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Empowering MSMEs to Independently Establish Individual Companies through Digital Government Platforms

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Abstract

The transformation of the Micro and Small Enterprise (MSMEs) law in Indonesia has introduced Individual Companies as a simplified legal entity under the Job Creation Law. However, limited legal literacy among MSME actors remains a major obstacle to the implementation of business legalization. This Community Service activity aimed to improve participants' understanding of business legality and the establishment process of Individual Companies. The program was conducted at NGO Kita Design Bandung and involved women-led microbusiness actors through interactive lectures, role-play simulations, practical registration tutorials, and participatory evaluations based on the Clinical Legal Education (CLE) approach. The effectiveness of the activity was measured using pre-test and post-test assessments as well as participant satisfaction evaluations. The results showed a significant improvement in participants' understanding of the legal aspects and online registration procedures of Individual Companies. In addition, participants demonstrated high satisfaction with the training materials, facilitators, and implementation process. This activity contributes to strengthening MSMEs legal capacity, encouraging business formalization, and supporting sustainable community empowerment through practice-based legal education.

Keywords

Business Legalization, Clinical Legal Education, Community Service, Individual Companies, Legal Literacy.

1. Introduction

The presence of Law Number 6 of 2023 concerning Job Creation, along with Government Regulation Number 7 of 2021 concerning the Facilitation, Protection, and Empowerment of Cooperatives and MSMEs, provides a legal basis for micro and small business actors to establish legal entities more simply and efficiently through Individual Companies. This form of legal entity allows individuals to establish businesses independently through the General Legal Administration (*Administrasi Hukum Umum*/AHU) Online system with simpler procedures and lower costs. The policy aims to improve legality, access to financing, and legal protection for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (MSMEs) in the informal sector, while also expanding access to government programs and legal protection (Dewanto & Sirait, 2022; Dewi, 2024). However, many MSME actors still lack understanding regarding the concept and establishment mechanism of Individual Companies, indicating a gap in legal literacy among business actors (Mulada et al., 2024). Therefore, this Community Service (*Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*/PKM) activity aims to improve participants' legal literacy regarding the establishment of Individual Companies.

As a response to the need for legal and economic empowerment for vulnerable groups, lecturers and students from the Master of Notary Program at Pasundan University conducted a Community Service program on the establishment and registration of Individual Companies at the Kita Design Community Bandung. This institution assists local MSME actors, particularly women trafficking survivors, through practical skills training such as sewing and fabric-based handicrafts to support economic independence. The products are marketed locally and directed toward export opportunities, reflecting the institution's commitment to sustainable social and economic empowerment (Ariska et al., 2023).

The problem of trafficking remains a crucial issue in Indonesia, particularly affecting women as a vulnerable group (Lie, 2024). In this context, skills-based economic empowerment is important for prevention and victim recovery efforts (Nurhayati et al., 2020). Through this activity, the implementation team provides practical legal information to women MSME actors assisted by institutions, aiming to increase their understanding of business legality and encourage independent business legalization (Suryanti et al., 2025). However, the transition from informal to formal businesses remains challenging due to limited knowledge of business law and legalization procedures. Many MSME actors are still unfamiliar with simple legal entities suitable for their businesses, despite the government introducing individual companies through the Job Creation Law as a flexible and affordable legal entity model for micro and small enterprises.

The lack of legal understanding is one of the main obstacles in the transformation of participants' businesses from the informal sector to the formal sector (Anugrah et al., 2021). Many MSME actors do not understand the importance of business legality, and do not know the procedure for establishing a business entity that is simple and in accordance with their capacity (Ningsih et al., 2025). In this context, the Job Creation Law and its Derivative Regulations are an important momentum, because it introduces a new form of legal entity, namely Individual Companies (Kusmadana et al., 2022; Maruf et al., 2022). This form of business allows individuals to establish a company legally without having to have a partner, with an easier process, affordable cost, and can be accessed through the online platform owned by the Ministry of Law and Human Rights (AHU Online) (Aziz & Febriananingsih, 2020). Individual Companies are a strategic solution for MSME actors, including women survivors of exploitation who are rebuilding their lives through independent businesses.

