

The influence of the notarial practice laboratory course on improving the quality and professionalism of students of the master of notarial law program at usu

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Abstract: Notarial education is expected to produce graduates who not only understand legal norms but are also able to apply them carefully, professionally, and ethically. The Notarial Practice Laboratory course at the Master of Notarial Law Program, Faculty of Law, Universitas Sumatera Utara (USU), is designed to bridge theoretical knowledge and practical experience. This study analyzes the scope of laboratory materials, their importance for competence development, and implementation constraints. The study employs an empirical legal approach with a descriptive-analytical design. Data were obtained from interviews with five informants and a questionnaire administered to 61 active students and alumni. Qualitative analysis integrated interview findings, questionnaire responses, curriculum documents, and legal materials. The findings show that the laboratory covers client-handling simulation, legal case analysis and reasoning, authentic deed drafting, preparation of minutes and copies, substantive and formal legal application, and professional ethics. All respondents considered the course relevant to professional needs, while 95.0% reported that simulations improved problem-solving and 96.7% reported improved communication skills. Constraints remain in practice intensity, students' communication and legal reasoning abilities, and facilities. Optimization should focus on competency-based curriculum integration, increased practice frequency, complex case simulation, technology use, competency-based assessment, and collaboration with notarial offices.

Keywords: Competence; Experiential Learning; Notarial Education; Practice Laboratory; Professionalism.

1. Introduction

A notary is a public official who exercises state authority in the preparation of authentic deeds and other notarial acts (Kholidah et al., 2024). This position requires a thorough understanding of the law, attention to detail, independence, prudence, and adherence to professional ethics. Law No. 30 of 2004 on the Office of the Notary, as amended by Law No. 2 of 2014, sets forth the authorities, obligations, prohibitions, and responsibilities of notaries within a framework that demands professional competence. (Rostarum, 2024). Therefore, the education of prospective notaries is not limited to a theoretical understanding of the law but also requires the ability to apply the law and draft legal documents (Sirait & Djaja, 2023).

The main challenge in notarial education lies in the gap between knowing the law and applying the law. Students may understand the legal concepts and ethics of the notary's profession, but they may not necessarily be able to grasp the intentions and objectives of the parties involved, identify legal issues, verify documents, or apply the law to draft deeds (Johannes Triestanto & Kn, 2026). In practice, a misunderstanding of the facts or legal basis can affect the validity of a legal document and have implications for professional liability. The literature on legal education also points to the need for a shift from predominantly theoretical learning toward an approach that integrates the development of professional knowledge, skills, and values. (Yahman, 2019).

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In this context, the Notarial Practice Laboratory in the USU Master's Program in Notarial Studies holds a strategic position. Based on the Semester Learning Plan (RPS) examined in this study, learning consists not only of lectures but also includes discussions, Q&A sessions, simulations of deed drafting, and case analyses. The material covers various types of deeds, including agreements, powers of attorney, guarantees and financing, land deeds, and wills, as well as exercises in drafting drafts and copies (Utomo & SH, 2020).

The laboratory, therefore, serves as a space to test students' ability to apply professional standards in situations that resemble the work of a notary. However, the existence of a practical course does not automatically guarantee the attainment of competencies (Fathonih, 2018). Research cited in the thesis indicates limitations in the frequency of practical sessions, a heavy academic workload, variations in student capabilities, and inadequate facilities. On the other hand, the majority of respondents actually expressed positive perceptions regarding the relevance and benefits of the laboratory. This situation raises an important question: which aspects of the laboratory contribute most to professional readiness, and which aspects still require improvement? Based on this, this article focuses its discussion on three issues: (1) the scope of the Notarial Practice Laboratory curriculum; (2) the urgency of practical learning in shaping students' quality, competence, and professionalism; and (3) the obstacles and strategies for optimizing the implementation of the laboratory (Al Khalik et al., 2025).

