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Next-Generation Succession Intention in Family Businesses: The Roles of Passion, Self-Efficacy, And Affective Commitment

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ABSTRACT

Family businesses significantly contribute to economic growth, yet ensuring intergenerational survival remains a prominent challenge. This study investigates the psychological mechanisms driving next-generation succession intention in family businesses, specifically examining the parallel mediating roles of entrepreneurial self-efficacy and affective commitment in the relationship between entrepreneurial passion and succession intention. Employing a quantitative explanatory design, data were collected through an online survey from 203 university students with family business backgrounds across Indonesia, selected via purposive sampling. The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) via SmartPLS 4. The empirical results demonstrate that entrepreneurial passion positively and significantly enhances next-generation succession intention. Furthermore, the findings confirm that both entrepreneurial self-efficacy (the cognitive pathway) and affective commitment (the emotional pathway) successfully act as parallel mediators in this relationship. Because the direct effect of entrepreneurial passion on succession intention remains significant when both mediators are included, the model constitutes partial rather than full mediation. This study contributes to the family business literature by integrating Social Cognitive Theory and Socioemotional Wealth perspectives, highlighting that incumbent generations must actively cultivate successors' internal passion, practical confidence, and emotional attachment rather than relying on forced obligations.

Keywords: *Family Business, Next-Generation Succession, Succession Intention, Entrepreneurial Passion, Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy, Affective Commitment*

JEL Classification: *G21; G32; G12; O53*

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1. Introduction

Family businesses serve as the backbone of the global economy, driving innovation, wealth creation, and long-term economic stability. Aligning with the contemporary academic discourse on dynamic business environments and economic resilience, this phenomenon is particularly evident in developing economies such as Indonesia, where family-owned enterprises contribute significantly to national employment rates and overall economic development (Negara & Padmalia, 2026). Despite their massive economic footprint, family businesses are notoriously vulnerable to intergenerational transitions. The survival rate of family firms across multiple generations remains a major global challenge, with a significant majority failing to survive past the founder's generation, and even fewer successfully transitioning to the third generation (PwC, 2023). Consequently, sustainable business continuity depends heavily on successful succession management, widely recognized as the most critical and complex phase in the family business lifecycle.

At the heart of a successful succession process is the next generation's willingness, readiness, and proactive desire to assume leadership roles. Historically, succession has often been viewed as a forced obligation, where children take over the firm purely out of familial duty or a lack of alternative career options. However, Sharma and Irving (2005) emphasized that succession intention, rooted in genuine psychological alignment, is critical to family firm survival. Attracting younger generations requires more than just the promise of financial inheritance; it demands a deep-seated interest in the business ecosystem itself (Negara & Padmalia, 2026). In the Indonesian context, understanding succession intention among younger demographics, such as university students who represent a pool of potential future successors, is critically important for navigating these generational transitions amid economic and digital disruption (Pribadi & Agustiawan, 2021).

While the importance of succession intention is well-established, the existing literature has predominantly situated the problem within external and family-level paradigms. Recent studies have extensively explored how incumbent-driven factors and familial environments shape the next generation's career choices. For instance, Lyons et al. (2024) highlighted the vital role of parental emotional support in fostering succession intentions, while Liu et al. (2024) demonstrated how specific parenting styles directly influence the likelihood of a child taking over the family firm. Although these external factors provide valuable insights, focusing solely on the family environment leaves a critical gap in understanding the internal, intrinsic psychological drivers that motivate the next generation from within. To ensure long-term sustainability, succession must transition from an external expectation to an internal calling.

Therefore, there is a critical need to investigate entrepreneurial passion as a foundational internal psychological driver. Entrepreneurial passion is an intense positive emotion and psychological factor that profoundly motivates individuals to engage in entrepreneurial activities. Fellnhofer (2017) highlighted its pivotal role in shaping entrepreneurial behavior, fostering resilience, and guiding complex decision-making processes. In the highly emotionally charged context of family businesses, entrepreneurial passion may serve as the catalyst that encourages the next generation to view succession as a meaningful, identity-aligning career choice rather than a burdensome obligation. When successors possess a genuine passion for entrepreneurship, their intention to continue the family business is significantly strengthened.

However, the mechanism through which entrepreneurial passion translates into definitive succession intention is not merely a direct emotional leap; it operates through complex cognitive and emotional pathways. Cognitively, passion provides the energetic foundation required to strengthen entrepreneurial self-efficacy, defined as an individual's confidence in their capability to execute entrepreneurial tasks and achieve business-related goals (Li et al., 2020). Higher entrepreneurial self-efficacy, in turn, equips the next generation with the mental readiness and perceived competence to take over and aggressively develop the family business (Alshibani & Alshebami, 2025). Emotionally, passion fosters a deep sense of belonging and attachment to the family firm, which is reflected in affective commitment. This emotional bond ties the successor to the firm through love and loyalty, which can further strengthen their succession intention (Negara & Padmalia, 2026).

Despite the acknowledged theoretical importance of these variables, a notable research gap remains prevalent in the family business literature. Previous research has examined the roles of entrepreneurial self-efficacy and affective commitment in explaining next-generation succession intention, including their mediating roles in the relationship between parental emotional support and succession intention (Lyons et al., 2024). However, limited empirical research has positioned entrepreneurial passion as the primary antecedent of these cognitive and emotional mechanisms in explaining next-generation succession intention. Addressing this gap, this study proposes a parallel mediation model to examine whether the "head" (entrepreneurial self-efficacy) and the "heart" (affective commitment) mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial passion and next-generation succession intention. By doing so, this research aims to provide a more holistic psychological framework that explains how passionate successors are formed, ultimately offering actionable insights for family businesses seeking sustainable intergenerational continuity.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Social Cognitive Theory

This study employs Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) as the theoretical foundation for explaining the role of entrepreneurial self-efficacy in family business succession. SCT posits that human behavior is not driven by inner psychological forces or environmental stimuli alone. Instead, it is shaped by a dynamic and continuous interaction among personal factors, environmental influences, and behaviors, a concept known as triadic reciprocal determinism(Bandura, 1986). Within this theoretical lens, personal factors encompass an individual's cognitive and affective states, which play a central role in determining their career choices, motivations, and subsequent actions.

