

## A Gender-Based Analysis of Family Business Succession in the Entrepreneurship Study Program, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Tasikmalaya Campus, Class of 2022

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### ABSTRACT

Succession in family business is a strategic process to ensure company sustainability through mature and considerate planning that takes into account family expectations, business interests, and successor readiness. In the past, men played a larger role in leadership, but now women also hold increasingly significant leadership positions. This shift reflects a change in how individual ability is viewed, no longer based solely on gender hierarchy, but on how an ideal and capable successor can bring positive change to the company. The research method used is a qualitative study with a descriptive approach. This research was conducted at the Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI), with the study object being family business founders and family business successor candidates who are students of the 2022 Entrepreneurship Study Program. The sampling method applied in this research is purposive sampling. The results show that the majority of family businesses have their own planning in selecting a successor by providing formal education and practical experience from an early age. Furthermore, 67% of family business owners do not consider gender as a determining factor in choosing a company successor. For them, mental readiness and commitment to running the business are the main requirements for a family business successor.

**Keywords:** Family Business; Succession; Gender Perspective; Entrepreneurship; Study Program.

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### INTRODUCTION

Succession is a strategic process for transferring leadership from generation to generation, where the business owner undertakes careful planning to ensure the company's stability and future success (Soleimanof, Singal, & Wright, 2020). In a family business, proper succession planning must be designed according to family business criteria. Addayo et al. (2016) stated that succession planning is a process that includes the successful transfer of ownership and management from the family business founder to the successor. On the other hand, Gilding et al. (2015) defined succession planning as the transition of management and ownership from the founder to the next generation, serving as a tool to set the future direction of the business after the departure or death of the founder.

Redirection in a family business requires processes to determine the next leader. Zellweger et al. (2021) argued that the succession process in family businesses involves

more than just transferring responsibilities; it must balance family expectations, business interests, and the successor's readiness in leadership aspects. According to Ghee et al. (2015), the success of family-owned businesses is built on several integrated factors derived from the founder's managerial skills, including the establishment of a strong foundation for successors to ensure a smooth transition process.

One increasingly important and relevant aspect in this context is how succession planning considers gender factors, which can provide new and richer perspectives in the process. An interesting issue in entrepreneurship literature is how gender intersects with family-related issues. Succession planning becomes more meaningful when gender is taken into account. A study by Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler (KPMG, 2020) found that women's roles in family businesses are developing toward more collaborative and transformational leadership. They defined women's participation in family businesses not only in emotional roles but also as leaders who can drive better business performance through inclusive and transformative approaches.

A survey conducted by Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC) in 2021 revealed that around 30% of family businesses worldwide are led by women, while 70% are led by men. The survey also noted that women are increasingly involved in making strategic decisions in family businesses, particularly in sectors such as technology, services, and fashion. In determining a suitable family business successor, mature planning, open communication among family members, and selection based on individual capability—rather than solely on gender or traditional hierarchy—are essential. By analyzing gender aspects in succession, family businesses can develop strategies to overcome structural and cultural barriers, while maximizing the potential of all family members regardless of gender.

Succession itself plays a crucial role in ensuring the sustainability of a family business. Traditionally, succession in family businesses has prioritized male descendants. This research aims to explore whether gender matters in family business succession and what considerations influence it, with a case study on Family Business Batch 2022 at the Indonesian Education University, Tasikmalaya Campus.

A family business is defined as a company where at least two generations are involved in production activities and the second generation can influence company policy (Setiawan & Susanto, 2018). Le Breton-Miller & Miller (2022) described a family business as one in which family members serve together as owners and managers. Similarly, Miller & Le Breton-Miller (2015) emphasized that family businesses are owned and managed by members of a particular family, where the company's sustainability depends on active involvement in ownership, governance, and operations. The focus is also on inheriting family values and traditions within the organization. Krueger et al. (2021) further illustrated how family factors are embedded in businesses, shaping their operations and culture.