This activity was held as an effort to introduce the form and procedure of establishing an Individual Company to the trainees at the Kita Design Community.

Through this activity, participants are expected to be able to understand the importance of business legality, as well as get wider access to the market, sources of capital, and adequate legal protection. This is possible because an Individual Company is a form of legal entity that is very suitable for the needs of MSME actors, especially women. After all, the establishment process is designed to be simple and can be done independently through the AHU Online system managed by the Ministry of Law (Yulianingrum & Prananingtyas, 2024).

Despite the availability of individual companies as a simplified legal entity for MSMEs, legal literacy and understanding of the registration process remain limited, particularly among vulnerable women entrepreneurs. Unlike conventional empowerment programs that primarily focus on vocational and economic skills, this program integrates legal education with practical AHU Online registration guidance, supporting both legal and economic empowerment. By integrating legal education and skills training holistically, the program aims to shape legal independence as well as economic independence for women in the face of complex and multi-layered social challenges. Therefore, this socialization activity aims to introduce the form and mechanism of the establishment of an Individual Company to the participants, so that they can run their business legally, be protected by the law, and have wider access to the market and capital.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Legal Literacy and Business Legality for MSMEs

Legal literacy is the ability of business actors to understand and apply legal knowledge in business activities, including licensing, contracts, taxation, and intellectual property rights. For MSMEs, legal literacy is important because it helps entrepreneurs avoid legal disputes and improve business sustainability. In Indonesia, the government has encouraged the transformation of informal businesses into formal entities through easier business registration systems, including the establishment of the Individual Company (*PT Perorangan*) under the Job Creation Law (Paramudhita, 2025). This legal entity simplifies registration procedures for single-owner MSMEs and provides stronger legal certainty for entrepreneurs (Burhan & Costiana, 2025). Legal literacy also supports MSMEs in understanding regulatory compliance and consumer protection obligations, which are essential in the digital economy era (Prasetyo, 2024; Yusdira et al., 2025).

Business legality provides significant economic and legal benefits for MSMEs. Legally registered businesses gain easier access to banking services, government funding programs, investment opportunities, and digital marketplaces because formal legality is often required in financing applications and partnerships (Sunggara et al., 2024; Winarko & Manurung, 2025). In addition, legalization strengthens legal protection for business owners against disputes, fraud, and unfair competition. Formalized MSMEs are also more capable of adapting to taxation systems, cybersecurity regulations, and digital transformation policies (Sari & Sarumpaet, 2025; Hidayat et al., 2025). Therefore, improving legal literacy and encouraging MSMEs legalization are essential strategies for increasing economic resilience and supporting sustainable business growth in developing economies.

2.2. Clinical Legal Education in Community Empowerment

Clinical Legal Education (CLE) is a method of legal education that combines academic learning with practical legal experience through direct community engagement (Le Thi, 2025). CLE emphasizes experiential learning, where law students apply legal theories in real situations such as legal counseling, advocacy, mediation, and public legal education programs. This participatory approach allows students to develop professional skills while simultaneously improving public access to justice. CLE has become increasingly important in strengthening legal awareness

among vulnerable and marginalized communities that often experience barriers in accessing formal legal services (Du Plessis, 2021). Through community-based legal assistance, CLE encourages the development of socially responsible legal professionals who understand the relationship between law, ethics, and social justice (Madhloom & Antonopoulos, 2022).

In the context of community empowerment, CLE functions not only as an educational model but also as a mechanism for legal empowerment. Universities and legal clinics collaborate with communities to provide legal literacy programs, rights awareness campaigns, and advocacy services that enable citizens to actively defend their legal rights. Community outreach activities conducted through CLE programs strengthen participatory legal education and increase public confidence in resolving legal issues independently (Ghanghash, 2023; Balan, 2025). Furthermore, CLE contributes to sustainable social development by encouraging collaboration between students, academics, civil society organizations, and local communities. According to Pandey et al. (2025), CLE programs oriented toward social justice lawyering are highly effective in promoting community legal empowerment because they integrate legal education with grassroots advocacy and participatory community engagement.