A cornerstone of the Social Cognitive Theory is the concept of self-efficacy, originally conceptualized as an individual's conviction that they can successfully execute the behavior required to produce desired outcomes (Bandura, 1977). Self-efficacy is a central cognitive mechanism that regulates human motivation and action. According to SCT, individuals are much more likely to engage in challenging behaviors when they strongly believe in their competencies. People with high self-efficacy view difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered rather than threats to be avoided, fostering intrinsic interest and deep engagement in complex activities.

In the context of family business succession, Social Cognitive Theory provides an appropriate theoretical foundation for explaining the cognitive pathway through which entrepreneurial passion enhances entrepreneurial self-efficacy, which subsequently strengthens next-generation succession intention. According to Social Cognitive Theory, emotional arousal and other positive affective states constitute important sources of efficacy information that strengthen individuals' beliefs in their capabilities (Bandura, 1977). In the entrepreneurship context, entrepreneurial passion represents a positive psychological state that enhances entrepreneurial self-efficacy by increasing confidence in performing entrepreneurial tasks (Li et al., 2020). Consequently, individuals with higher entrepreneurial self-efficacy are more likely to develop stronger next-generation succession intentions (Alshibani & Alshebami, 2025). Accordingly, entrepreneurial self-efficacy is expected to function as a cognitive mechanism through which entrepreneurial passion influences next-generation succession intention. Therefore, SCT provides an appropriate theoretical basis for explaining the mediating role of entrepreneurial self-efficacy in the relationship between entrepreneurial passion and next-generation succession intention.

2.2. Entrepreneurial Passion

Entrepreneurial passion is widely recognized as a fundamental psychological driver of entrepreneurial action, persistence, and overall business success. Contemporary literature defines entrepreneurial passion as consciously accessible, intense positive feelings individuals experience when engaging in entrepreneurial activities that are profoundly meaningful and salient to their self-identity (Bouhalleb & Haddoud, 2024; Li et al., 2020). This intense emotional state goes far beyond mere intrinsic interest or temporary motivation; it acts as a powerful psychological catalyst that fuels resilience and goal-directed behavior, especially when individuals must navigate complex business challenges (Fellnhofer, 2017). Passionate individuals are inherently energized by identifying opportunities, creating innovations, and building enterprises, which makes them far more willing to invest substantial time, cognitive effort, and emotional capital in their entrepreneurial endeavors.

In the context of family businesses, entrepreneurial passion serves as an indispensable psychological resource that encourages next-generation family members to participate in the firm's continuity actively. The younger generation often perceives succession as a heavy burden, a restrictive career path, or a forced obligation imposed by incumbent parents. However, when potential successors possess high entrepreneurial passion, this restrictive paradigm shifts entirely. A strong entrepreneurial drive encourages next-generation members to view succession not as a rigid duty, but as a meaningful, personally rewarding career choice that aligns with their entrepreneurial aspirations. Conversely, a distinct lack of entrepreneurial passion severely reduces the likelihood that potential successors will proactively prepare themselves for future leadership, regardless of the financial incentives offered by the family firm.

Furthermore, recent empirical studies suggest that entrepreneurial passion acts as an energetic engine that triggers subsequent psychological mechanisms. Li et al. (2020) demonstrated that entrepreneurial passion not only stimulates initial entrepreneurial activities but also strengthens individuals' cognitive confidence in performing complex managerial tasks, thereby directly building entrepreneurial self-efficacy. At the same time, this positive emotional arousal is vital for fostering a deep-seated sense of belonging and affective commitment to the family legacy. Accordingly, entrepreneurial passion is conceptualized in this study as the central psychological antecedent that intrinsically motivates next-generation family members, serving as the foundational catalyst that influences their entrepreneurial self-efficacy, affective commitment, and ultimately, their next-generation succession intention.

2.3. Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy

Rooted in Bandura's (1977) concept of self-efficacy within Social Cognitive Theory, entrepreneurial self-efficacy is the domain-specific application of cognitive belief in entrepreneurship. It is defined as an individual's belief and confidence in their capability to successfully perform entrepreneurial tasks, mobilize necessary resources, and overcome business challenges (Li et al., 2020; Newman et al., 2019). Unlike general self-confidence, entrepreneurial self-efficacy is a task-specific cognitive evaluation that plays a pivotal role in shaping entrepreneurial motivation, persistence, and decision-making.

In the context of family business succession, entrepreneurial self-efficacy reflects the cognitive readiness of next-generation family members to assume leadership responsibilities. Leadership transitions in a family firm require managerial competence and an entrepreneurial mindset to navigate future business challenges. Consequently, potential successors must believe in their capability to sustain, innovate, and develop the family business. Alshibani and Alshebami (2025) emphasized that individuals with higher entrepreneurial self-efficacy are more likely to perceive succession challenges as manageable and demonstrate stronger intentions to continue the family business. Accordingly, this study conceptualizes entrepreneurial self-efficacy as a key cognitive resource that reflects next-generation family members' confidence in their ability to successfully manage, develop, and sustain the family business.