According to Antoro (2017), succession is the process of transitioning business management and ownership to the next generation of family members. To sustain their businesses, family business owners need to plan succession carefully. Succession planning can be defined as the set of principles, actions, and steps involved when

leadership is transferred from one person to another. Many researchers have demonstrated that succession planning is a key element in ensuring the continuity and prosperity of family businesses (Alayo, Jainaga, Maseda, & Arzubiaga, 2016).

Succession planning is essential for organizational growth and business sustainability (Al Suwaidi, Jabeen, Stachowicz-Stanusch, & Webb, 2020; Hassan & Siddiqui, 2020). In family businesses, succession planning involves efforts to ensure business continuity by transferring management to the next generation. Founders must prepare management rules and anticipate changes in case of illness or early death. Without succession planning, family businesses often fail during leadership crises such as death, disability, or unresolved family conflicts.

The preparation of successors also plays an important role. Effective succession requires successors to acquire new skills, including business and industry knowledge, communication and interpersonal skills, decision-making abilities, social networks, entrepreneurial spirit, as well as legitimacy and credibility with key stakeholders. Another critical factor is family commitment, which is vital for the sustainability of family businesses. Strong commitment among family members to jointly strategize and pursue family and business goals distinguishes family businesses from non-family enterprises (Klein, Astrachan, & Smyrnios, 2005; Shen, 2018).

Woodward (2022) explained that gender is a concept used to describe social inequalities and power relations that create injustice within social systems. Gender is often categorized within a binary framework, male and female. The American Psychological Association (APA, 2023) defines gender as the social characteristics related to roles and expectations assigned to individuals by society based on their sex. Unlike sex, which refers to biological differences, gender is a social construct that evolves over time and varies across cultures.

Succession in family businesses is therefore a critical process in sustaining the enterprise. Gender plays a significant role in shaping succession patterns, where cultural and social norms still influence the selection of family business leaders. According to Maya Prabhu's journal review, one of the key findings is that although women are increasingly recognized for their leadership roles, societal perceptions regarding gender still affect their opportunities to inherit family businesses. Several studies have noted the persistence of patriarchal cultural trends that favor sons as successors, even though awareness of gender equality in the succession process is improving.

Women Leaders in Family Enterprises (WLife) recently released a survey in 2023 focusing on identifying biases faced by women leaders in family businesses due to their gender. The survey also examined the impacts of these biases and discrimination within family business environments, and how these issues influence perceptions of women's competence, professional performance, and career development.

### ***Gender Influence in Succession Business Family***

EY (formerly Ernst & Young) (2015) through the Family Business Center of Excellence published report entitled "Women in leadership" in connection with findings

from global survey on leader women, who predict that Woman will the more Lots lead company family in the future. Although Woman in business family often face challenge big related with gender perception, they can give impact positive with apply style more leadership inclusive and innovative. Research by McAdam et al. (2021) revealed that Woman tend own a more approach holistic in manage company family.

However, women often have to try more hard For get recognition and legitimacy in position leadership said, which shows existence more obstacles big related gender stereotypes. Further research recently by Salinas-Quiroz and Sweder (2022) shows that gender equality in succession business family No only increase opportunity women, but also contribute to the success term long business said. The woman who leads business family often present a more approach sustainable, with more emphasize on value social and employee, which provides impact positive to sustainability company.

## **METHOD**

The research method used is a qualitative study with a descriptive approach. This research was conducted at the Indonesian Education University (UPI), with the study object being family business founders and potential successors, namely students of the 2022 Entrepreneurship Study Program. The total population of the 2022 batch consists of 66 students. The sampling method in this research used purposive sampling. According to Sugiyono (2018:138), purposive sampling is a technique of determining samples based on specific considerations in accordance with the desired criteria, so that the number of samples to be studied can be identified. The criteria for participants in this research are: (1) Students who will continue the family business; (2) Having knowledge or experience related to gender issues in family business succession; (3) Coming from family businesses with more than one child; (4) Willing to participate in in-depth interviews.

