When Protection Fails: Institutional Barriers and Sexual Violence Impunity Among Students with Disabilities in Higher Education

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HOW TO CITE:

Khaerul Umam Noer, Ati Kusmawati (2026). When Protection Fails: Institutional Barriers and Sexual Violence Impunity Among Students with Disabilities in Higher Education. International Journal of Special Education, 41(12s), 586-601

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ABSTRACT:

Sexual violence in higher education disproportionately affects students with disabilities, yet this intersection remains underexplored. This study examines how university protection policies against sexual violence are translated into institutional practices for students with disabilities in Indonesian higher education, and how the structural failures of that translation contribute to the production of impunity. Employing a qualitative multi-site design informed by institutional ethnography, the study was conducted across 28 higher education institutions in six provinces, involving 8 students with disabilities, 11 victim advocates, 36 Satgas PPKPT members, and disability service unit staff through in-depth interviews, document analysis, and seven focus group discussions. Findings reveal that while formal regulatory compliance with Permendikbudristek 55/2024 has progressed, substantive protection for students with disabilities remains unrealized: only one institution had developed disability-specific case-handling procedures, and none had established accessible reporting mechanisms. Five institutional failures converge to produce impunity: inaccessible reporting systems, fragmented coordination, hierarchical decision-making delays, credibility bias against disabled complainants, and reputation-driven case management. Integrating disability studies, institutional ethnography, and the sociology of impunity, this study argues that impunity is produced not through the absence of policy but through the systematic gap between policy as text and policy as practice, widened by epistemic injustice, deepened by institutional betrayal, and sustained by organizational self-protection.

Keywords: sexual violence, disability, higher education, institutional impunity, institutional ethnography

Introduction

Sexual violence in higher education constitutes a pervasive structural problem that extends well beyond individual incidents of misconduct. Globally, research consistently documents that university campuses are environments in which students face significant risks of sexual victimization. A systematic review and meta-analysis estimated that approximately one in five women and one in thirteen men enrolled in

higher education institutions have experienced sexual assault during their time as students (Steele et al., 2021, 2024). These figures represent conservative estimates, given that underreporting remains endemic due to fear of retaliation, institutional stigma, and distrust in formal reporting mechanisms (Dufour, 2024; Gómez, 2022; Noer, 2025; Noer et al., 2022; Pinciotti & Orcutt, 2021; Shanti et al., 2025).

The problem is further compounded by unequal power relations embedded within academic structures, between supervisors and supervised, between senior and junior students, and between faculty and students, that create conditions in which perpetrators operate with a degree of social protection that formal policy alone has proven insufficient to dismantle (Mackinnon, 2016; Noer, Kusmawati, Agustian, et al., 2025; Noer, Kusmawati, Khusnaeny, et al., 2025). Sexual violence in higher education must therefore be understood as a structural condition reproduced through institutional arrangements that simultaneously expose students to risk and constrain their access to redress.

Within this structural landscape, students with disabilities occupy a position of heightened and compounded vulnerability. Empirical research across multiple national contexts demonstrates that students with disabilities face substantially elevated risks of sexual victimization compared to their non-disabled peers. Campe (2021) found that female students with disabilities were more than twice as likely to experience completed sexual assault, attempted assault, and relationship assault relative to female students without disabilities, while Scherer, Snyder, and Fisher documented that college students with disabilities were approximately twice as likely to experience intimate partner violence (Scherer et al., 2013, 2016).

These elevated rates are not incidental to disability itself but are produced through intersecting vulnerabilities: communication barriers, dependence on caregivers, limited mobility, reduced access to safety information, and the institutional perception of disabled individuals as less credible witnesses to their own victimization (Castillo, 2024; Ledingham et al., 2022). An intersectional analysis further reveals that risk is not uniform across disability types, students with cognitive and multiple disabilities, particularly those from racially and socially marginalized groups, face the most severe barriers to both safety and justice (Das, 2024; Heidari & Moreno, 2016; Johnson et al., 2025; Ostridge, 2025; Suardi, 2025). The vulnerability of students with disabilities is therefore not located solely within individual impairment but is actively constructed by social and institutional environments that fail to accommodate their needs and that systematically diminish their standing as complainants.

The conceptual apparatus of Disability Studies provides a necessary corrective to individualized understandings of this vulnerability. Rather than locating the problem within the impairment itself, Disability Studies directs analytical attention toward the disabling structures of institutional life: the norms, procedures, spatial arrangements, and communicative practices that render certain bodies as full subjects of protection and others as marginal or implausible (Junindya Fasya, 2024; Ledingham et al., 2022; Molenaar et al., 2025; Quinlivan, 2012; Shanti et al., 2025; Simkiss, 2013; Sutton, 2018).