The previous studies cited in this thesis primarily discuss notary candidates' internships, the role of the host notary, the implementation of joint internships, and notary candidates' readiness to take the code of ethics exam (Wicaksana et al., 2024). These studies show that practical experience is important for professionalism, but the focus of learning has been on the notary's office or internship programs. This study takes a different approach by placing the practical laboratory within a university setting as the unit of analysis. This focus is important because the laboratory is a relatively controlled space for practicing, making mistakes, receiving feedback, and repeating actions before students face the risks of actual practice (Juliar et al., 2026).

The novelty of this article does not lie in the claim that the practice is essential for prospective notaries a proposition that is already well-established but rather in mapping the relationship between the design of laboratory materials, students' learning experiences, and the development of professional competencies. The research findings show that the materials perceived as most valuable include not only deed drafting techniques but also simulations of client communication, legal reasoning, problem-solving, identity and document verification, and prudence-oriented decision-making. (Juliar et al., 2026) Thus, the laboratory should be understood as a model for clinical legal education at the study program level.

The analytical framework of this article is based on two main pillars. First, experiential learning, which views concrete experiences, reflection, conceptualization, and active experimentation as a single learning cycle (Dewi Tjandraningsih & Kn, 2026). In a laboratory setting, students engage in simulations, reflect on their mistakes, relate their experiences to legal norms, and then attempt to work through different cases again. This approach is relevant to notarial education because competencies consist not only of declarative knowledge but also of skills and attitudes. Second, the theory of professionalism is used to assess the quality of learning outcomes (Jumadin, 2023). Professionalism is not measured solely by the ability to draft legal documents, but by the integration of legal knowledge, technical skills, communication skills, reasoning, diligence, responsibility, and adherence to ethics. In the context of the notary's role, this integration is crucial because the notary's work has legal consequences for the parties involved and society at large. (Abdillah, 2025).

Based on this framework, this study views the laboratory as a mechanism for transitioning from *das sollen* to *das sein*. *Das sollen* refers to an understanding of the legal principles and norms studied in class; *das sein* refers to the practical application of legal problem-solving in client scenarios and simulations of the real-world work of notaries and

administrative officials. The quality of learning can be assessed by students' ability to translate normative knowledge into practical, accountable decisions. (Muljohadi & SH, n.d.).

2. Materials and Methods

This study is an empirical legal study of a descriptive-analytical nature. The empirical approach was chosen because the subject of the study extends beyond legal norms to examine the implementation of the Notarial Practice Laboratory course and the experiences of students and administrators/instructors. (EKSEKUSI & CAHYONO, n.d.). Descriptive analysis was used to describe the scope of the material and learning practices, while the analysis was conducted by linking empirical findings to theories of experiential learning, professionalism, clinical legal education, and the professional ethics of notaries. The data sources consisted of primary and secondary data. (Kamaludin Yusup et al., 2019). Primary data was obtained through interviews with five informants, including the Chair of the Master's Program in Notarial Studies and four faculty members/notary practitioners/PPATs involved in notarial education or practice. The interviews were conducted in March–April 2026 via in-person meetings and online communication channels, as documented in the thesis sources. (Muljohadi & SH, 2025).

Primary data was also collected through an online questionnaire administered to 61 respondents, consisting of current students and alumni of the USU Master's Program in Notarial Studies. Some specific analyses focused on a subgroup of respondents who were already employed or engaged in related professional activities (Yahman, 2019). Secondary data consists of primary legal sources and supporting materials. The primary legal sources used include the Civil Code, Law No. 30 of 2004 on the Office of the Notary, Law No. 2 of 2014 amending the Law on the Office of the Notary, and the Code of Ethics of the Indonesian Notary Association (Faulina et al., 2022). The curriculum documents and the Syllabus for the Notarial Practice Laboratory are also used to outline the objectives, learning methods, subject matter, and assessment. Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews and an electronic questionnaire. The questionnaire used closed-ended yes/no questions focused on four dimensions: scope of material, relevance to the profession, professional readiness and ethics, and students' experiences in conducting simulations (Abdullah et al., 2026).