2.4. Affective Commitment

Drawing upon the seminal work of Allen and Meyer (1990), organizational commitment is a multidimensional construct, with affective commitment representing its emotional component. Affective commitment is defined as an individual's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. According to Allen and Meyer (1990), this emotional bond is deeply rooted in positive psychological experiences and value congruence between the individual and the organization. Individuals with strong affective commitment dedicate themselves to an organization because they genuinely want to, rather than because they need to (continuance commitment) or feel obligated to do so (normative commitment).

In the context of family businesses, affective commitment takes on profound significance because of the unique intertwining of family dynamics, socioemotional wealth, and business operations. It reflects the next generation's emotional attachment, sense of belonging, and identification with the family business (Negara & Padmalia, 2026). When potential successors possess a high degree of affective commitment, they view the family business not merely as an economic entity, but as a central part of their personal identity and familial heritage. Negara and Padmalia (2026) highlighted that this emotional connection significantly enhances the next generation's willingness and intention to pursue family business succession.
Accordingly, this study conceptualizes affective commitment as a key emotional resource that reflects next-generation family members' emotional attachment, sense of belonging, and identification with the family business. Strong affective commitment encourages successors to willingly contribute to the continuity and long-term sustainability of the family business.

2.5. Next-Generation Succession Intention

Next-generation succession intention is widely regarded as a critical prerequisite for the successful intergenerational transition and long-term sustainability of family businesses. Drawing on the foundational perspectives of Sharma and Irving (2005), succession intention represents the conscious willingness and deliberate desire of next-generation family members to pursue a career within the family business and eventually assume leadership responsibilities. Rather than being a passive acceptance of family expectations, succession intention reflects an individual's voluntary commitment to continue and develop the family business.

In the context of family businesses, succession intention extends beyond the willingness to inherit ownership. It reflects a genuine commitment to preserving the family legacy while ensuring the business's continuity and future development. Individuals with strong succession intention are more likely to prepare themselves for future leadership roles, actively participate in business activities, and contribute to the long-term sustainability of the family firm (Negara & Padmalia, 2026; Sharma & Irving, 2005).

Accordingly, this study conceptualizes next-generation succession intention as the behavioral intention of next-generation family members to willingly assume leadership responsibilities and continue the family business across generations. Building on these conceptual foundations, the research model positions entrepreneurial self-efficacy and affective commitment as parallel mediators of the relationship between entrepreneurial passion and next-generation succession intention, as illustrated in Figure 1.

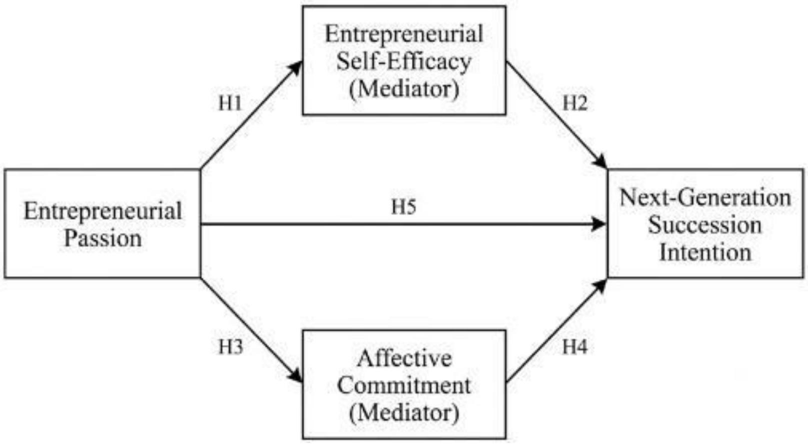

Figure 1. Research Model

2.6. The Effect of Entrepreneurial Passion on Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy

According to the foundational principles of Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1977), an individual's self-efficacy is not static; it is actively shaped by various sources of information, with emotional and physiological states playing a critical role. In the entrepreneurial domain, entrepreneurial passion operates as a profound psychological resource that energizes individuals and triggers positive emotional arousal. When individuals experience intense passion for business activities, this enthusiasm acts as a psychological buffer against anxiety and fear of failure, directly strengthening their belief in their ability to perform entrepreneurial tasks successfully. Bouhalleb and Haddoud (2024) highlighted the intertwined nature of passion and self-efficacy, noting that passionate individuals inherently possess a proactive mindset that drives them to learn, adapt, and continuously build their managerial capabilities.

In the specific context of family business succession, this relationship becomes even more vital. Next-generation family members often face complex managerial demands, high uncertainty, and heavy expectations from incumbent leaders, which can be daunting. However, when a genuine passion for the business drives successors, they are more likely to view these high-stakes challenges as achievable goals rather than insurmountable threats. Li et al. (2020) demonstrated that entrepreneurial passion significantly fosters entrepreneurial self-efficacy by motivating individuals to engage deeply in skill acquisition and experiential learning. Recent empirical evidence strongly supports this linkage; for instance, Neneh (2022) found that entrepreneurial passion significantly enhances entrepreneurial self-efficacy among younger student demographics, acting as a crucial cognitive bridge toward concrete entrepreneurial intentions. Therefore, this intense psychological drive provides potential successors with the necessary cognitive readiness and confidence to navigate the uncertainties of leading a family firm.

