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## SMU researcher wins an Ig Nobel prize for 'improbable research'

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SMU Assistant Professor of Finance Gennaro Bernile was awarded an Ig Nobel Prize for his research into the influence of early-life disasters on the behaviour of chief executive officers. PHOTO: SMU

SINGAPORE -An assistant professor from the Singapore Management University (SMU) has won the 2015 Ig Nobel Prize, becoming the only Singapore-based researcher on this year's list of 10 winners.

The Ig Nobel Prize is a parody of the Nobel prize awards given out every year at Harvard University in the United States, and is awarded to "improbable research... that makes people laugh and then think". It also celebrates research that spurs an interest in science, medicine, and technology.

Assistant Professor of Finance Gennaro Bernile, from the SMU Lee Kong Chian School of Business, clinched a prize in the Management category for his research on the influence of early-life disasters on the behaviour of chief executive officers.

He had found that many business leaders who experienced natural disasters, such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, or wildfires, developed a fondness for risk-taking in their childhood, if the disasters had no dire personal consequences for them.

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Other award winners include Mark Dingemanse, research staff from the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in the Netherlands, who shared the award in the Literature category with two of his colleagues, for discovering that the word "huh" and its equivalent seems to exist in every human language, although they are not quite sure why.