

亚洲女性缘何 不愿加入董事会

Asian Women Say **NO** Thanks to Board Positions



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全世界的女性仍在与那些阻碍她们加入公司董事会的成见做斗争。尽管这种斗争在许多国家取得了进展，但亚洲却在这方面却显得落后。人们往往将此归咎于这些国家根深蒂固的男权社会的影响。然而我们研究发现，亚洲女性本身比预期的更不愿意担任董事会职务。

那么，有多少女性在公司董事会中任职呢？2012年，麦肯锡通过分析10个亚洲市场上744家公司的当地股票指数发现，女性只拥有8%的董

事席位。同年，光辉国际咨询顾问公司（Korn/Ferry International）分析了香港、马来西亚、新加坡等6个国家和地区的市值前百强企业，比较了其董事会中女性担任重要领导职位的比例。通过分析了担任5335个董事职务的4630位董事，他们发现，在香港、马来西亚和新加坡，逾70%的公司董事会都没有女性独立董事，有三位以上女性董事的董事会凤毛麟角，而有三位以上女性独立董事的董事会几乎没有。

增加女性董事的一条途径就是招聘更多女性

比起在公司董事会做一个“花瓶董事”，许多亚洲女性更愿意建立自己的公司，在个人信仰和价值观的基础上创造价值。

Many women in Asia may prefer to build up their own businesses and create value based on their personal beliefs and values, instead of sitting on corporate boards as ‘ornamental directors’.

Women around the world still face an on-going battle against stereotypes that keep the doors of boardrooms firmly closed to them. Progress has been made in many countries, but Asia still lags behind. Much of the blame for this has traditionally been laid at the feet of a male-dominated society. Our research suggests that Asian women may themselves be more reluctant than originally thought to take on these roles.

So how many women are actually in the boardrooms? In 2012 McKinsey, using the local stock indices of 744 companies in 10 Asian markets, found women held just 8% of seats on boards. That same year Korn/Ferry International looked at the largest 100 domestic companies by market capitalisation in 6 countries – including Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore – to compare the extent to which women held key leadership positions on boards. They looked at 4,630 directors holding 5,335 directorships and found that more than 70% of boards in Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore had no female independent directors. Boards with three or more female directors

were rare, while boards with three or more women as independent directors were almost non-existent (Ibid).

One way to boost the number of women on boards is to hire more women in the first place. A low female labour participation rate is one of the eight factors and barriers that we identified as keeping women, especially those in Asia, away from the boardroom. It’s worth noting that among Asian countries, China has the highest number of women in the workforce. Yet the numbers are still far from ideal.

So among this already limited pool of potential candidates, why is it that so few of them want to be on boards?

One stumbling block is linked to the legal framework. First, board directors may face onerous, less than transparent and poorly defined responsibilities that come with their fiduciary duties. Their obligations may not be clearly defined (as in China for example) but there are severe consequences and liabilities for compensation if these same unclear obligations are violated. It doesn’t help that director liability insurance remains under-developed in sections





对于许多亚洲女性来说,加入董事会犹如逆水行舟,充满挑战却回报甚微。



员工。我们认为,女性劳动参与率低是阻碍女性(尤其是亚洲女性)加入董事会的八个因素之一。值得注意的是,在亚洲国家,中国的女性员工最多,但是女性董事的数量仍远不够理想。

那么,在已经非常有限的潜在候选人中,为什么愿意加入董事会的女性也寥寥无几呢?