3. Methods

The target audience for this PKM activity consisted of 12 women assisted by the Kita Design Community. The activity was conducted for one full day in the training hall of the Kita Design Community Bandung. The participants were trafficking survivors who were undergoing recovery and vocational training programs focused on sewing and fabric-based MSME skills. The problem-solving framework of this activity was based on the identification of several legal needs and constraints faced by MSME actors, including a low understanding of legal entities such as Individual Companies, the perception that business legalization is expensive and complicated, limited technical capability for independent online registration, and the lack of awareness regarding the potential benefits of legal protection and access to funding after business registration.



Figure 1. PKM Troubleshooting Framework

Figure 1 illustrates that the business legalization process begins with identifying the main barriers faced by MSME actors, namely the perception that legalization is costly and complicated, as well as limited digital registration skills. Through the provision of technical assistance and access to online registration support, these obstacles can be reduced, leading to improved business legality, stronger legal protection, and wider access to funding opportunities.

The PKM activity was implemented interactively through a combination of lectures, experience sharing, question-and-answer sessions, group discussions, tutorials on registration procedures, and direct practice in establishing an Individual

Company through the official website of the Ministry of Law and Human Rights. All activities were facilitated by lecturers and students from the Master of Notary Program at Pasundan University. The training aimed to ensure that participants understood the concept and legal basis of Individual Companies, were able to distinguish Individual Companies from ordinary limited liability companies in terms of structure and procedure, understood the required documents and registration data, and were able to produce proof of Individual Company registration for participants with complete administrative documents such as a Taxpayer Identification Number (*Nomor Pokok Wajib Pajak*/NPWP).

The implementation of this Community Service activity was held on March 3, 2025, at the Kita Design Community, Bandung. The main purpose of this activity is to empower participants in utilizing digital technology to establish an Individual Company independently through the online platform of the Ministry of Law and Human Rights. It is hoped that after participating in this training, participants will be able to understand the process of registering legal entities and be able to apply it in their business activities. The main problems faced by participants include a lack of legal knowledge, the perception that the cost of establishing an Individual PT is expensive, and concerns about legal and tax consequences in the future. Interestingly, most of the participants were the young generation (Gen Z) who were relatively familiar with digital technology. This generation tends to be quick to respond in learning new things related to the use of simple digital devices, namely smartphones. This is a great potential in the digital transformation process of business legalization, because participants are more interested in independent and technology-based learning methods.

4. Results

4.1. Stages of Implementation of Community Service Activities

The initial stage begins with internal coordination by the head of the implementation team with members of the lecturer team to formulate the theme of PKM activities that are relevant to the needs of partners. The theme raised is a form of downstreaming the results of research that has been carried out previously, especially in the field of micro business law. The main focus is directed to applicable legal assistance efforts, namely the establishment of Individual Companies as a new legal entity that can be accessed online by MSME actors. The team then decided that the implementation of PKM activities would be carried out at the partner's location based on a direct request from the Kita Design Community. Mitra said that the training participants, women victims of exploitation who are being empowered, need integrated training that includes legal aspects, business skills, and assistance in business legalization. At this stage, initial coordination was also carried out between the lecturer team and partners to agree on the time, form of training, and infrastructure needed. In the meeting, the lecturer team said that the training activities would be carried out with an interactive approach based on Clinical Legal Education (CLE).

The training method used in this activity adopts the Clinical Legal Education (CLE) approach. Different from conventional methods, this approach is designed not only to transfer legal knowledge but also to build students' practical legal skills while fostering a sense of social justice and awareness of community empowerment (Ulfah, 2019). In the CLE system, students are given the space to be directly involved in the process of identifying legal issues in the community, providing basic legal assistance, and providing legal education through a participatory approach (Cole, 2011). Students not only learn through theory, but also through practice, reflection, and direct interaction with society.