The questionnaire data were not treated as inferential evidence, but rather as descriptive data to support or contrast the interview findings. The analysis was conducted in three stages: data reduction, grouping of findings into themes, and interpretation. The main themes included (a) laboratory design and materials, (b) benefits to competencies, (c) professional readiness, and (d) implementation constraints. Descriptive quantitative findings are presented in terms of frequencies and percentages based on the primary data included in the thesis. This strategy allows for triangulation among learning documents, respondents' experiences, and informants' perspectives. (Abdullah et al., 2026).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Scope of the Notarial Practice Laboratory Course

3.2. A review of the Course Syllabus and interview results indicates that the Notarial Practice Laboratory course is designed to link legal knowledge with professional practice. Learning activities include introductory lectures, discussions, question-and-answer sessions, simulations of deed drafting, and case analyses. The primary objective is for students to be able to understand, analyze, and practice the drafting of various authentic deeds in accordance with a notary's authority, as well as to apply the law and professional ethics (Jamalum Sinambela et al., 2024).

Components	Main Scope
Client Services	Receiving clients, ascertaining the parties' intentions, and identifying legal issues and needs.
Legal Reasoning	Assessing the facts, linking the facts to legal norms, identifying risks, and formulating solutions.
Document Drafting	Drafting various agreements, powers of attorney, security/financing documents, land deeds, and other legal documents.

Document Administration	Preparing drafts, copies, original deeds, and renvoi documents, as well as practicing the binding of legal documents.
Ethics & Professionalism	Diligence, impartiality, accountability, professional communication, and adherence to the code of ethics.
Technology	Strengthening readiness for digital-based notarial administration and services.

Table 1. Scope of the Notarial Practice Laboratory Course

Deed drafting is the core of the curriculum, but research findings indicate that instruction has moved beyond simply practicing the copying of templates. Students are trained to draft documents from scratch, understand comparisons, make references, prepare drafts and copies, and grasp the relationship between facts, legal grounds, and clauses. From a professional perspective, the shift from “following examples” to “constructing deeds based on facts” is a key indicator. Client service simulations also play a strategic role. Informants explained that students need to practice ascertaining the parties’ intentions before determining the form of the legal document and applying the law. Errors at this stage can result in a legal document whose validity does not align with the parties’ intentions. Therefore, the laboratory must position client handling and problem-solving as core competencies, not merely supporting activities.

3.3. Respondents’ Perceptions of the Course Design and Relevance of the Material

A questionnaire administered to 61 respondents revealed strong support for the basic course design. All respondents stated that the instructor explained the concepts, benefits, and objectives of the laboratory sessions; used active teaching methods; communicated in an easy-to-understand manner; and provided opportunities for discussion. All respondents also assessed the course as still relevant to the curriculum and the professional needs of notaries.

Indicators	Yes	No	Implications of the Findings
Objectives and benefits explained	61 (100,0%)	0	Respondents understood the learning objectives.
Active and effective methods	61 (100,0%)	0	The learning model was rated as participatory.
Discussion/Q&A	61 (100,0%)	0	Learning interactions were present.
Drafting exercises from scratch	56 (91,8%)	5 (8,1%)	Basic techniques were relatively strong, but not yet consistent.
Renvoi/minuta/copy/grosse	57 (93,4%)	4 (6,5%)	Administrative competencies have been extensively trained.
Relevant to the profession	61 (100,0%)	0	Professional relevance was very strong.
Office-like atmosphere	49 (80,3%)	12 (19,6%)	Simulation conditions still need to be made more authentic.
Simulations aid communication	59 (96,7%)	2 (3,2%)	Communication is the primary benefit.
Improved problem-solving skills	58 (95,0%)	3 (4,9%)	Case studies were deemed effective.
Legal principles can be applied	59 (96,7%)	2 (3,2%)	There was a transfer from norms to specific provisions.

Table 2. Respondents’ Perceptions of Course Design and Material Relevance.