H1: Entrepreneurial passion has a positive effect on entrepreneurial self-efficacy

2.7. The Effect of Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy on Next-Generation Succession Intention

Leadership transitions within a family business are inherently fraught with uncertainty, complex managerial demands, and the immense psychological pressure of preserving the family's legacy and socioemotional wealth. Following the foundational logic of Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1977), individuals equipped with high self-efficacy tend to perceive challenging and ambiguous situations as tasks to be mastered rather than intimidating threats to be avoided. In the context of succession, taking over the family firm requires a diverse set of entrepreneurial skills, from strategic decision-making to navigating internal family dynamics. Next-generation members who possess strong entrepreneurial self-efficacy firmly believe in their cognitive readiness and practical competence to manage, innovate, and sustain the family firm. This elevated confidence significantly reduces the fear of failure, transforming the daunting prospect of succession into an achievable and attractive career milestone.

Consequently, this cognitive conviction naturally translates into a stronger behavioral intention to take over the family business. Empirical literature consistently supports the critical role of self-efficacy in shaping succession trajectories. For instance, Alshibani and Alshebami (2025) found that successors who strongly believe in their entrepreneurial capabilities show a much stronger and more proactive intention to continue the family legacy. Basco and Gómez González further reinforced this, showing in an extensive cross-country analysis that management and entrepreneurial self-efficacy are key antecedents that directly increase the next generation's succession intentions. Furthermore, Chan et al. (2020) corroborated this mechanism by showing that firm-specific self-efficacy is an indispensable psychological component that drives multi-generational successors to commit to the firm's future willingly. Therefore, when next-generation members are confident in their ability to execute entrepreneurial tasks, their hesitation diminishes, and their succession intentions solidify.
H2: Entrepreneurial self-efficacy has a positive effect on next-generation succession intention

2.8. The Effect of Entrepreneurial Passion on Affective Commitment

Beyond cognitive confidence, entrepreneurial passion is fundamentally an emotional construct that stimulates a profound psychological bond between an individual and their entrepreneurial endeavors. According to Fellnhofer (2017), passionate individuals are inherently more likely to develop intense positive feelings toward business activities, naturally aligning their personal self-identity with their professional roles. This deep-seated emotional arousal means that their engagement is not transactional; rather, it is driven by genuine affection and an intrinsic desire to nurture the business entity. In organizational psychology, this strong emotional connection and identification with an organization's goals directly translate into affective commitment.

In family businesses, this relationship is uniquely amplified by socioemotional wealth and familial heritage. When next-generation members experience entrepreneurial passion, this positive psychological state fosters a much stronger sense of belonging, pride, and emotional attachment to the family business (Sharma & Irving, 2005). Rather than viewing the family firm merely as an inherited financial asset or a fallback career option, passionate successors develop a genuine emotional loyalty to the firm's legacy. As Saputra et al. (2023) highlighted in the Indonesian context, positive psychological integration and autonomy in joining the family firm significantly solidify the successor's affective commitment. Therefore, entrepreneurial passion is a critical antecedent that builds the emotional foundation necessary for a successor to care for the family business truly.

H3: Entrepreneurial passion has a positive effect on affective commitment

2.9. The **Effect Of Affective Commitment On Next-Generation Succession Intention**

Affective commitment is widely recognized as the most potent and desirable form of organizational commitment. Drawing upon the foundational framework of Allen and Meyer (1990), affective commitment refers to an individual's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. Unlike normative commitment (driven by a sense of obligation) or continuance commitment (driven by the perceived costs of leaving), individuals with high affective commitment choose to remain in the organization simply because they genuinely want to. In family businesses, an affective basis of commitment ensures that the successor's participation is voluntary, enthusiastic, and deeply rooted in loyalty to the family's socioemotional wealth (Sharma & Irving, 2005).

Consequently, this emotional resource significantly solidifies the conscious desire to assume leadership roles. When potential successors possess a high degree of affective commitment, they view the long-term survival of the family business as a personal mission rather than a mere career trajectory. Recent empirical evidence profoundly supports this relationship. Gimenez-Jimenez et al. (2021) demonstrated, utilizing a massive global sample, that intergenerational solidarity and affective commitment function as critical mechanisms that directly drive succession intentions. Similarly, in the context of emerging economies, Negara and Padmalia (2026) emphasized that emotional alignment and affective attachment significantly enhance the next generation's willingness to pursue family business succession. Thus, a strong emotional bond directly translates into a higher intention to take over the firm.

H4: Affective commitment has a positive effect on next-generation succession intention

2.10. The Direct Effect of Entrepreneurial Passion on Next-Generation Succession Intention

While cognitive and emotional mechanisms (self-efficacy and affective commitment) play crucial mediating roles, entrepreneurial passion is also positioned as a robust intrinsic motivator that can directly drive behavior. Passionate individuals naturally possess a relentless internal desire to engage in entrepreneurial environments simply because the activities themselves bring them intense joy, fulfillment, and meaning (Fellnhofer, 2017). This inherent enthusiasm acts as an internal engine that directly shapes an individual's career trajectory. Li et al. (2020) suggested that entrepreneurial passion directly motivates individuals to engage in business venturing and significantly strengthens their behavioral intention to pursue long-term entrepreneurial goals, bypassing the need for external incentives.

In the context of family businesses, this strong entrepreneurial drive is expected to directly increase next-generation members' willingness to continue and lead the family enterprise. Modern potential successors, particularly university students, often face many attractive external career options (Pribadi & Agustiawan, 2021). For these individuals to choose the family business, the succession process must be viewed not as a burdensome duty, but as a naturally rewarding and exciting path. Entrepreneurial passion provides this exact intrinsic pull. Passionate next-generation members are naturally drawn to the family business because it provides an immediate platform to channel their entrepreneurial energy, directly increasing their behavioral intention to take over the firm.

H5: Entrepreneurial passion has a positive effect on next-generation succession intention.