Applied to the context of campus sexual violence, this framework requires asking not merely whether a student was victimized, but whether the institutional environment was structured in ways that amplified risk and subsequently foreclosed pathways to justice. The failure to provide accessible reporting mechanisms, the absence of trained personnel capable of accommodating diverse communicative needs, and the persistence of credibility bias against disabled complainants are not accidental gaps, they are predictable outcomes of institutions designed with the non-disabled student as the unmarked norm.

Recognizing the gravity of campus sexual violence, governments and higher education systems across multiple national contexts have developed formal policy frameworks intended to protect students. In Indonesia, Law No. 12 of

2022 on Sexual Violence Acts (TPKS Law) established a comprehensive legal basis for victim protection across institutional contexts, while Ministerial of Education Regulation No. 55 of 2024 (Permendikbudristek 55/2024), mandated higher education institutions to establish task forces (*Satuan Tugas*) responsible for the prevention and handling of all forms of violence, including sexual violence (Noer, 2025; Noer et al., 2022; Noer, Nurtjahyo, & Shanti, 2025; Nurtjahyo, 2024; Pratiwi et al., 2024; Saefudin et al., 2023; Tirto, 2020; Yantik & Jamba, 2025).

These regulatory developments represent meaningful formal commitments to campus safety. However, normative analysis reveals that the provisions of Permendikbudristek 55/2024 remain primarily oriented toward administrative governance and general victim-centered principles, with negligible attention to the specific protection needs of students with disabilities (Noer et al., 2024a; Noer, Kusmawati, Khusnaeny, et al., 2025). The formal existence of protective policy, in other words, does not translate automatically into inclusive protection in practice, a disjuncture that constitutes the central analytical concern of this study.

The translation of policy into institutional practice is where institutional ethnography (IE) becomes analytically indispensable. Developed by Smith, IE directs attention to the disjuncture between *policy as text*, formal regulations, standard operating procedures, and institutional mandates and *policy as practice*, the lived, everyday work processes through which those texts are activated, interpreted, and frequently distorted within organizational settings (Carroll, 2011; Smith & Griffith, 2022; Smith, 2016; Smith & Gomez, 2013). Research applying IE to campus sexual violence has demonstrated that institutional actors routinely subordinate survivor interests to competing organizational imperatives, including legal liability management, reputational protection, and administrative efficiency (Quinlivan, 2012; Quinn et al., 2002). For students with disabilities, this subordination carries compounded consequences: accessible information may not be produced, investigative procedures may not be adapted, and victim accompaniment may be delivered through formats that are communicatively inaccessible. The formal text of a policy can mandate protection; the practice of its implementation can structurally exclude those whose needs were never anticipated in its design.

Where implementation fails systematically, the result is the production of impunity, a condition in which perpetrators face no meaningful accountability for acts of sexual violence. Impunity in this context must be understood in its institutional dimension: it is not merely the absence of criminal prosecution, but the cumulative effect of procedural barriers, delayed responses, case attrition, and the failure of institutions to provide survivors with sufficient support to sustain engagement with formal processes (Equality Now, 2025). Impunity is, in this sense, an institutional achievement, produced through ordinary administrative decisions about resource allocation, procedural design, and the consistent prioritization of institutional reputation over survivor justice (Binningsbø & Nordås, 2022; Henry, 2024; Houge & Lohne, 2017; Noer, 2025; Odello & Burke, 2016).

For students with disabilities, the pathway to impunity is structurally shorter: barriers to initial reporting, credibility challenges during investigation, and the absence of reasonable accommodation at each procedural stage collectively ensure that the threshold for meaningful accountability becomes effectively unreachable. The concept of institutional betrayal, the compounded harm inflicted when an institution responds to disclosed victimization with indifference, delay, or procedural obstruction captures the experiential dimension of this dynamic (Christl et al., 2024; Dufour, 2024; Gómez, 2022; PettyJohn et al., 2023; Pinciotti & Orcutt, 2021).

Despite the growing body of scholarship on campus sexual violence and on disability inclusion in higher education, the intersection of these two domains remains significantly underexplored. The majority of existing studies on campus sexual violence focus on prevalence estimation and the general efficacy of policy

implementation, with non-disabled student populations treated as the primary referent. Research on disability and higher education, meanwhile, tends to concentrate on academic accommodation, physical accessibility, and pedagogical inclusion, with little sustained attention to protection from gender-based violence (Bondestam & Lundqvist, 2020; David, 2011; Mok & Neubauer, 2016; Noer, Kusmawati, Agustian, et al., 2025; Shanti et al., 2025; Sukeni & Bhanu Prakash, 2023; Symaco & Tee, 2019; Waisath et al., 2024).