A finding worthy of attention is that 40 respondents (65.5%) stated that the instructor formed groups or teams, while 21 respondents (34.4%) did not experience this. These percentages indicate that collaborative work is not yet uniform. In fact, role-playing simulations for example, as a notary, client, legal representative, or related party can enrich communication experiences and help students understand that a notary’s work takes place within a multi-party interaction. The fact that simulation conditions still do not align with the real-world conditions of a notary’s office is also a factor contributing to the ineffectiveness of laboratory practice. A total of 40 respondents (65.6%) also stated that the transition from an academic mindset to a practitioner’s mindset is a challenge. This find-

ing is significant because it shows that a positive perception of the course is not synonymous with perfect mastery of competencies. The laboratory is already relevant, but the process of transforming knowledge into professional judgment still requires more repetitive practice and a wider variety of cases.

3.4. The Importance of Laboratories for Professional Readiness

Indicators of Professional Readiness	Yes	No
Relevant to the current profession	32 (100,0%)	0
Understanding the differences between the Notary and PPAT codes of ethics	29 (90,6%)	3 (9,3%)
Understanding the work environment of a Notary/PPAT	28 (87,5%)	4 (12,5%)
More confident in explaining legal terms	31 (96,8%)	1 (3,1%)
Able to draft and adapt deed drafts	30 (93,7%)	2 (6,2%)

Table 3. The Importance of Laboratory Courses for Professional Readiness

The group of respondents who already had professional experience provided insights into the relevance of laboratory courses to the professional world. A total of 32 respondents (100%) stated that the courses were relevant to their professions. A total of 31 respondents (96.8%) felt more confident explaining legal terms to the public, and 30 respondents (93.7%) felt capable of drafting legal documents and tailoring them to the parties' wishes.

In terms of professional readiness and ethics, 30 out of 32 respondents (93.7%) stated that their ability to gather information and solve problems had improved. All respondents in this group stated that they were able to maintain a professional demeanor and authority when dealing with difficult clients and understood the steps for verifying competence and the authenticity of identities and documents. (Rusdima, 2024). A total of 28 respondents (87.5%) stated they were prepared to handle client requests that could potentially violate the code of ethics, while four respondents (12.5%) still needed more experience. These findings reinforce the argument that the laboratory serves as a safe learning environment. Students can practice handling difficult situations without immediately facing the legal consequences they would encounter in real-world practice. Mistakes can be corrected by instructors, discussed, and repeated. In experiential learning theory, such concrete experiences become meaningful when followed by reflection and conceptualization.

The importance of the laboratory also relates to risk mitigation. Notaries work in a field that demands a high degree of precision; errors in identifying parties, capacity to act, the objectivity of authority, or the drafting of deeds can lead to legal problems. Therefore, practical learning is not merely a method to make students "skilled," but a preventive mechanism to build professional habits before entering practice.

3.5. Professionalism, Legal Reasoning, and Experiential Learning

The professionalism of prospective notaries can be assessed through several indicators: mastery of legal knowledge, technical skills, reasoning ability, communication skills, ethics, attention to detail, and responsibility. The laboratory brings all these indicators together in a single activity. When a student receives a case, they must understand the facts, gather information from the client regarding their legal issues, identify the legal issues, select the applicable legal norms, formulate a solution, and then draft the solution into a document. Thus, the process is more complex than simply drafting a deed based on a template (Bakri et al., 2026).

The research findings support the experiential learning model. The concrete experience stage occurs when students conduct client service simulations or draft legal documents. Reflective observation occurs when students receive feedback and evaluate their mistakes. Abstract conceptualization occurs when these experiences are linked back to the UUJN, the Civil Code, land law, contract law, and the code of ethics. Active experimentation occurs when students apply what they have learned to new scenarios.

These four stages are important because notarial issues rarely present themselves in a form identical to the examples in textbooks. Clients present different facts, documents may be incomplete, and the parties' legal objectives may involve certain risks. Students

need to be trained not merely to find the “appropriate deed,” but to understand why a particular law or norm is applied to the deed and what the consequences of that choice are. The findings that 96.7% of respondents stated that simulations helped with communication and 95.0% stated that their problem-solving skills improved show that the benefits of the lab lie in the process, not just the product. Similarly, 96.7% stated that they understood the legal basis and were able to apply it to contract clauses. These data support the proposition that the lab can serve as a tool for integrating normative knowledge and professional skills.