2.11. The Parallel Mediating Roles of Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy and Affective Commitment

While entrepreneurial passion provides the initial psychological spark, its translation into the ultimate behavioral outcome of succession intention often requires specific bridging mechanisms. This study proposes a comprehensive parallel mediation model encompassing both a cognitive pathway (the "head") and an emotional pathway (the "heart"). On the cognitive path, entrepreneurial passion enhances successors' entrepreneurial self-efficacy by strengthening their practical confidence in performing complex entrepreneurial tasks (Li et al., 2020), which subsequently drives their concrete intention to take over the firm (Alshibani & Alshebami, 2025). Simultaneously, on the emotional path, entrepreneurial passion cultivates affective commitment, nurturing a deep emotional attachment to the family firm that reinforces the successors' voluntary willingness to assume leadership (Negara & Padmalia, 2026).

Recent prominent studies in the family business literature strongly support these dual mediating pathways. For instance, Lyons et al. (2024) explicitly validated that both entrepreneurial self-efficacy and affective commitment simultaneously act as critical parallel mediators in shaping next-generation succession intentions. Furthermore, Chan et al. (2020) corroborated that both firm-specific self-efficacy and emotional commitment to the family firm are indispensable psychological components for multi-generational continuity. By integrating these parallel pathways, this study argues that entrepreneurial passion exerts its strongest influence on succession intention indirectly by developing both successors' cognitive readiness and emotional loyalty.

H6: Entrepreneurial self-efficacy mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial passion and next-generation succession intention.

H7: Affective commitment mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial passion and next-generation succession intention

3. Method

3.1. Research Design, Population, and Sample

This study employs a quantitative research design with an explanatory approach to test the formulated hypotheses and examine the relationships among the variables (Sekaran & Bougie, 2019). The target population comprises next-generation family members, specifically university students from family business backgrounds in Indonesia. The study employed purposive sampling to select respondents who met the predefined criteria (Sugiyono, 2019), namely university students from family business backgrounds who are considered potential future successors. The study collected and used 203 valid responses for the final data analysis.

University students from business-owning families are treated as an appropriate proxy population for three reasons. First, the dependent construct is succession intention rather than succession behavior; intention formation is most salient during late adolescence and early adulthood, when career commitments are still being negotiated and are therefore observable before they are constrained by employment in the firm. Second, sampling students rather than incumbent successors avoids the survivorship bias inherent in firm-based samples, which by construction exclude next-generation members who have already declined succession—precisely the variance this study seeks to explain. Third, this design follows established practice in the succession-intention literature, where student samples from family business backgrounds have been used to model the psychological antecedents of succession (Gimenez-Jimenez et al., 2021; Li et al., 2020; Pribadi & Agustiawan, 2021). Accordingly, the findings should be interpreted as evidence on the formation of succession intention among potential successors, and not as direct evidence of realized succession behavior.

3.2. Demographic Profile of Respondents

The study used primary data from 203 active university students whose parents own and operate a family business. The respondents were analyzed based on four demographic characteristics: gender, age, geographical distribution, and academic background. In terms of gender, the sample is predominantly female, comprising 161 respondents (79.31%), while male respondents account for 42 individuals (20.69%). Regarding age distribution, most participants are between 20–22 years old (89.66%), indicating a critical phase when individuals begin to consider their future career paths seriously.

Table 1. Demographic Data: Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Female	161	79,31%
Male	42	20,69%
Total	203	100%

Table 2. Demographic Data: Age Group

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
17–19 years old	21	10,34%
20–22 years old	182	89,66%
Total	203	100%

Source: authors' compilation.

Geographically, the highest participation originated from universities located in Java (69.95%), followed by respondents from Sumatra (22.17%), Sulawesi (5.42%), and Bali & Nusa Tenggara (2.46%). Academically, more than half of the respondents (53.20%) are enrolled in Economics and Business faculties, while the rest come from Social Sciences, Politics, Administration, Engineering, and other disciplines (46.80%).

Table 3. Demographic Data: University Origin

Region / Island	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Java (e.g., UI, UGM, UPH, ITB, etc.)	142	69.95%
Sumatra (e.g., UIB, UNAND, UNSRI, etc.)	45	22.17%
Sulawesi (e.g., UNHAS, UNSRAT)	11	5.42%
Bali & Nusa Tenggara (e.g., UNUD)	5	2.46%

Total	203	100%

Source: authors' compilation

Table 4. Demographic Data: Faculty

Faculty / Academic Discipline	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Economics and Business (FEB)	108	53.20%
Social Sciences, Politics, Administration, and Communication	32	15.76%
Other Academic Discipline (Education, Law, Psychology, Engineering, Tourism, etc.)	63	31.04%
Total	203	100%

Source: IBM SPSS Statistics 27, 2026

3.3. Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix

To provide a comprehensive overview of the constructs analyzed, Table 5 presents descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, and internal consistency [Cronbach's alpha]) and the correlation matrix for all latent variables.

Table 5. Correlation Matrix and Descriptive Statistics

Construct	Mean	SD	Cronbach's Alpha	1	2	3	4
1. Affective Commitment	3.849	0.892	0.929	1			
2. Entrepreneurial Passion	3.712	1.03	0.933	0.571	1		
3. Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy	3.776	0.906	0.932	0.701	0.673	1	
4. Next-Generation Succession Intention	3.819	0.835	0.94	0.761	0.731	0.843	1

Source: IBM SPSS Statistics 27, 2026

The descriptive statistics reveal insightful preliminary patterns regarding the next generation's psychological states. The mean scores for Entrepreneurial Passion, Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy, Affective Commitment, and Next-Generation Succession Intention show a moderately high baseline, indicating that respondents, on average, have a foundational level of enthusiasm and emotional attachment to their respective family businesses. The standard deviations across all constructs are relatively consistent, reflecting a normal dispersion of responses among the university student sample.

