

# 'CAGONG' CULTURE

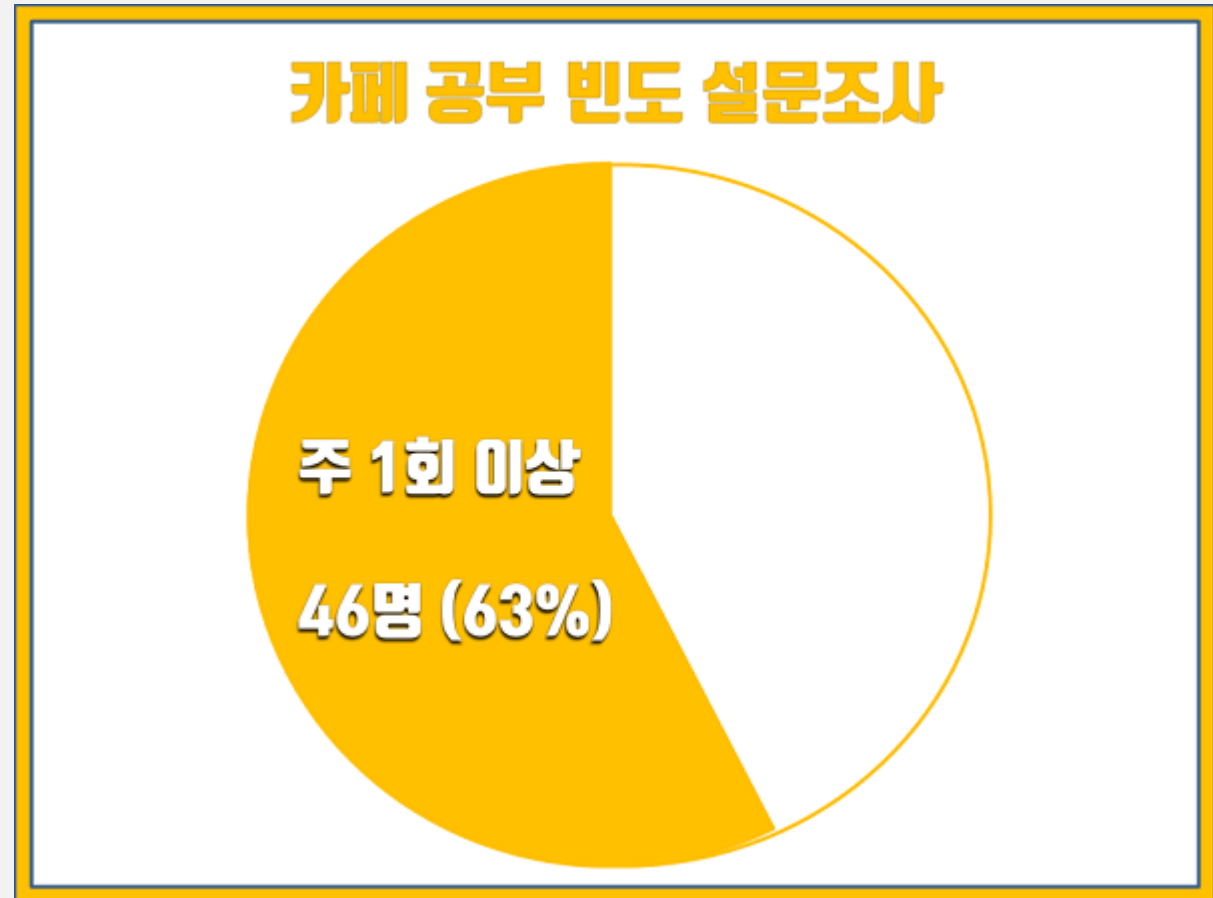
'Cagong' Culture in Korea

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# CAGONG

- Referring to the activity of studying or working at a café, this trend has gained prominence since the 2010s.
- Neologism in Active Use - The term used to describe this phenomenon is a neologism actively in use since the 2010s.
- Blend of 'Café' and 'Gongbu' combination of two words—'Café' and 'Gongbu' (공부).
- Derivation: 'Cagongjok ' A derivative term, 'Cagongjok,' has been created, translating to 'Cagong folks. ' However, word Cagongjok has a negative connotation.

# HOW PROLIFERATED IS 'CAGONG' CULTURE?



- Out of 73 student surveyee. 63 percent study in a café at least once a week.

- Out of 563 student surveyee, 41% answered they are 'Cagongjok'



WHY ARE  
THEY  
HEADING  
TO THE  
CAFÉ?

## POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS FOR CAGONG

- **Remote Work/Study Norm** - Ever since the Covid-19, working or studying in a distance became a norm.
- **Limited Accessibility of Libraries** - Libraries, can be hard to find, limited accessibility.
- **Discomfort in Silent Environments** - Some individuals feel uneasy in silent environments,
- **Convenience of Snacks and Drinks** - Drinks and snacks are easily obtainable.
- **No Restrictions on Electronic Devices** - No restrictions on using laptop keyboards and electronic devices.
- **Cozy Atmosphere** - Cafes provide a cozy atmosphere, accompanied by pleasant music.

## CONTROVERSY OVER CAGONG

SBS  
NEWS

실시간 e뉴스

"카공족, 이렇게까지..."

카페 업주들의 호소

## CONTROVERSY OVER CAGONG

- **'Cagong' has become a controversial topic in Korean society.**
- **Often unwelcomed by Café owners** - For café owners, Cagongjok are not welcomed, as they drop the turnover ratio of the business, reducing its profitability. They often use electricity, internet and so on.
- **Extended Stay Impact** - The profit break-even time for cafes, on average, is 1 hour and 42 minutes. However, Cagongjok tend to spend a longer time, impacting the overall profitability.
- **Media Highlight of Controversial Behaviors** - Some controversial behaviors of ill-mannered Cagongjok are often mentioned in the media. – Some Cagongjok demand other customers to keep silence for them

## IS CAGONG ALWAYS BAD?

- **Positive Contribution During Lulls** - On the other hand, Cagongjok fill in the gap when there are not many customers.
- **Varied Duration of Stay** - Not all Cagongjok stay for extended periods in the café. In fact, most of them are one of the main sources of the café's revenue.
- **Rights Through Purchase** - They have the right to stay in the café for as long as they want. By purchasing from the café, they acquire the time right to spend time in it.



## FILLING THE GAP

Emerging Business Model - There is an emerging business model targeting Cagongjok to meet their demand. (Cagong friendly cafés)

Concerns About 'Ugly' Cagongjok - Frequently asked questions about how many orders one should make to avoid being labeled an 'ugly' Cagongjok.

Reflection of a Competitive Society?

THANK YOU!

FURTHER READINGS & REFERENCES

- <https://www.hani.co.kr/arti/economy/working/755587.html>
- <https://cm.asiae.co.kr/article/2022102014024053375>
- <https://magazine.hankyung.com/job-joy/article/202007146581b>
- <https://news.mt.co.kr/mtview.php?no=2023030713502265408>