3.6. Implementation Challenges

3.6.1. Curriculum and Learning Intensity

The first challenge relates to the curriculum structure and course load. Informants noted that the intensity of laboratory sessions is not always commensurate with skill requirements. Students face the reality that practical skills require repetition and additional class time. Time constraints limit students’ opportunities to correct mistakes, receive feedback, and retry the same procedures in different scenarios. This issue does not mean the curriculum lacks practical content. The Course Syllabus (RPS) already includes a variety of practical exercises and learning assessments. The problem lies more in depth and continuity. Practical training conducted in a single term with limited time risks students achieving only a basic procedural mastery. Muiru and Mwanza (2025) emphasize the importance of reviewing the legal education curriculum to ensure its content is responsive to professional needs. In the context of USU, the review could focus on mapping the competencies that must be achieved at each level.

The curriculum can be strengthened by distinguishing between basic, intermediate, and advanced competencies. Basic competencies include the structure of deeds, minutes, copies, renvois, and document verification. Intermediate competencies include client interviews, case analysis, and the selection of deed formats. Advanced competencies may involve complex cases, conflicts of interest, legal risks, ethics, and the use of technology (Mukhtarzain & S HI, 2026). A tiered structure will ensure that practical training does not become a mechanical repetition but evolves according to the level of difficulty. The finding that 65.6% of respondents had difficulty shifting from an academic mindset to a practitioner’s mindset reinforces this need. A shift in mindset takes time. Students need to be trained to make decisions under conditions of imperfect information, rather than simply answering questions based on predefined standards. Thus, the issue with the curriculum is not merely the number of credit hours, but rather the proportion and design of learning experiences. Laboratories need to be positioned as an integral part of learning outcomes, rather than as standalone practical courses lacking continuity with courses such as Deed Drafting, the Law on Notaries (UJN), civil law, land law, and other relevant courses.

3.6.2. Student Challenges and Facilities and Infrastructure

The second challenge stems from variations in student preparedness. Interview results indicate that some students have difficulty interacting with clients and ascertaining the parties’ intentions. Some also lack a deep understanding of legal fundamentals, leading them to rely on pre-existing deed templates. This situation highlights that technical skills cannot be separated from a mastery of both substantive and procedural law. In practice, legal communication plays a crucial role, as notaries must explain legal consequences to parties who may not have a legal background. Siahaan (2025) identifies language and communication as essential components of notarial practice. Therefore, simulations should place students in scenarios involving clients with diverse characteristics: lay clients, clients in a hurry, clients presenting incomplete documents, and clients requesting actions that are contrary to the law or ethics.

The third challenge is facilities and infrastructure. The study identified limitations in practice spaces, supporting facilities, and the use of technology. The fact that only 80.3% of respondents described the laboratory atmosphere as resembling a notary’s office indicates that 19.6% of respondents did not find the simulation sufficiently authentic. Facilities that are not sufficiently representative can diminish the quality of the learning experience,

particularly when students must practice client service workflows, document administration, and the use of digital systems. Digitalization must also be an integral part of laboratory development. Notarial practice is evolving alongside the use of electronic services and digital administration. Makarim (2020) discusses the relationship between the notary profession and cyber law and electronic transactions, highlighting the need for readiness to integrate electronic systems. The laboratory does not have to simulate the entire electronic system identically but can provide training based on digital workflows, document security, verification, and records management.

Limitations in facilities should be viewed as a learning issue, not merely a physical one. Providing spaces without a pedagogical design does not automatically improve competencies. Facilities must support role-playing, simulation recording, performance assessment, access to legal materials, computer equipment, and administrative training (Aimang et al., 2025). Thus, investment in facilities must align with the competencies to be developed.