Moreover, the correlation matrix provides robust initial support for the hypothesized relationships. Entrepreneurial Passion shows a strong, highly significant positive correlation with both Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy and Affective Commitment, aligning with the premise that passion serves as an energetic catalyst for both cognitive and emotional resources. Importantly, all independent and mediating variables show significant positive correlations with Next-Generation Succession Intention. The correlation coefficients among the independent variables remain within acceptable thresholds, indicating that the constructs are sufficiently distinct and that severe multicollinearity is unlikely to distort the subsequent structural equation modeling analysis.

3.4. Data Collection and Measurement

Data were collected primarily through a self-administered online questionnaire distributed to the targeted respondents. All constructs in the conceptual model were measured using multi-item scales adapted from established prior studies to ensure validity and reliability. The items were assessed using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Entrepreneurial Passion (EP): Measured using five items adapted from Nguyen and Nguyen (2024)focusing on the intense positive feelings towards entrepreneurial activities. Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (ESE): Assessed using four items adapted from Li et al. (2020)Evaluating the respondents' confidence in their capability to execute entrepreneurial tasks. Affective Commitment (AC): Measured using four items adapted from Negara and Padmalia (2026), based on the foundational work of Allen and Meyer (1990), capturing the emotional attachment and identification with the family business. Next-Generation Succession Intention (NSI): Evaluated using six items adapted from Alshibani and Alshebami (2025)assessing the proactive desire and willingness to take over the family firm.

Ethical Considerations. The study involved no more than minimal risk to participants and was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki and the research ethics guidelines of the authors' institution. The research protocol and questionnaire were reviewed and approved by the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Pelita Harapan, prior to data collection. The first page of the online questionnaire presented an informed-consent statement describing the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, the right to withdraw at any point without consequence, and the anonymous and confidential treatment of responses; participants proceeded to the survey items only after providing explicit consent. No personally identifying information was collected, and the data were used solely for the purposes of academic research.

3.5. Data Analysis Technique

To evaluate the proposed parallel mediation model, this study used Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4. PLS-SEM was deliberately chosen over Covariance-Based SEM (CB-SEM) for several strategic methodological reasons. According to Hair et al. (2022), PLS-SEM is highly superior for evaluating complex structural models that incorporate multiple indirect relationships, such as the parallel mediation pathways analyzed in this study. Furthermore, this research is primarily predictive, aiming to identify the key psychological drivers of succession intention, which aligns well with the predictive orientation of the PLS algorithm. Additionally, PLS-SEM is highly robust and does not require the strict assumption of multivariate normality, making it ideal for analyzing behavioral and psychological survey data in social sciences (Hair et al., 2022). The data analysis process was systematically conducted in two main stages: (1) the evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) to assess indicator reliability, internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity; and (2) the evaluation of the structural model (inner model) to test the significance of the formulated hypotheses and determine the explanatory and predictive power of the model.

Following the reporting standards recommended by Hair et al. (2022), the significance of the path coefficients and of the specific indirect effects was assessed using a nonparametric bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 subsamples drawn with replacement, applying the bias-corrected and accelerated (BCa) method and two-tailed significance tests at the 5% level. Bootstrap confidence intervals were computed at the 95% level, and no sign-change option was applied. Mediation was evaluated using the Zhao, Lynch, and Chen (2010) decision framework, in which the significance of the indirect effect is examined first, and the pattern of the direct effect is then used to classify the mediation as partial or full.

3.6. Research Instruments and Analytical Software

Data collection and analysis were carried out using standard research tools. The questionnaire was administered online, responses were screened and coded in a spreadsheet before analysis, demographic and descriptive statistics were computed separately, and the measurement and structural models were estimated in dedicated PLS-SEM software. Table 6 summarises each tool and its specific function in this study.

4. Findings

4.1. Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)

The measurement model was evaluated to assess construct reliability and validity based on established guidelines (Hair et al., 2022). Indicator reliability was confirmed, as all outer loadings ranged from 0.849 to 0.931, well above the recommended 0.70 threshold. Internal consistency was firmly established; both Cronbach's Alpha (0.929–0.940) and Composite Reliability (0.949–0.953) values exceeded the 0.70 minimum requirement. Furthermore, convergent validity was achieved, as the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for all constructs ranged from 0.771 to 0.831, surpassing the 0.50 threshold and indicating that the constructs explain more than half of the variance of their indicators. (Hair et al., 2022).

Discriminant validity was rigorously examined using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) criteria, which are currently recognized as a more sensitive and reliable method for detecting discriminant validity issues than the traditional Fornell-Larcker criterion. Following the advanced methodological guidelines by Roemer et al. (2021), the HTMT values were assessed alongside their corresponding confidence intervals using a bootstrapping procedure. Although one HTMT value between closely related constructs reached 0.900, strict discriminant validity was maintained because the 95% confidence intervals did not encompass 1.0. This statistically proves that, despite a strong correlation, the constructs are conceptually distinct and independently measure different psychological traits. The complete results of the measurement model evaluation, confirming robust reliability and validity, are presented in the tables below.

