia, the practical implication is to measure implementation rather than celebrate enactment alone. UU TPKS should be evaluated through indicators such as number of trained investigators, availability of integrated service units, time to protection measures, number and enforceability of restitution orders, digital evidence handling, case-

flow attrition, district-level service gaps and survivor satisfaction. Without these indicators, the law risks becoming symbolically powerful but administratively uneven.

The manuscript has limitations. First, the underlying database export files were not supplied, so PRISMA counts are author-reported and must be checked against RIS/CSV archives before submission. Second, the evidence is heterogeneous. The review therefore makes cautious claims about legal design and implementation conditions rather than causal claims about which legal model is best. Third, fast-moving AI-generated sexual images and platform governance require an update search immediately before submission. Fourth, Indonesia is integrated as a comparative implementation case, but a future article could focus specifically on UU TPKS empirical implementation.

Despite these limitations, the review provides a publishable analytical framework: legal response to sexual violence should be judged by the coherence of the pathway from recognition to remedy. Table 3, Figure 3 and Figure 4 together show that a justice system is only as strong as its weakest procedural link. The most defensible conclusion is therefore proportionate: legal reform can improve recognition, rights and remedies, but only implementation architecture can determine whether survivors actually experience justice.

5. Conclusion

Sexual violence law reform is most credible when it connects criminalisation with survivor agency, evidentiary competence, procedural fairness and enforceable remedies. The final revised synthesis shows that attrition, credibility discounting, forensic evidence, digital sexual abuse, survivor rights and UU TPKS implementation are not separate topics. They are linked components of the same justice architecture.

Legal systems should therefore be evaluated through stage-specific indicators: safe reporting, competent investigation, timely forensic testing, transparent charging, fair trial safeguards, meaningful protection, enforceable restitution and digital content removal. Indonesia's UU TPKS provides an important comparative model because it links offence taxonomy with protection and restitution, but its success will depend on district-level implementation, professional training, data transparency and survivor-centred services. Future research should prioritise empirical evaluation of implementation rather than further descriptive praise of reform.

Supplementary Table 1. Full search strings

Supplementary Table 1. Search strings and source-specific notes

Source	Search string	Note
Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY(("sexual violence" OR rape OR "sexual assault" OR "sexual offence" OR "image-based sexual abuse" OR "technology-facilitated sexual violence") AND (law OR legal OR criminal* OR prosecution OR police OR court* OR justice OR statute OR legislation OR "victim rights") AND (attrition OR reform OR consent OR "rape shield" OR credibility OR "rape myth" OR forensic OR digital OR online)) AND PUBYEAR > 2009	Rerun with institutional access and export RIS/CSV.
Web of Science	TS=(("sexual violence" OR rape OR "sexual assault" OR "image-based sexual abuse" OR "technology-facilitated sexual violence") AND (law OR legal OR "criminal justice" OR prosecution OR policing OR court OR evidence OR legislation) AND (attrition OR reform OR consent OR "rape myth" OR forensic OR digital abuse))	Rerun with full platform filters documented.
PubMed	((sexual violence[Title/Abstract] OR rape[Title/Abstract] OR sexual assault[Title/Abstract]) AND (law[Title/Abstract] OR legal[Title/Abstract] OR prosecution[Title/Abstract] OR police[Title/Abstract] OR forensic[Title/Abstract] OR criminal justice[Title/Abstract]))	Used for health-forensic literature.
HeinOnline / Google Scholar	"sexual violence" "law reform" attrition consent survivor rights forensic evidence "image-based sexual abuse"	Legal scholarship; results must be screened manually.
Official repositories	"sexual violence" "victim rights" legislation OR directive OR convention OR law reform	Council of Europe, EUR-Lex, UN records, WHO, Congress.gov, JDIH Setkab, law reform commissions.

Source: Authors' synthesis.

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