The CLE model used in this activity combines several forms, including simulation, where students role-play as legal facilitators in the process of creating an Individual PT; externship, in which students observe and practice mentoring directly under the supervision of lecturers; live-client clinic activities that involve real participants from partner institutions rather than simulations; and street law clinic activities that provide basic legal education regarding legal rights and obligations in running a business (Grimes et al., 2011). Through the CLE approach, this activity not only provides direct benefits to partners in the form of legal literacy and business legalization skills but also becomes a transformative learning medium for students (Barry et al., 2011; Tanveer & Kumar, 2025). They gain contextual experience in legal practice, strengthen social awareness, and develop competencies as prospective legal professionals oriented toward justice and community empowerment.

This Community Service activity is motivated by three main issues identified from the results of initial coordination with partners and field needs analysis (Maruf et al., 2022). First, entrepreneurship both in the education sector and MSMEs requires continuous coaching in order to adapt to technological developments, market dynamics, and the latest regulations. Second, the majority of participants in this activity come from marginalized or socially and economically vulnerable groups, requiring adequate legal protection in carrying out their economic and educational activities. Third, although the participants already have productive businesses or activities, most of them do not yet possess formal business entities, making them vulnerable to legal and administrative issues as well as limiting their access to financing and empowerment programs from the government or financial institutions.

In response to these challenges, this PKM activity was designed using the Clinical Legal Education (CLE) method, which emphasizes the direct involvement of students in providing practice-based legal education to the community (Rachmawati et al., 2022). One of the key strategies implemented is the preparation of a Lesson Plan as a learning plan within the context of clinical legal education. The Lesson Plan is systematically prepared to ensure that the learning objectives can be conveyed clearly and specifically to the participants (Fan et al., 2024). The learning structure in this activity includes three main components, namely material planning through the preparation of structured and logical learning materials so participants can gradually understand legal concepts and principles; interactive implementation that enables participants to actively discuss, simulate, and directly practice the creation of an online legal entity in the form of an Individual Company; and reflection as an evaluative stage to review the learning process, measure the extent of participants' understanding, and identify aspects that require further follow-up activities.

With this approach, it is hoped that the PKM activities will not only increase participants' legal literacy but also provide a tangible impact in the form of technical skills and sustainable legal empowerment. The CLE approach enables the integration of academic aspects, social empathy, and practical solutions that directly address the needs of the target community. This training activity was held on March 3, 2025, and took place at a partner location, namely Kita Design Community Bandung. This training was attended by 12 participants who were women fostered by the foundation who had run micro businesses informally. The activity was carried out in one full day with a focus on delivering material about the establishment of an Individual Company, the ease of procedures, and its differences from the form of Limited Liability Company (PT) in general.



Figure 2. Implementation of Activities

Based on Figure 2, the training material was delivered interactively through a combination of lecture methods, question and answer sessions, open discussions, and sharing experiences between participants. The delivery of material is designed to be applicable and relevant to the needs of participants who are trying to legalize their business. The topics discussed include the legal basis of Individual Companies, the stages of registration through the AHU online system of the Ministry of Law and Human Rights, and the accompanying legal and administrative implications.

In general, the training activities went smoothly according to plan. The participants showed high enthusiasm and were able to understand the material presented well. In addition, the presence of a strong digital background from some participants also supports the effectiveness of this training. It is hoped that the results of this training can encourage participants to carry out the business legalization process independently and increase legal protection for their business activities.

4.2. Training Effectiveness and Activity Outputs

The main target of this training activity is to increase participants' understanding of the basic aspects of the establishment of business entities, especially in the context of Individual Companies. Specifically, participants are expected to be able to understand the material about: (1) introduction to the forms of business entities; (2) the difference between an ordinary Limited Liability Company (PT) and an individual company; (3) the stages of establishing an individual PT; and (4) follow tutorials and direct practices of the registration process through the AHU Online system. The targeted output of this training is that participants are able to establish business entities independently through the digital platform provided by the Ministry of Law and Human Rights.