其中一个绊脚石与法律体制有关。首先,董事因其信托责任,可能需要承担繁重的、不透明也不明确的义务。例如在中国,公司董事的义务可能定义不明晰,但是如果他们不履行这些不明晰的义务,就可能产生严重后果并需要承担赔偿责任。在中国等亚洲国家,董事责任保险的发展依然落后,对于改善上述状况毫无帮助。此外,亚洲国家在保证女性晋升的政策方面也乏善可陈,事实上,马来西亚是亚洲唯一采用女性晋升配额制度的国家。

老朋友关系网也是阻碍之一。男性主导的董事会不太愿意让女性加入,而缺少同性榜样的鼓励,已经加入董事会的女性也难有作为。这导致了一个恶性循环:董事会中的女性越少,董事会任命女性董事的几率就越低,女性受到榜样鼓舞加入董事会的意愿也越低。

社会因素也是一大障碍。亚洲传统文化鼓励女性扮演好照顾家庭的角色,全心全意支持丈夫。此外,工作中的“玻璃天花板”限制了女性高管的数量,也降低了女性加入董事会的机会,因为公司董事会成员需要有着丰富的管理经验。这与男性质疑女性工作能力的传统性别偏见密切相关。

女性注重细节的特质经常被看成女性的优势。但是当涉及到担任董事会职位时,这实际上会削减女性的机会,因为反对者会称女性无法通观全局。

然而,还有一个往往被忽视的重要原因自我选择。尽管女性董事数量很少,但女性企业家和个体经营者的数量却在增加。到2012年,中国已有超过2900万女性企业家,占全国企业家总数的20%。简而言之,比起在董事会做一个“花瓶董事”,许多亚洲女性更愿意建立自己的公司,在个人信仰和价值观的基础上创造价值。

毕竟很多公司的董事会仅仅是一个象征性机构,董事也不过是“橡皮图章”罢了。

总之,全球女性董事的数量已有所增长,尽管各国增长情况并不平衡。在亚洲,这种增长不平衡的情况更明显,日本和韩国在这方面较为落后。对于许多亚洲女性来说,加入董事会犹如逆水行舟,充满挑战却回报甚微。社会从整体上来说并不了解女性员工和女性董事的重要性。如果企业继续不作为,继续低估性别平等对于董事会的长期益处,各国政府也不推行政策解决这一问题的话,那么女性将继续对董事职位说“对不起,谢谢。”

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of Asia, China included. Second, Asian countries have fewer policies in place for ensuring that women are promoted. In fact, Malaysia is the only Asian country to adopt a quota system.

The old boy's network is also a barrier. Male dominated boards show little inclination to include women. Then there's the lack of female role models to encourage and inspire women on boards to make a difference. This results in a vicious cycle: the fewer women on boards, the less likely boards are to appoint women, and the less likely it will be that women are inspired to be board members.

Societal factors are another barrier. Traditional Asian cultures encourage women to be highly committed to their role as the family caregiver who provides a supporting role to their husbands. In addition, the 'glass ceiling' at work restricts the number of women in top management positions, reducing their chances of serving on boards since this generally requires extensive management experience. This is closely linked to traditional gender bias where men just think women can't get the job done.

Women's attention to detail is often cited as a plus. But when it comes to landing board positions it actually harms their chances by fuelling the argument that they can't see the big picture.

But one important barrier that's often overlooked is self-selection. In contrast to the number of women directors, there is a growing number of women entrepreneurs and the self-employed. By 2012 China had more than 29 million women entrepreneurs,



accounting for over 20% of the national total. In short, many women would rather start their own businesses to create value based on their personal beliefs and values, than sit on boards as 'ornamental directors' (Mace, 1971; Allen, 1989). After all, in many companies boards merely play a symbolic role and its directors are just 'rubber stamps'.

To sum up, the number of women on boards has increased globally, albeit unevenly, across countries. In Asia the situation is even more patchy and with some very weak spots, such as Japan and South Korea. For many women in Asia, entering the boardroom is like rowing upstream – it's a challenging job with little upside. Society as a whole still doesn't grasp how significant it is to have women in the workforce and on boards (Yi, 2012). As long as companies continue to be less-than-active in making changes and

continue to underestimate the long-term benefits of having the fairer sex in the boardroom, and governments fail to put policies in place to address the issue, women will continue to say, "No thanks!" to board positions.

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