3.6.3. The Impact of Obstacles on Quality and Professionalism

Implementation obstacles have direct consequences for the quality of the learning experience. First, limited time and facilities can result in students not getting enough practice. The skills of drafting documents, making referrals, verifying identities, and communicating with clients require practice (Jamalum Sinambela et al., 2024). Without repetition, students may understand the steps conceptually but may not yet have the fluency to handle new cases. Second, communication gaps can affect students' ability to conduct a legal needs assessment. If students are unable to accurately ascertain the parties' intentions, the subsequent legal analysis also risks being flawed. In notarial practice, the client intake process is not merely an administrative step; it serves as the gateway to ensuring that the legal acts to be documented in the deed align with the parties' intentions and the legal framework. Third, weak legal reasoning can lead students to rely too heavily on precedents. Such reliance becomes problematic when the facts of a case differ. Students must be able to explain the rationale for selecting clauses, the basis of authority, and legal risks. This ability constitutes a form of intellectual competence within professionalism. Fourth, a professional attitude has not always been fully developed. A total of 84.3% of respondents in the professional group stated that the demands for precision and caution in drafting legal documents create significant psychological pressure. This finding should not be interpreted solely as a weakness. Such pressure can serve as an indicator that students recognize the magnitude of their professional responsibilities. However, the educational system needs to transform this pressure into competence through practice, checklists, supervision, and feedback.

Dimensions	Challenges	Competency Risks
Technical	Limited training and facilities	Skills are not internalized through repetition
Communication	Lack of client-handling practice	Inaccurate assessment of intentions or identification of needs
Reasoning	Reliance on sample deeds	Difficulty dealing with conflicting facts
Ethics	Insufficient variety of dilemma cases	Limited readiness to handle unethical requests
Digital	Limited tools and simulations	Discrepancies with modern administrative practices

Table 4. The Impact of Obstacles on Quality and Professionalism

The ultimate impact is systemic. Suboptimal education can produce graduates who possess knowledge but are not yet fully job-ready. Because notaries are public officials, the quality of graduates' competencies is directly linked to the quality of legal services and public trust. Therefore, strengthening laboratories is an integral part of ensuring the quality of notarial education.

3.6.4. Strategies for Optimizing Notarial Practice Laboratories

Based on the research findings, optimization can be directed toward six strategies. First, competency-based curriculum integration. Each laboratory activity must be aligned with clear learning outcomes, such as client-handling skills, legal reasoning, drafting, ver-

ification, ethics, and deed administration. With this mapping, the laboratory is not evaluated solely based on the number of tasks completed, but on the competencies that are actually mastered. Second, increasing intensity and continuity. Professional skills are not developed through a single simulation. The program can develop tiered or modular laboratories, such as basic, advanced, complex case, and PPAT practice laboratories.

The tiered model is also consistent with the comparisons made in the thesis regarding educational practices at other universities, including UI and UGM. Third, the development of real-case simulation and role-play methods. Students can be given complete scenarios that include identities, documents, transaction objectives, potential conflicts, and information limitations. Students then take on the roles of notaries and relevant parties. Assessment focuses not only on the final deed but also on the interview process, accuracy in identifying issues, legal basis, communication, and ethical compliance. Fourth, performance-based evaluation. Assessment can utilize a rubric that measures legal accuracy, deed structure, administrative precision, communication skills, reasoning, ethics, and risk mitigation. A rubric will provide more useful feedback than simply an assignment grade.

Simulation recordings can also be used for student reflection, provided they comply with privacy and academic governance requirements. Fifth, the use of technology. The laboratory can provide a database of legal materials, controlled document templates, electronic administration simulations, document management exercises, and electronic transaction scenarios. The goal is not to replace legal education with technology, but rather to equip students to understand the relationship between technology, legal validity, data security, and professional responsibility. Sixth, collaboration with notary offices and professional organizations. Practitioners can be involved as.