Studies that specifically examine how protection policies function — or fail — for students with disabilities within higher education remain sparse, particularly in the Indonesian context, where a recently enacted regulatory framework has yet to be examined through a disability-inclusive lens. This study responds directly to that gap. By integrating disability studies, institutional ethnography, and the sociology of impunity into a unified analytical framework, the article advances a theoretically grounded account of how sexual violence protection policies are translated into institutional practice for students with disabilities in Indonesian higher education, and how the structural failures of that translation contribute to the production of impunity.

Two interrelated research questions guide the inquiry: *first*, how are university protection policies against sexual violence translated into institutional practices for students with disabilities in higher education; and *second*, what institutional barriers contribute to the production of impunity in sexual violence cases involving students with disabilities. Together, these questions trace a causal chain from formal protection policy through institutional translation to the production or negation of justice for one of the most structurally marginalized student populations in higher education.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative multi-site design informed by institutional ethnography to examine how sexual violence protection policies are translated into institutional practice for students with disabilities across Indonesian higher education. The research was conducted across 28 higher education institutions in six provinces: Jakarta, West Java, Banten, East Java, West Sumatra, and East Kalimantan; and comprising five public universities and 23 private institutions, three of which operate dedicated disability service units. This distribution was deliberate, designed to capture variation in policy implementation capacity, organizational structure, and resource availability, while avoiding the interpretive constraints of single-institution analysis. All participating institutions had formally established a Task Force for the Prevention and Handling of Sexual Violence (Satgas PPKPT), ensuring that each site possessed a baseline institutional mechanism whose translation into practice could be systematically interrogated.

Participants were drawn from three analytically distinct groups: 8 students with physical, sensory, mild intellectual, and psychosocial disabilities who had either accessed or attempted to access campus protection mechanisms; 11 victim advocates, 36 Satgas PPKPT members from all 28 campuses, including task force chairs, case-handling division members, and victim service personnel; and staff from the three disability service units, comprising unit managers, counselors, and student accompaniment officers. The first group constituted the primary standpoint of the inquiry, consistent with IE's methodological commitment to beginning analysis from the lived experience of those most directly subject to institutional processes, while the second and third groups provided complementary institutional perspectives on how policy mandates are operationalized, negotiated, and constrained within everyday organizational work.

Data were generated through three complementary methods. In-depth interviews were conducted with all participant groups using topic guides calibrated to each group's institutional position: student participants addressed reporting experiences, access to information, support received, and barriers encountered throughout the process; Satgas members were questioned about case-handling

procedures, needs assessment practices, and the provision of reasonable accommodation; disability unit staff were asked about inter-unit coordination and service delivery.

Institutional documents were collected and analyzed as *ruling texts* in the IE sense, materials that direct, authorize, and constrain institutional action, including Permendikbudristek 55/2024, campus standard operating procedures, Satgas formation decrees, disability service guidelines, reporting forms, and victim accompaniment manuals. These texts were examined not for their formal content alone, but for how their embedded procedural logic shapes and limits institutional responses to disabled complainants. Finally, seven focus group discussions were conducted with Satgas members, disability service managers, and campus counselors, with the purpose of mapping organizational barriers, identifying service bottlenecks, and examining the structural conditions under which inter-unit coordination either functions or breaks down in cases involving students with disabilities.

Results

Analysis across the 28 participating institutions reveals that Indonesian higher education has made substantial formal progress in institutionalizing sexual violence protection through the establishment of Satgas PPKPT units, the adoption of victim-centered principles in institutional documentation, and formal compliance with Permendikbudristek 55/2024. Of the 28 campuses examined, 12 had enacted institution-specific regulations beyond the ministerial mandate, seven had developed standard operating procedures for case handling, and all 28 had formally constituted a task force (Noer et al., 2024). These figures suggest a landscape of regulatory compliance that, at the level of institutional documentation, appears adequately structured. However, closer examination of this formal architecture reveals a critical absence: only one campus had developed a standard operating procedure specifically addressing cases involving students with disabilities, and none had established disability-specific reporting mechanisms.

Prevention programs were delivered uniformly across the student population, with no adaptation for students with different communicative or cognitive needs. Physical accessibility of institutional protection services was also inadequate, for example in five campuses, the Satgas office was located on upper floors without elevator access, and no campus provided directional signage adapted for students with visual impairments. The formal policy landscape, in short, performed inclusivity without operationalizing it. As Ostridge and Iverson observe in analogous regulatory contexts, the institutional production of policy documents can function as a performative act of compliance that forecloses deeper accountability rather than enabling it (Iverson & Issadore, 2018; Ostridge, 2025).