The effectiveness of the training was measured through the results of the pre-test and post-test, each consisting of 10 questions. The pre-test is given before the material is delivered by the resource person, while the post-test is carried out at the end of the training session. The goal is to measure the improvement of participants' understanding after participating in the activity.

Table 1. Recapitulation of The Participants' Scores

No Participants	Pre-test	Post-test
1	80	90
2	80	100
3	40	60
4	70	80
5	80	80
6	50	60
7	60	80
8	50	60
9	50	70
10	70	80
11	50	90
12	70	80

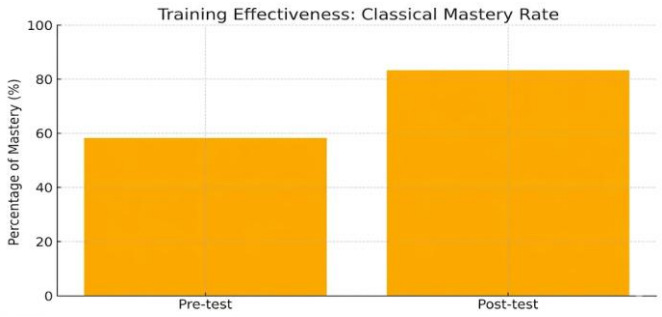


Figure 3. Bar Chart

As shown in Table 1 and Figure 3, the classical completeness level (KKM 70) increased by 25%, from 58.33% in the pre-test to 83.33% in the post-test. These results indicate that the training was effective in improving participants' understanding of the material presented, both conceptually and practically. The improvement also demonstrates that the interactive approach and hands-on practice applied during the training were able to enhance participants' motivation and ability to understand the process of establishing a business entity legally and independently.

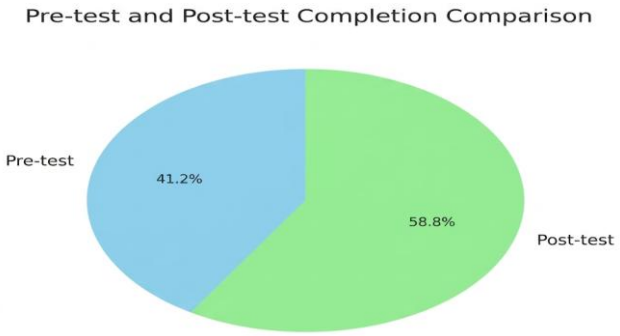


Figure 4. Pie Chart

As shown in Figure 4, the comparison between the pre-test and post-test results indicates a significant improvement in participants' learning outcomes after the training. The post-test percentage reached 58.8%, which was higher than the pre-test percentage of 41.2%. This result demonstrates that the training activities successfully enhanced participants' understanding of business legality and the establishment process of Individual Companies. The increase also reflects the effectiveness of the interactive learning methods and practical simulations applied during the program.

4.3. Implementation Evaluation

Evaluation of the implementation of the training was carried out at the end of the PKM activity by asking participants to fill out a questionnaire that measured their perception of the overall activity. This evaluation includes three main aspects, namely: 1. the quality of the material delivered, 2. the competence of the resource persons, and 3. the technical management of the implementation of training. The assessment was given on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). In the first aspect, namely the training material, the evaluation results showed that as many as 75% of participants felt very satisfied with the content and delivery of the material. The material is compiled systematically and delivered sequentially, in line with the purpose of the training, which is to improve the knowledge and skills of participants in the process of establishing an Individual Company business entity. The training process also includes hands-on practice, Q&A, and interactive discussions that provide a space for participants to obtain feedback directly from the facilitator.