Table 6. Measurement Model Evaluation

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (rho_c)	AVE
Affective Commitment	AC1	0,897	0,929	0,950	0,825
	AC2	0,920			
	AC3	0,901			
	AC4	0,915			
Entrepreneurial Passion	EP1	0,875	0,933	0,949	0,790
	EP2	0,858			
	EP3	0,912			
	EP4	0,885			
	EP5	0,913			
Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy	ESE1	0,894	0,932	0,952	0,831
	ESE2	0,894			
	ESE3	0,926			
	ESE4	0,931			
Next-Generation Succession Intention	NGSI1	0,849	0,940	0,953	0,771
	NGSI2	0,873			
	NGSI3	0,907			
	NGSI4	0,907			
	NGSI5	0,858			
	NGSI6	0,872			

Source: SmartPLS 4, 2026

4.2. Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

Prior to evaluating the structural relationships, a collinearity test was conducted by examining the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values. The ideal VIF value should be less than 3 to ensure the absence of multicollinearity among the exogenous constructs. (Hair et al., 2022). The analysis revealed that all VIF values were well below the threshold: the VIF for Affective Commitment (AC) on Next-Generation Succession Intention (NGSI) is 2.037, Entrepreneurial Passion (EP) on NGSI is 1.898, and Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (ESE) on NGSI is 2.511. Furthermore, the VIF values for EP on AC and EP on ESE are both 1.000. Thus, collinearity is not a critical issue in this structural model.

The model's explanatory power was evaluated using the coefficient of determination (R-squared), which measures the variance in the endogenous variables explained by the exogenous variables. According to Hair et al. (2019), R^2 values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 can be described as substantial, moderate, and weak, respectively. The model demonstrated substantial explanatory power for Next-Generation Succession Intention (NGSI), with anh an R-squared value of 0.799. Additionally, the R-squared for Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (ESE) is 0.454 (moderate), while Active Commitment (AC) has an R-squared of 0.327 (weak to moderate).

In addition to R^2, the effect size (f^2) was assessed to determine the specific impact of each exogenous construct. Values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 represent small, medium, and large effects, respectively. The data showed large effect sizes for the impact of EP on ESE (0.830), EP on AC (0.485), and ESE on NGSI (0.451). Meanwhile, medium effect sizes were observed for the relationships between AC and NGSI (0.200) and EP and NGSI (0.160).

The model's predictive accuracy was further validated using the Q-squared value. Following Hair et al. (2022), a $Q - squared$ value greater than 0 indicates that the model has predictive relevance. Specifically, values around 0.15 and 0.35 indicate moderate and strong predictive abilities, respectively. The results confirmed strong predictive relevance for NGSI (Q^2 = 0.608) and ESE (Q^2 = 0.367). Affective Commitment (AC) also demonstrated an acceptable predictive relevance with a Q^2 of 0.261.

The significance of the proposed relationships was tested using the bootstrapping procedure described in Section 3.5, with 5,000 subsamples, the bias-corrected and accelerated (BCa) method, and two-tailed tests at the 5% significance level.

Table 7. Hypothesis Testing Result

Hypothesis Path	Path Coefficient (β)	T-Statistics	P-Values	Effect Size (f^2)	Decision
Entrepreneurial Passion -> Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy	0.673	12.893	0.000	0.83	Supported
Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy -> NGSI	0.477	7.300	0.000	0.451	Supported
Entrepreneurial Passion -> Affective Commitment	0.571	9.518	0.000	0.485	Supported
Affective Commitment -> NGSI	0.285	5.658	0.000	0.2	Supported
Entrepreneurial Passion -> NGSI	0.247	4.859	0.000	0.16	Supported

Source: SmartPLS 4, 2026

Hypothesis 1 (H1) posits that Entrepreneurial Passion enhances Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy. The empirical data confirms a strong and significant positive effect (β = 0.673, T = 12.893, p = 0.000). This outcome indicates that successors with a strong drive for entrepreneurship naturally develop higher confidence in their managerial and leadership capabilities, supporting H1. Hypothesis 2 (H2) hypothesizes that Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy influences Next-Generation Succession Intention (NGSI). The statistical evaluation reveals a significant positive effect (β = 0.477, T = 7.300, p = 0.000). This shows that when successors believe they can handle complex business challenges, their hesitation decreases and their succession intentions strengthen, supporting H2. Hypothesis 3 (H3) proposes that Entrepreneurial Passion positively affects Affective Commitment. The results demonstrate a significant positive relationship (β = 0.571, T = 9.518, p = 0.000). This finding suggests that high enthusiasm for entrepreneurial activities fosters deeper emotional attachment and loyalty to the family business among the next generation, fully supporting H3. Hypothesis 4 (H4) proposes that Affective Commitment influences Next-Generation Succession Intention (NGSI). The statistical analysis reveals a significant positive relationship ($\beta = 0.285$, $T = 5.658$, $p = 0.000$). This indicates that higher emotional attachment to the family business directly translates into a stronger intention to take over the leadership, thereby supporting H4. Hypothesis 5 (H5) states that Entrepreneurial Passion directly impacts Next-Generation Succession Intention (NGSI). The path analysis shows a significant positive relationship ($\beta = 0.247$, $T = 4.859$, $p = 0.000$). This result indicates that an innate passion for entrepreneurship alone is a significant driver of the next generation's intention to succeed in the family business, supporting H5.

5. Discussion

The primary objective of this study is to examine the underlying mechanisms driving Next-Generation Succession Intention (NGSI) in family businesses. Family enterprises often face high mortality rates across generations, with succession failure identified as a primary cause. While previous literature has extensively explored succession from the perspective of incumbent leaders, this research focuses on successors. Specifically, this study introduces a dual-pathway approach, evaluating the cognitive (Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy) and emotional (Affective Commitment) mechanisms driven by Entrepreneurial Passion within the next generation. This study contributes to the family business literature by proving that passion alone is insufficient. Instead, this entrepreneurial drive must be channeled through both the "head" (cognitive confidence) and the "heart" (emotional attachment) to secure succession intentions.