The experiences reported by the 8 students with disabilities and 11 victim supporting team in this study reveal a systematic disjuncture between formal protection entitlements and the practical accessibility of those entitlements. Across disability types, participants identified three recurring barriers that structured their encounters with campus protection systems.

First, information about reporting mechanisms was available almost exclusively in text-based formats: institutional websites, printed pamphlets, and online forms, without alternative formats such as audio guides, easy-read documents, or sign-language-interpreted materials. Socialization about protection mechanisms was conducted during new student orientation in a format indistinguishable from that provided to non-disabled students, rendering it effectively inaccessible to students with sensory or cognitive disabilities.

Second, the reporting process itself imposed significant communicative demands that were neither anticipated nor accommodated: no interpreter was available at any campus for students who communicate through sign language, and several participants reported being prohibited from bringing a trusted personal accompaniment figure on the grounds that their presence constituted a confidentiality risk, a

procedural interpretation that effectively isolated disabled complainants at the most critical moment of the process.

Third, the administrative burden of the reporting process, involving lengthy online forms, repeated questioning across multiple sessions, and requirements for supplementary documentation including police reports and witness statements imposed what participants described as exhausting and re-traumatizing experiences. As Dufour (2024) identifies, bureaucratized and inaccessible reporting procedures constitute a structural form of harm that compounds the original experience of violence.

The translation of formal policy into institutional practice, the central concern of Institutional Ethnography as a methodological framework was found to be systematically deficient across all site types. A dominant pattern identified through interviews with Satgas members and focus group discussions was the fragmentation of coordination between units whose mandates nominally converged in cases involving disabled survivors: the Satgas, disability services unit, psychological counseling service, student affairs bureau, and campus leadership operated without established inter-unit protocols, and responsibility for individual cases was frequently displaced through informal referral chains that produced delays and accountability gaps.

In several instances, participants in different units attributed case-handling responsibility to each other, with no unit accepting primary ownership of the coordination function. This organizational dynamic, which Smith and Griffith (2022) theorize as the ruling relations that organize institutional life independently of the intentions of individual actors, resulted in students with disabilities navigating a fragmented service landscape without guidance or continuity of support. The capacity deficit within Satgas units further compounded this structural problem: the majority of task force members had received no training on disability-specific needs, none of the 28 campuses provided a dedicated accompaniment officer trained in disability-inclusive case management, and access to professional psychological support for disabled survivors was available in only a minority of sites.

Decision-making hierarchies within the campus governance structure constituted an additional and particularly consequential source of institutional delay. Across campuses, investigative decisions, protective measures, and case recommendations required approval from senior institutional leadership before they could be enacted, a top-down authorization structure that, in the context of sexual violence cases, produced delays ranging from weeks to months. This bottleneck was especially pronounced in cases where the alleged perpetrator held institutional standing — as a final-year student, a faculty member, or an individual with established social reputation within the campus community — in which cases multiple participants reported that investigative timelines extended significantly, and that task force members expressed reluctance to advance recommendations without clear signals of institutional support.

The gap between victim-centered principles inscribed in formal SOPs and the victim-subordinating logic of actual case management was here most visible: procedures nominally designed to prioritize survivor welfare were operationally subordinated to the institutional risk calculations of senior administrators, consistent with the pattern of image maintenance and risk management that D'Enbeau (2019) identifies as structurally characteristic of institutional sexual violence response.

A distinct and analytically significant dimension of the findings concerns the operation of credibility bias against students with disabilities within institutional investigation processes. Across multiple cases documented in this study, the testimonies of disabled students, particularly those with visual impairments, psychosocial disabilities, and mild intellectual disabilities, were subjected to heightened epistemic scrutiny that their non-disabled counterparts did not face. Notably, students with visual impairments reported being repeatedly asked whether they had directly witnessed the acts they were reporting, a line of questioning that revealed institutional

assessors' failure to understand basic features of the complainants' disability.

Students with psychosocial disabilities described having their accounts reframed as misunderstandings or misperceptions of consensual interactions, with institutional actors questioning whether consent had been genuinely withheld given the complainants' presumed social inexperience. These patterns constitute as testimonial injustice in disability contexts: a systematic credibility deficit applied to complainants on the basis of their disability status, which functions to render their accounts procedurally insufficient and their cases structurally unresolvable (Shanti et al., 2025; Williams & Jobe, 2025). The compounding of credibility bias with dependence on family members or personal caregivers to navigate the reporting process further reduced the autonomous epistemic standing of disabled complainants within investigative proceedings.