Meanwhile, in the second aspect, namely the competence of the resource persons, participants' perceptions were evaluated based on three main indicators: 1. mastery of the material, 2. the ability to convey the material effectively, and 3. the ability to understand the conditions of the participants. Based on the results of the evaluation, the majority of participants (80%) stated that they were very satisfied with the mastery of the topic by the resource persons. The resource persons in this activity are members of the PKM implementation team who have academic backgrounds and professional experience in the field of corporate law, including teaching and research related to the topic. This provides added value in the delivery of relevant and applicable material according to the needs of the participants.

In the third aspect, namely the management of the implementation of PKM activities, the results of the evaluation showed that most of the participants, namely 85%, stated that they were very satisfied with this aspect. The evaluation of management aspects includes several indicators, including the feasibility and comfort of the training location, as well as the availability of consumables and other technical equipment during the activity. The high level of participant satisfaction in this aspect shows that the PKM implementation team has prepared the activity carefully and is responsive to the needs of the participants. Representative training locations, as well as good coordination with partners, are factors that support the success of this activity. In addition, efficient management of training time and a conducive atmosphere of activities also contribute to creating a positive learning experience for participants. The evaluation of the implementation of the training from all three aspects showed excellent results. All three aspects, materials, resource persons, and management, showed a level of participant satisfaction above 75%, which reflects that this PKM activity is effective, on target, and has a real impact on increasing the legal and technical capacity of participants.

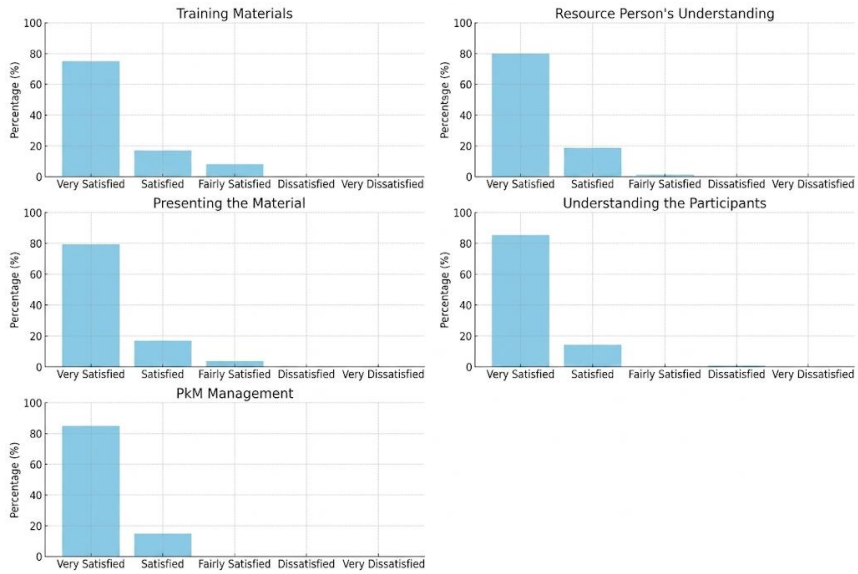


Figure 5. Participants' Satisfaction Evaluation of the Training Program

As shown in Figure 5, the evaluation results indicate a high level of participant satisfaction across all assessed aspects of the training program. In terms of training materials, 75% of participants stated that they were very satisfied. The resource persons' understanding of the topic received 80% "very satisfied" responses, while the ability to deliver the material effectively reached 79.58%. In addition, 85.42% of participants expressed that they were very satisfied with the facilitators' ability to understand participants' needs, and 85% reported being very satisfied with the management and implementation of the PKM activities. These findings reflect the successful implementation of the training program, both in terms of the quality of the material and speakers, as well as the technical organization of the activities.

5. Discussion

The results of this Community Service activity demonstrate that the Clinical Legal Education (CLE)-based training was effective in improving participants' understanding of business legality and the establishment process of Individual Companies. This can be seen from the increase in participants' learning outcomes, where the classical completeness level increased from 58.33% in the pre-test to 83.33% in the post-test. In addition, participant satisfaction in all evaluation aspects exceeded 75%, indicating that the training materials, facilitators, and technical implementation were well received by participants. These findings confirm that practical and participatory legal education can significantly improve legal literacy among MSME actors, especially vulnerable women groups who previously operated informal businesses (Suryanti et al., 2024).

