

Study shows pay difference between female and male directors on SGX listcos



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Female directors get much lower pay

✓ LEE XIN EN, THE STRAITS TIMES

According to a study released yesterday by the National University of Singapore (NUS), female executive directors of Singapore Exchange (SGX)-listed companies made just 56.1 per cent of what their male counterparts made.

At that level, men were paid an average annual salary of \$1,118,877 while women pulled in just \$628,024.

Excluding the roles of chief executives and executive chairmen, the difference was less stark, with female executive directors earning 86.1 per cent of what their male peers made.

Dr Marleen Dieleman, an associate professor at NUS Business School who led the study,

said it shows “women are paid less, partly because they have less influential roles on boards”.

Of the top positions, 3.6 per cent of chief executives in the study were female, and just 1.2 per cent of executive chairmen were women.

She noted that with so few women in the top roles, it is fairer to compare the pay of “ordinary” executive directors.

COMPARABLE

She said the gap of around 20 per cent was comparable with the situation in Europe.

She said the “disappointing results” show “board diversity here should move beyond merely increasing the percentage of female directors to also address... inequalities including remuneration and women’s share of board leadership roles”.

The study made use of director remuneration disclosures required under the Singapore Exchange’s new corporate governance code.

But only 199 of 631 listed firms in the NUS database disclosed exact remuneration on a named basis. Among these firms, only 8 per cent of directors were female.

The pay gap was small among independent directors, who are often paid fixed fees.

Female independent directors earned 83 per cent and female non-executive directors 70.4 per cent of what their male peers made.

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