The assessment and investigation procedures applied to cases involving students with disabilities were found to be uniformly non-differentiated across disability types. Satgas members consistently described applying the same investigative framework regardless of whether a complainant had a physical, sensory, intellectual, or psychosocial disability, a treatment of disability as a homogeneous administrative category that directly contradicts the operational requirements of disability-inclusive case management.

No campus provided a trained sign-language interpreter for investigation sessions involving deaf or hard-of-hearing complainants, and psychological accompaniment during investigative interviews, a provision nominally included in victim-centered SOPs was not consistently operationalized for any disability group. These procedural failures are not merely matters of resource insufficiency; they reflect a deeper institutional failure of recognition: the assumption that protection designed for the non-disabled student is adequate protection for all students, regardless of their communicative, cognitive, or mobility needs. This assumption functions as what Castillo (2024) describes as a structural amplifier of victimization risk, an institutional arrangement that extends vulnerability from the moment of violence through the moment of attempted redress.

The cumulative effect of information inaccessibility, communicative barriers, fragmented coordination, decision-making delays, credibility bias, and non-differentiated procedures was, in a substantial proportion of cases documented in this study, the administrative closure of cases without meaningful resolution for survivors. Participants described situations in which cases were formally recorded as concluded through mediation, institutional counseling referrals, or the expiry of investigative timelines, while the complainant had neither received a determination of responsibility nor been informed of any sanction against the alleged perpetrator.

The institution, from its own administrative standpoint, had fulfilled its procedural obligations; from the survivor's standpoint, nothing had been resolved. This dynamic, the production of administrative closure as a substitute for justice, corresponds precisely to what we identifies as the institutional management of accountability as a set of organizational practices that generate the appearance of responsiveness while protecting the institution from the reputational and legal consequences of substantive engagement with survivor claims (Noer et al., 2022, 2024b).

Across the five themes identified in this analysis, a consistent pattern emerges: campus reputation management constituted a silent but structurally decisive variable in institutional case handling. In cases involving perpetrators with high institutional standing, academically distinguished students, faculty members with religious or community authority, task forces reported explicit or implicit pressure to handle cases with discretion, to prioritize mediation over formal sanction, and to avoid outcomes that would generate public visibility. This orientation toward institutional self-protection over survivor justice was not codified in any formal policy document;

it operated instead through informal communication between Satgas members and institutional leadership, through the structuring of decision-making timelines that allowed cases to attenuate, and through the framing of survivor support as a matter of pastoral care rather than accountability. As Dufour (2024) observes, this constitutes institutional betrayal in its most insidious form: not dramatic failure, but quiet, procedurally legitimized inaction that is experienced by survivors as abandonment.

Taken together, these findings support the central theoretical argument of this study: that impunity in sexual violence cases involving students with disabilities is not primarily produced by the absence of formal policy but by the cumulative operation of ordinary institutional practices: inaccessible procedures, fragmented coordination, credibility bias, non-inclusive assessment, delayed decision-making, and reputation-driven case management that converge to foreclose meaningful accountability at every procedural stage.

The chain from formal protection mandate to impunity as an institutional outcome runs not through dramatic failure or deliberate malice but through the quiet, unremarkable work of institutional life: the form that cannot be completed, the interpreter who was never hired, the meeting that requires one more approval, the case that is closed because the paperwork is in order. Impunity, in this analysis, is an organizational achievement produced through the everyday translation of policy texts into practice, a translation that consistently positions the non-disabled, administratively uncomplicated survivor as the implicit subject of protection, and leaves the disabled survivor at the threshold of a system that was never designed to let her in.

Discussion

The findings of this study address the first research question, concerning how university protection policies against sexual violence are translated into institutional practices for students with disabilities by revealing that formal regulatory compliance and substantive protection accessibility occupy fundamentally different registers of institutional life. The formal architecture of protection that has developed across Indonesian higher education, including the establishment of Satgas PPKPT, the adoption of victim-centered principles in institutional documentation, and compliance with Permendikbudristek 55/2024, represents a genuine and meaningful advance in national higher education governance. However, compliance with the formal requirement to establish a protection mechanism does not, in itself, constitute the provision of accessible protection.