The findings are consistent with Anugrah et al. (2021), who explained that legal counseling activities play an important role in increasing MSME actors' awareness regarding the importance of business legality as a form of legal protection. Similarly, Ningsih et al. (2025) found that legal education programs improved participants' understanding of licensing procedures and strengthened their motivation to formalize their businesses. The current study further strengthens these findings by demonstrating that legal literacy training combined with direct practice using the AHU Online system can improve not only conceptual understanding but also technical capability in establishing legal entities independently.

This study also supports Aziz and Febriananingsih (2020), who argued that the Individual Company scheme under the Job Creation Law was specifically designed to simplify business legalization for micro and small enterprises. Participants in this training initially lacked understanding regarding the existence and advantages of Individual Companies, which aligns with the challenges identified by Paramudhita (2025) concerning limited public awareness and implementation barriers in the establishment of Individual Companies in Indonesia. After the training, participants showed improved understanding of the legal procedures and benefits of formal business entities, indicating that community-based legal education can help bridge the gap between legal reform and practical implementation.

The successful implementation of the CLE approach in this activity also confirms the theoretical perspectives proposed by Barry et al. (2011), Cole (2011), and Du Plessis (2021), who emphasized that CLE is not only a teaching method for legal knowledge but also a transformative approach that integrates experiential learning, social justice values, and community empowerment. Through direct interaction with real participants, students involved in the activity gained practical legal experience while simultaneously contributing to community legal empowerment. This finding is further supported by Tanveer and Kumar (2025), who argued that CLE effectively bridges legal theory and practice through experiential and client-centered learning approaches.

Moreover, the use of simulations, live-client clinics, and street law methods during the training aligns with the framework proposed by Grimes et al. (2011) and Ghanghash (2023), who highlighted that participatory legal education is effective in increasing public legal awareness and encouraging community engagement. The high level of participant satisfaction in this study indicates that interactive and practice-oriented methods are more effective than conventional lecture-based approaches in delivering legal education to MSMEs.

From a broader perspective, this study also reflects the importance of legal empowerment in supporting sustainable MSMEs development in the digital era. Formal business legality enables MSMEs to access financing opportunities, government assistance programs, and digital market ecosystems more easily, as emphasized by Burhan and Costiana (2025), Winarko and Manurung (2025), and Yusdira et al. (2025). Therefore, strengthening legal literacy through CLE-based community service programs can become an effective strategy for empowering vulnerable business groups and supporting inclusive economic development.

6. Conclusion

This Community Service activity successfully improved participants' understanding of business legality, particularly regarding the establishment and registration of Individual Companies. The effectiveness of the training was reflected in the significant increase in participants' post-test results, with the classical completeness rate rising from 58.33% to 83.33%. In addition, the evaluation results demonstrated a high level of participant satisfaction with the quality of the training materials, the competence of the resource persons, and the technical management of the activity. These findings indicate that interactive and practice-based learning methods are effective in increasing both legal literacy and participants' confidence in independently carrying out business legalization processes.

The implementation of the Clinical Legal Education (CLE) approach also provided important implications for both community empowerment and legal education. For participants, the program strengthened awareness of the importance of business legality, legal protection, and access to broader economic opportunities. For students, the activity served as a transformative learning experience that integrated academic knowledge with practical legal assistance and social engagement.

However, this activity still has several limitations. The training involved a relatively small number of participants and was conducted within a limited duration, which restricted the depth of practical assistance, particularly in the completion of online registration documents through the AHU system. In addition, differences in participants' digital literacy levels became a challenge during the practical sessions. Therefore, future programs are recommended to include longer mentoring periods, more intensive technical assistance, and broader participant coverage. Further studies may also examine the long-term impact of business legalization on the economic resilience, access to financing, and social empowerment of MSME actors, especially among vulnerable groups.

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