The data collection technique used was in-depth interviews with family business founders, aimed at further exploring gender phenomena in family business succession. The interview guide covered themes such as understanding of succession, determining factors of succession success, gender preferences in choosing successors, obstacles and barriers based on gender, as well as expectations and future perspectives of the family business in question. (The interview guide is attached). The data analysis technique employed was qualitative analysis.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***Succession Process Analysis***

According to Belgin Aydintan (2017), succession planning consists of three main elements. First, the restrictions imposed by the company founder, in which the founder grants full authority to the chosen successor or, in some cases, appoints an external successor to join the organization. Second, ensuring effective on-the-job training in core management functions so that the successor gains adequate skills and practical

experience. Third, the acceptance of the succession plan and the designated successor by business partners as well as by other potential successors.

Based on interviews with key informants, namely business owners and successor candidates, the succession process carried out by the respondents in this study begins with the succession planning stage. This stage involves business planning conducted by the owner or founder for the successor candidate, which varies depending on the type of business being run.

Table 1: Planning Process Succession

Type of business	Planning Succession	Criteria Succession
King Mentai ( Culinary )	Viewed from successor who is more ready and who is seen own talent For continue business And later on will discussed with all member family more carry on	There is none, with condition candidate successor willing accept and be responsible answer For undergo business.
Coconut Sugar Production	Not done yet planning but prioritized successor man Because business that is run need power Work man	Because of the candidate successor man all, then No There is rule specific to the criteria succession.
Wanmart Cell	Planned through introduction business since small Then understood How interest his to business, then directed his education For reach objective succession the.	n't any rules that require For become successor but definitely the priority the expected child Can continue and develop business the.
Moza Grocery Store	Give sufficient education For manage business family. In the management business must still guided by the founder.	Member of ready family For manage business.
UD Tirta Family	Since childhood Already invited involved follow to field For Study about operational until method negotiate.	Nothing, just just see who has ability, intention For continue effort, and must have commitment as well as understand about business.
Ardede Store	Planned with method deliberation For determine who will become candidate successor.	n't any rule special, only see who has basic leadership and can manage business family with good to know too about the ins and outs beluk business family.

Addayo et al. (2016) stated that succession planning is a process that includes the successful transfer of ownership and management from the family business founder to

the successor. Business planning must consider both business and family needs. Sustainability practices are essential for family businesses for two main reasons: they help build a good reputation within the community and maintain relationships with key stakeholders. According to Bakoğlu & Yıldırım (2016), family businesses tend to have a long-term orientation. Bryan (2016) further emphasized that early succession planning involves several methods applied by owners to prepare the next generation. Some deliberately provide exposure to the business by involving successors in office affairs, while others encourage them to first gain professional experience after graduating from college before joining the family business. In some cases, successors are directly involved in the company immediately after completing their studies. Succession planning practices differ across family businesses, and the methods chosen depend largely on the founder and the specific circumstances of the family business.

In the case of King Mentai's family business, succession planning is based on identifying who is more prepared, has the talent to continue the business, and is willing to accept responsibility for its operations. In the coconut sugar production business, succession planning has not yet been formalized, though the founder prioritizes male successors since all candidates are male. In Wanmart Cell, succession is planned through early exposure to the business, nurturing interest, and aligning education with future business continuity, with priority given to children who can further develop the enterprise. At Moza Grocery Store, sufficient education is provided to the successor candidate, although continued guidance from the founder remains necessary. Meanwhile, in the UD Tirta Family business, children have been taught from an early age how to manage operations and negotiate. However, there are no strict criteria for selecting successors beyond observing who shows the intention and ability to continue the business. Similarly, Ardede Store has no special rules for determining a successor; decisions are made through deliberation, particularly by evaluating leadership potential.