3.7. Discussion

The research findings show that the USU Notarial Practice Laboratory has a sufficiently strong foundation for experience-based learning. Respondents rated the relevance of the course at 100%, while the indicators for problem-solving, communication, and the application of legal principles were above 95%. These data indicate a good alignment between the instructional design and competency requirements. However, these positive results should not be interpreted to mean that all professional competencies have been achieved. Theoretically, the laboratory operates through experiential learning mechanisms. Concrete experiences serve as the starting point, but the educational value depends on reflection and feedback. If students merely complete deed assignments without discussing the rationale for legal application, errors, and alternative solutions, learning risks becoming merely procedural. Therefore, instructors need to conclude each simulation with a debriefing: what are the key facts, what are the legal issues, which legal norms were applied, why was a particular form of legal document chosen, what risks were identified, and how can actions be improved. The finding that 65.6% of respondents still find the transition to a practitioner's mindset difficult is the most important indicator for curriculum development. This difficulty indicates a gap between academic knowledge and professional judgment.

In professional education, judgment cannot be fully imparted through lectures alone. It develops through exposure to case studies, decision-making, feedback, and repetition. Thus, improving the quality of clinical training is best achieved by enriching students' experiences rather than simply adding more theoretical material. From a professionalism perspective, clinical training must also strengthen the ethical dimension. Students need to be trained to handle inappropriate client requests, conflicts of interest, pressure to expedite processes, incomplete documentation, and situations requiring refusal. Preparedness to face these dilemmas is just as important as the ability to draft legal documents. A code of ethics must serve as a framework for decision-making, not merely material to be memorized. This article also demonstrates that laboratory development should adopt an outcome-based approach. The learning outcome is not "students have participated in a simulation," but rather "students are able to conduct legal interviews, identify issues, select legal grounds, draft legal documents, explain the consequences to clients, and justify their decisions ethically".

This shift in orientation will make the laboratory more measurable and auditable within the higher education quality assurance system. Thus, the main contribution of this research is to demonstrate that practical laboratories should be positioned as ecosystems for competency development, rather than merely as drafting spaces. Such an ecosystem requires a tiered curriculum, authentic case studies, practitioners, technology, performance assessments, and feedback. This model is more consistent with the nature of notarial education as an education that combines knowledge, skills, and professional ethics.

4. Conclusions

The Notarial Practice Laboratory in the Master's Program in Notarial Studies at the USU Faculty of Law has a fairly comprehensive scope. The course material covers client service, legal analysis and reasoning, the drafting of various deeds, original documents, and copies, *renvoi*, the application of substantive and procedural law, as well as the development of ethics and professionalism. The questionnaire results show a very positive perception of the course's relevance and the benefits of simulations, particularly in communication, problem-solving, and the application of legal principles. The laboratory's significance lies in its ability to bridge the gap between "das sollen" and "das sein." Students not only learn what the law prescribes but also practice applying it to facts and interactions that resemble real-world practice. This type of learning supports experiential learning by providing concrete experiences, reflection, conceptualization, and active experimentation. The laboratory also serves as a risk-mitigation space, as students can make mistakes and correct them before facing real-world practice. Nevertheless, implementation has not yet been optimal. Major obstacles include limited practical training, heavy course loads, variations in students' abilities in legal communication and reasoning, and limited resources and technology. The result is a persistent gap between theoretical knowledge and practical skills. Therefore, students' positive perceptions must be accompanied by more objective competency assessments. The practical implications of this research highlight the need to develop competency-based laboratories that incorporate tiered practical training, real-case simulations, role-playing, rubric-based evaluations, the use of technology, and the involvement of practitioners. The study program also needs to integrate the Notarial Practice Laboratory with courses on Deed Drafting Techniques, the Notary Law (UUJN), civil law, land law, and ethics so that the learning experience is not fragmented. The limitations of this study should be noted. The questionnaire data are based on perceptions and were analyzed descriptively; therefore, this study cannot statistically prove a causal relationship. Future research could employ a mixed-methods design, a pretest-posttest design, an objective structured professional assessment, or a longitudinal study to measure changes in competencies more objectively. In addition, a comparative study of notarial master's programs can be used to identify the most effective laboratory model. However, caution is needed in interpreting the results. The data represent respondents' perceptions, not objective measures of competence through pretest-posttest assessments or performance evaluations. Therefore, the appropriate conclusion is that laboratories are perceived to contribute to readiness and competence, not that laboratories have been causally proven to enhance professionalism. This distinction is important to maintain methodological rigor and prevent overgeneralization.

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