Disability rights scholarship and the normative framework of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) consistently distinguish between formal equality, treating all individuals according to the same rules; and substantive equality, ensuring that each individual can meaningfully access those rules in accordance with their specific needs (Barrett & Marshall, 2023; Isiaka, 2025; Oliver, 2013; Quinn & Degener, 2002; Suardi, 2025). The near-total absence of disability-specific reporting procedures, alternative-format information, trained accompaniment personnel, and physically accessible task force offices across the 28 institutions studied demonstrates that Indonesian higher education has achieved formal equality while leaving substantive equality effectively unrealized. Protection that exists only in text, accessible only to those who already possess the communicative, cognitive, and physical capacity to navigate its procedures, is protection that is, for a significant proportion of students with disabilities, functionally unavailable.

This finding invites a deeper conceptual argument about the conditions under which access to justice can be considered genuinely achieved. The concept of access to justice, properly understood, requires not only the legal existence of remedial mechanisms but the practical capacity of rights-bearers to engage with those mechanisms on terms consistent with their needs and circumstances (Larkin et al., 2017; Noer, Nurtjahyo, & Shanti, 2025; Nurtjahyo, 2021, 2022). For students with disabilities navigating sexual violence protection systems,

this capacity is contingent on a set of institutional prerequisites, accessible information, inclusive communication channels, trained intermediaries, and procedurally adapted investigation processes; none of which were consistently present in the institutions studied.

The dominant institutional response to disability was one of procedural sameness: applying a uniform framework to all students, on the implicit assumption that equality of process guarantees equality of outcome. This assumption is precisely what disability studies rejects as the logic of formal equality, a logic that erases difference in the name of treating everyone the same, while in practice advantaging those whose bodies, communications, and cognitive styles are already aligned with the institutional norm (Alsabilah & Firmansyah, 2024; Larkin et al., 2017; Ledingham et al., 2022; Oliver, 2013). Reasonable accommodation, the obligation to modify procedures, environments, and practices to enable equivalent access; is not, in this framework, a discretionary enhancement; it is the operational precondition for justice itself. Where reasonable accommodation is absent, what presents itself as an open mechanism of protection is, for disabled students, a closed door.

The victim-centered principles embedded in institutional SOPs, including confidentiality, protection, accompaniment, and recovery, nominally represent a philosophical commitment to centering the survivor's experience and needs in institutional responses to sexual violence. However, the findings of this study demonstrate a consistent and consequential gap between the articulation of these principles in formal documents and their operationalization in everyday institutional practice. This gap is precisely what Institutional Ethnography theorizes as the disjuncture between policy as text and policy as practice: the ruling texts that govern institutional action establish what Smith and Griffith (2022) call the *ideological circle*, a closed loop in which the language of protection substitutes for, rather than produces, the material conditions of protection.

When victim-centered language is used to authorize policies that do not accommodate diverse communicative needs, when confidentiality provisions are invoked to exclude the trusted accompaniment figures on whom disabled students depend, and when trauma-informed care is cited in SOPs that are never delivered in accessible formats, the principles themselves become instruments of institutional self-legitimation rather than survivor protection. The answer to the first research question is therefore not simply that translation is incomplete, but that the form of translation that has occurred, the conversion of policy mandates into compliance documentation without substantive disability inclusion, produces a protection system that performs accessibility without delivering it.

The second research question, concerning the institutional barriers that contribute to the production of impunity in sexual violence cases involving students with disabilities, is addressed directly by the organizational dynamics documented in this study. The fragmented coordination between Satgas units, disability services, counseling, student affairs, and institutional leadership constitutes a structural configuration in which no single unit assumes primary accountability for the disability-inclusive case management that justice requires. This organizational fragmentation is not a temporary resource problem that can be resolved through additional funding; it is, rather, a product of the institutional silo logic that identifies as characteristic of campus sexual violence governance, a logic in which procedural boundaries between units function to distribute responsibility so diffusely that accountability for individual cases effectively disappears (Noer, Kusmawati, Khusnaeny, et al., 2025; Ostridge, 2025).

Delayed justice, in this analysis, is not an unfortunate by product of bureaucratic complexity; it is a predictable outcome of decision-making structures that require hierarchical authorization for protective responses, creating timelines within which cases attenuate, survivors disengage, and alleged

perpetrators with institutional standing benefit from the natural inertia of administrative process. As D'Enbeau (2019) argues, organizations consistently resolve the tension between survivor advocacy and institutional risk management in favor of the latter, and the most vulnerable survivors, those whose cases are most complex, most resource-intensive, and most likely to challenge institutional hierarchies are the ones most likely to experience this resolution as abandonment.

The credibility dynamics identified in this study introduce an analytically distinct dimension of the impunity production process, one that can be precisely theorized through Fricker's (2007) framework of epistemic injustice. Fricker distinguishes two forms of epistemic wrong: *testimonial injustice*, which occurs when a speaker is assigned a deflated level of credibility on the basis of identity prejudice, causing harm in their capacity as a knower; and *hermeneutical injustice*, which occurs when gaps in collective interpretive resources prevent the experiences of marginalized individuals from being adequately understood or communicated. Both forms operate with particular force against students with disabilities in campus protection systems.