From interviews with respondents, it was revealed that, on average, succession planning does take place, though most businesses do not have strict criteria for successor candidates. Each family business applies its own standards in line with its context and founder's preferences. For example, in King Mentai, Wanmart Cell, and UD Tirta Family, readiness of the successor candidate is the main criterion. This aligns with Mokhber et al. (2017), who noted that the most important factor in succession planning is the preparedness of the heir and the relationship between family members and the business in supporting family business performance. Thus, succession planning based on the readiness of family members is critical for successful succession in family businesses, as it ensures continuity in the long term.

Succession planning at Wanmart Cell and Moza Grocery Store also emphasizes education, equipping successors with the knowledge needed to manage the family business. This is reinforced by Cabrera-Suárez, García-Almeida, & De Saá-Pérez (2018), who argued that knowledge transfer in family business succession and successor performance are influenced by the successor's readiness and capability to manage the knowledge acquired, whether from within the family or externally through formal education. Higher education plays an important role in shaping a successor's intentions

regarding the family business, with the university years being one of the most decisive periods for determining whether an individual will continue the family enterprise (Bozer et al., 2017; Collins, Seaman, Graham, & Stepek, 2013). In addition to formal education, many family businesses introduce successors to business activities from a young age, as seen in Wanmart Cell and UD Tirta Family. This practice echoes Bryan (2016), who emphasized that early succession planning involves various methods applied by owners to develop the next generation's business abilities.

Table 2: Gender Preferences in choose candidate successor

Type of business	Gender Issues	Gender Preference
King Mentai ( Culinary )	Nothing is more important than having the determination and willingness to continue the family business.	There isn't any.
Coconut Production	Sugar Yes, the father tends to prefer a son to be the successor.	Yes, the founder shows a stronger preference for choosing a male child as the successor.
Wanmart Cell	Nothing, both men and women have their own opportunities, and neither is superior to the other.	There is none, but depends interests and desires continue from candidate successor.
Moza Grocery Store	Nothing, both men and women are the same.	There is no preference given, as long as the successor candidate is ready to manage the business.
UD Tirta Family	There is no difference; both men and women have the same opportunities. What matters is that they are trustworthy and capable of running the business.	There are no other specific criteria; what matters is identifying who is serious and has the mental readiness to manage the family business
Ardede Store	Yes, gender becomes the important thing However must accompanied by with understanding adequate business.	Man prioritized in management business family.

### *Findings on Gender Issues in the Succession Process*

The results of the interviews show that gender considerations in the succession process vary among family businesses. Some businesses do not question the gender of their successor, believing that both men and women have equal capabilities, while others still prefer male successors.

- a) In selecting a successor, several family businesses emphasized that gender is not a determining factor. They believe that both men and women are equally capable of continuing the family business. However, there are also businesses that specifically require male successors.

- b) For many businesses, gender is not a central concern and depends more on the interests, readiness, and willingness of the successor. Nonetheless, some still demonstrate a preference for sons as successors.

In King Mentai's family business, there is no gender preference in succession planning. With five daughters involved in the business, gender is not considered a barrier:

"No, I think gender is not an obstacle. As long as there is strong will and determination, anyone can continue the family business." (Endang Rahayu)

In the Coconut Sugar Production family business, the founder is still focused on business development and has not introduced management knowledge to his children. Although all of his sons are encouraged to pursue higher education, they are not obliged to continue the business. Nonetheless, the founder acknowledges a preference for a male successor due to the physically demanding nature of the work: "Because the business is still developing, I have not yet introduced management knowledge to my children. But I prefer a male successor, because this work is physically demanding, like climbing coconut trees. So I still believe men are more suitable as successors. However, I also give freedom to my children to choose their own careers." (Suparno)

In the Wanmart Cell family business, gender is not considered in succession decisions. Both men and women are seen as equally entitled to become successors: "In my view, both men and women have equal opportunities to continue the family business. The important thing is interest and understanding of the business. In my family, there is no special preference regarding gender; all children have the same opportunities as long as they have the strong desire to continue." (Wawan Setiawan)