5.1. The Cognitive Pathway: Passion and Self-Efficacy

The empirical findings demonstrate that Entrepreneurial Passion (EP) significantly enhances Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy (ESE), which in turn positively impacts succession intention. This aligns with Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory, which suggests that positive emotional states, such as the enthusiasm generated by entrepreneurial passion, are a critical source of self-efficacy. In the unique context of family businesses, next-generation members who possess an intense drive for entrepreneurial activities naturally develop a stronger belief in their capacity to handle complex business challenges.

Furthermore, the significant effect of ESE on NGSI confirms prior theories suggesting that succession is heavily perceived as a demanding managerial task. Successors often face unique hurdles, such as proving their capability to non-family employees and navigating delicate family dynamics. When successors are confident in their leadership and problem-solving skills, their hesitation toward these challenges diminishes. Consequently, their intention to take over the family legacy strengthens, as they perceive the transition as a manageable challenge rather than an overwhelming burden.

5.2. The Emotional Pathway: Passion and Affective Commitment

This study also reveals that EP has a profound and significant effect on Affective Commitment (AC), which subsequently drives NGSI. This finding supports the Socioemotional Wealth

(SEW) theory in family businesses. It indicates that passion translates into a deeper emotional attachment to the firm. Passionate successors view the family business not merely as a backup career option, but as a meaningful extension of their personal identity.

The significant positive impact of AC on NGSI is particularly noteworthy. It highlights that the desire to succeed the business is strongest when it is rooted in genuine emotional loyalty and a sense of belonging (affective commitment). This differs from successors who step up out of obligation (normative commitment) or because they lack alternative career options (continuance commitment). Passionate successors want to stay and lead because they genuinely care about the firm's legacy.

5.3. The Direct and Mediating Mechanisms

Finally, the results confirm that Entrepreneurial Passion directly and positively influences succession intention. However, the comprehensive structural model, which explains 79.9% of the variance in NGSI, proves that the indirect mechanisms are indispensable. Achieving an R2 of nearly 80% indicates that the combination of passion, self-efficacy, and affective commitment strongly predicts whether a next-generation member intends to take over.

Because the direct effect of passion remains significant even with the mediators present, this study establishes a partial mediation model. Overall, this study offers a clear theoretical framework for family business continuity. It demonstrates that to ensure a smooth transition, incumbent generations should not force succession through pressure. Instead, they should actively cultivate the next generation's entrepreneurial passion by providing hands-on learning experiences to build practical confidence (the cognitive pathway), while fostering a supportive environment that nurtures emotional pride in the family’s heritage (the emotional pathway).

5.4. Theoretical Contributions

This study offers meaningful theoretical contributions to the family business literature by integrating Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) and Socioemotional Wealth (SEW) theory into a unified model.

First, while SCT is often used to predict general entrepreneurial intentions, this study extends its application to the specific context of family business succession. It empirically validates that entrepreneurial passion is a vital starting point that energizes the cognitive development of entrepreneurial self-efficacy among the next generation.

Second, this research enriches the SEW perspective. Historically, SEW literature has focused on how incumbent founders make decisions to preserve their family's socioemotional wealth. This study shifts the focus by demonstrating how the next generation internalizes this wealth. By proving that entrepreneurial passion builds affective commitment, this study shows how emotional attachment and loyalty are cultivated in younger successors.

Consequently, the proposed dual-pathway model demonstrates that succession intention is not merely a logical calculation of managerial capability, nor is it solely an emotional obligation.

Rather, it is a dynamic outcome of both the "head" (efficacy) and the "heart" (commitment), driven by intrinsic entrepreneurial passion.

6. Conclusions

This study investigated the mechanisms driving Next-Generation Succession Intention (NGSI) in family businesses, focusing on the roles of Entrepreneurial Passion, Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy, and Affective Commitment. Based on the empirical analysis of university students from family business backgrounds across Indonesia, the study concludes that all proposed hypotheses are fully supported. Entrepreneurial Passion serves as a fundamental catalyst that directly enhances the intention to succeed in the family business. More importantly, the study shows that this passion exerts its strongest influence when channeled through two critical mediating pathways: the cognitive pathway (building self-efficacy) and the emotional pathway (fostering affective commitment).

From a practical standpoint, the findings offer actionable insights for incumbent family business leaders who aim to ensure a smooth intergenerational transition. The results suggest that coercing or obligating the next generation to take over the business is unlikely to be effective. Instead, incumbents should adopt a nurturing approach by exposing potential successors to the business's positive, innovative, and meaningful aspects. To build entrepreneurial self-efficacy, successors should be entrusted with manageable projects or early leadership responsibilities that develop practical confidence. At the same time, an inclusive family business culture is needed to strengthen affective commitment by helping successors feel emotionally attached to, and proud of, the family legacy.

7. Limitations and Future Study

Despite its robust findings, this study has several limitations. First, the research relies on cross-sectional data, which captures respondents' intentions at a single point in time. Because succession intention may evolve as students graduate, gain work experience, or become more involved in the family firm, future studies are encouraged to employ longitudinal designs that track how intentions develop into actual succession behavior. Second, although the sample covers respondents from several regions in Indonesia, the findings may still reflect the country's specific cultural and family-business context. Replication in other cultural settings would strengthen the generalizability of the proposed dual-pathway mechanism. Third, future research may incorporate moderating variables such as family harmony, successor autonomy, external work experience, or perceived parental support to provide a more comprehensive explanation of succession intention.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization: Angelyn Christina Lai; Methodology, Data Collection, Formal Analysis, Writing – Original Draft Preparation; Writing – Review and Editing: Oscar Jayanagara. All authors; Supervision: All authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Declarations

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