The documented pattern of task force members repeatedly questioning the direct observational capacity of visually impaired complainants, a line of questioning that applied sighted epistemological standards to non-sighted experience, constitutes a paradigm case of testimonial injustice: the complainant's account is discredited not because of evidential weakness but because of a prejudicial assumption that disability renders certain forms of witness experience implausible. The parallel pattern of reframing accounts from students with psychosocial disabilities as misperceptions of consensual interaction represents hermeneutical injustice: the institution lacks the interpretive framework to comprehend that a person with a psychosocial disability can experience, recognize, and refuse non-consensual sexual contact.

Together, these epistemic failures do not merely delay justice, they render justice structurally unavailable, because the evidentiary and communicative standards through which the case must be prosecuted are calibrated to an implicitly non-disabled subject. Impunity, in this register, is not produced by a failure to follow rules; it is produced by the epistemic rules themselves (Binningsbø & Nordås, 2022; Equality Now, 2025; Manecksha, 2016; Noer, 2025; Odello & Burke, 2016).

The concept of institutional betrayal, as an extension of betrayal trauma theory, provides the most analytically precise account of the compounded harm experienced by students with disabilities who engage campus protection systems (Christl et al., 2024; Gómez, 2022; PettyJohn et al., 2023; Pinciotti & Orcutt, 2021; Reinke, 2022). Institutional betrayal occurs when an institution fails to prevent wrongdoing or respond supportively to those harmed within its context, a failure that constitutes a distinct and additional form of trauma beyond the original violation. In the cases documented in this study, institutional betrayal took several forms: the failure to provide accessible reporting mechanisms to students who disclosed victimization; the imposition of repeated, undifferentiated questioning that re-exposed survivors to their experiences without procedural justification; the administrative closure of cases in ways that communicated to survivors that the institution had fulfilled its obligations while leaving their harm unaddressed; and the explicit or implicit subordination of survivor interests to institutional reputation management.

For students with disabilities, the betrayal is compounded because their engagement with the institution was predicated on a particular form of trust, the expectation that an institution formally committed to both disability inclusion and survivor protection would honor those commitments in tandem. When this dual trust is violated, the survivor must contend simultaneously with the original harm of sexual violence and with the disorienting recognition that the institution designed to protect them has instead protected itself (Dufour, 2024; Houge & Lohne, 2017; Noer, 2025; Odello & Burke, 2016). This experience of doubled harm is not a

peripheral consequence of institutional failure; it is its most structurally revealing expression.

The role of reputation management in the production of impunity represents the dimension of the findings most directly connected to the governance logics of Indonesian higher education institutions. The informal but structurally consequential pressure to handle cases involving high-status perpetrators with discretion, evident in the task force deliberations documented across multiple campuses, reflects a fundamental tension within the governance architecture of institutions that are simultaneously accountable to survivors and attentive to their own organizational standing.

This tension, in the absence of strong civil society accountability mechanisms and institutional transparency obligations, is consistently resolved in favor of institutional self-protection; and that this resolution is rarely codified in explicit policy but operates instead through the informal communicative norms that term the ruling relations of organizational life (Equality Now, 2025; Noer, 2025; Noer, Nurtjahyo, & Shanti, 2025). Reputation protection becomes impunity when it shapes the pace of investigation, the framing of outcomes, and the threshold of evidence required for accountability, and it does so through a set of organizational decisions that are individually defensible but cumulatively function to ensure that perpetrators with institutional capital face effectively no consequences. For students with disabilities, who already face credibility deficits and procedural barriers, the additional weight of institutional self-interest in the balance of their cases is decisive.

Nonetheless, the findings and their theoretical interpretation, support an integrated analytical model in which access to justice for students with disabilities in Indonesian higher education is structured by two converging chains of causation. *The first chain*, policy recognition, accessibility requirements, reasonable accommodation, victim-centered support, represents the conditions under which protection can become meaningful; each link in this chain is, in the institutions studied, either absent or insufficiently realized. *The second chain*, institutional barriers, organizational bottlenecks, epistemic injustice, institutional betrayal, reputation management, represents the mechanisms through which protection failure is converted into impunity; each link in this chain was empirically documented across multiple institutions and disability groups.