Similarly, in the Moza Grocery Store, gender is not a factor in determining successors. Readiness and competence are considered more important: "When choosing a successor, I focus more on their readiness to manage the company and whether they have mastered the business. For me, gender is not a determining factor; both men and women have the same opportunities if they are prepared." (Fire)

In the UD Tirta Family business, gender is also not questioned. Men and women are believed to have equal opportunities as long as they demonstrate capability and readiness: "In my view, every child has the same potential to contribute to the sustainability of the family business. Whether male or female, we give equal opportunities as long as the child has the capability and mental readiness to continue the business."

In contrast, the Ardede Store family business shows a stronger preference for male successors, although understanding of the business is also taken into account: "Every member must play an important role. In our family, we tend to choose a son to continue the business, but he must also have an understanding of the business and personal commitment."

Overall, in the cases of Raja Mentai and Moza Grocery Store, gender is not an issue in succession. The most important factors are determination and a strong desire from the successor candidate. These findings align with Bloemen-Bekx, Van Gils, Lambrechts, & Sharma (2019), who state that successor commitment can be



strengthened through early, informal, and consistent preparation supported by the family.

Business The Mentai King Family, Wanmart Cell, Moza Grocery Store, and UD Tirta Family No questioning gender in elections candidate succession his Woman and also man entitled For continue business family According to Powell (2020) and Bass (2020) research Gender does not influential to style leadership used by leaders, that No There is gender differences in style leadership. This is also in line with results study conducted by Nurpadillah (2021) who stated that based on calculation the cross-section of the gender variable is very inconsistent own influence on style leadership.

Different with business family Coconut Sugar Production and Ardede Store they more choose prioritize man For continue business family they. Chen, et al. (2017) shows that although contribution Woman in business family has acknowledged, but the reality Still seldom Woman considered as candidate successor except No There is candidate successor available men. Under the same conditions, members family man often given priority more tall compared to with member family Woman.

Planning succession is taking decision who will lead company in the future front. From the results interview can known gender issues do not too influence on succession. Four among them No questioning gender for sustainability business nya. Founder business in decide successor business family majority see from ability, determination, intention, and responsibility answer For continue business family. From the research of Sawal Sartono, SE. MM., Bondan Subagyo, SE. MM (2020) on gender in succession company family in the district The city of Tulungagung state that a number of the company that became object study majority gender issue No influential in the succession process. Considerations main from founder company is so that sustainability business still awake so the successor who is considered own selected ability For continue business. Gender is not something that becomes focus in the succession process, there is also business family whose founder more choose child man For continue business his but they also have to have understanding to business family they.

## CONCLUSION

This study finds that several family business founders do not yet have a clear succession plan. Among the family businesses interviewed, many rely on the readiness and willingness of the successor candidate. Some founders provide education and exposure to the business beforehand, but ultimately leave the decision to the successor's own intentions. There are also founders who plan succession for their children from an early stage.

In most of the family businesses studied, gender does not play a significant role in the succession process. The main considerations of founders are the successor's ability, willingness, and determination to continue the business. While a few businesses prefer male successors, the overall findings suggest that gender is not a central issue in succession planning. What matters most is ensuring that both men and women are

involved and able to complement each other in sustaining the continuity of the family business.

Family business owners should develop more structured succession planning by integrating formal education and practical field experience for potential successors from an early age. This approach will better ensure the long-term sustainability of the business. Gender equality must also be considered by giving equal opportunities to both male and female successors to take on leadership roles.

A deliberative approach in selecting successors can be an effective method when combined with continuous mentorship and emotional support for the successor candidate. Furthermore, involving all generations in strategic discussions and utilizing modern technology can strengthen responsibility, leadership capabilities, and preparedness in facing future challenges.

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