The theoretical contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that these two chains are not independent: the systematic failure to build the first is precisely what activates the second, and vice versa. Institutions that invest in formal compliance without investing in substantive accessibility, disability-inclusive training, inter-unit coordination, and transparent accountability mechanisms do not merely fail to protect disabled survivors: they construct, through their ordinary organizational practices, the conditions under which impunity for sexual violence becomes the structurally predictable outcome.

Conclusion

This study set out to examine how sexual violence protection policies are translated into institutional practices for students with disabilities in Indonesian higher education, and how the structural failures of that translation contribute to the production of impunity. The findings demonstrate that the expansion of formal regulatory frameworks, including the establishment of Satgas PPKPT under Permendikbudristek 55/2024 and the formal adoption of victim-centered principles, has not been accompanied by the substantive institutional transformation necessary to make those frameworks accessible to students with disabilities.

Across 28 institutions, the study documented a consistent pattern in which disability was recognized in policy language but not operationalized in practice: reporting mechanisms were inaccessible, investigative procedures were non-differentiated across disability types, inter-unit coordination was fragmented, decision-making was hierarchically delayed, and credibility bias against disabled

complainants was structurally embedded in the assessment process. These failures did not occur despite the existence of formal protection; they occurred within it: produced through the ordinary, unremarkable work of institutional administration.

Integrating disability studies, institutional ethnography, and the sociology of impunity into a unified analytical framework, this study demonstrates that impunity in sexual violence cases involving students with disabilities is not primarily a product of absent regulation but of the systematic gap between policy as text and policy as practice, a gap that is widened by epistemic injustice, deepened by institutional betrayal, and sustained by the organizational priority of reputation management over survivor accountability.

The theoretical and practical implications of these findings extend beyond the Indonesian context. At the theoretical level, this study advances an integrated analytical model that links inclusive higher education policy, institutional text-practice disjuncture, and impunity as an institutional outcome, a tripartite framework that has not previously been systematically developed in the existing literature and that offers productive directions for future research on campus sexual violence governance in diverse national settings. At the practical level, the findings call for a fundamental reorientation of institutional protection design: one that moves beyond formal compliance toward the provision of disability-inclusive, procedurally accessible, and independently accountable protection systems.

Concretely, this requires the development of disability-specific SOPs and assessment protocols, the mandatory training of Satgas members in disability-inclusive case management, the institutionalization of inter-unit coordination mechanisms, the provision of trained accompaniment officers for disabled complainants, and the establishment of external oversight mechanisms capable of interrupting the reputation-driven logics that currently govern institutional case handling. Where protection systems are designed without the most marginalized survivors in mind, those survivors will remain, as this study has shown, at the threshold of justice, formally included, substantively excluded, and structurally abandoned to the impunity that institutional indifference reliably produces.

Acknowledgment

This publication is part of a research entitled Analysis of the Implementation of Permendikbudristek 30/2021 in Encouraging Inclusive Education in Higher Education: Policy and Sociocultural Aspects funded by the Kemendikbudristekdikti Catalyst Grant in 2024. With the number SK 0639/E5/PG.02.00/2024 dated July 23, the contract between the Directorate of Research, Technology and Community Service and LLDIKTI 3 Number 058/E5/PG.02.00/PL.BATCH.2/2024 dated August 1, Contract between LLDIKTI 3 and UMJ Number 1087/LL3/AL.04/2024 dated August 8, and Contract between UMJ and Researchers Number 116/R-UMJ/VIII/2024 dated August 12.

The authors wish to thank the Directorate of Research, Technology, and Community Service, LLDIKTI 3, the Chancellor of Universitas Muhammadiyah Jakarta, UMJ LPPM, Attaqwa Foundation, and Droupadi for their assistance and facilitation. Gratitude is also extended to the Catalyst 2024 research team: Lidwina Inge Nurtjahyo, Theresia Indira Shanti, Murniati Agustian, Nathanael E.J. Sumampouw, and Endah Triastuti for their invaluable support throughout the research process. The authors further thank all informants who generously contributed information and data to this study.

During the preparation of this work the authors used Quillbot Paraphrasing Tool as a language support tool in the preparation of this article to improve clarity, coherence, and conformity with international academic writing standards. After using this tool and/or service, the authors reviewed and edited the content as needed and take full responsibility for the content of the published article.

Ethical considerations

This study was conducted in strict accordance with ethical research principles and the Declaration of Helsinki. All instruments and procedures were reviewed and approved by the Ethics Committee of Universitas Muhammadiyah Jakarta (Approval No. 213/KE-UMJ/VI/2024) on June 15, 2024. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their involvement in the study.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Funding

This research received funding support from the Directorate of Research, Technology and Community Service, Directorate General of Higher Education, Research and Technology, Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia in 2024.

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