

No Professor Zone

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다른 손님들의 편안한 이용을 위해

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A 'No Professor Zone' notice is posted at a bar near Pusan National University, Busan. / Captured from internet

By Lee Hae-rin

A bar near the Pusan National University has discouraged professors from visiting the place due to their alleged hierarchical abuse of power.

"For the convenience of other visitors, we ask the regular professors of the Pusan National University to refrain from entering our bar. In case of entry, please do not disclose your profession voluntarily, and loudly," the bar owner said in a notice.

The owner posted the notice because the three rudest customers who had used the bar since its opening were university professors.

"The reason I learned about their profession is that they bragged, 'I am a professor here (at the university)," the owner said during an interview with The Hankyoreh, a local newspaper.

The owner initially thought the notice could be discriminatory against a certain profession. However, the notice is an expression of anger at their rudeness, rather than their profession, so the owner thought putting up the notice was reasonable, they said.

"I've seen customers, many of whom are graduate students, stressing out from excessive workloads and abuse of power by professors. I did not want them to run into professors in charge of them here at my bar, where they come to relax and chill."

There is a disparity in working conditions between regular and irregular instructors here, according to Kim Je-nam, the director of Korea's University Professors Union.

"There are multiple layers of discrimination among university professors and instructors, and they are treated very differently in terms of payment, welfare, and assignments by universities," Kim told The Korea Times, Wednesday.

Also, the relation of power between graduate students, assistants and professors could be similar to that of the military in many cases, making students feel uncomfortable in such surroundings, Kim added.

It seems that many of the public find the notice interesting and agree with the owner's point of view, as positive and enthusiastic feedback dominates online discussions.

"I never knew that there could be a good kind of discrimination," one internet user wrote. "I believe that no discrimination can be justified, but this discrimination (against regular professors) shakes my faith," wrote another.

The bar does not actually verify whether a customer is a university professor or restricts their entry. However, some view that the notice generalizes professors as a group and could be seen as an extension of growing discrimination against a certain group, including children, minors and the elderly.

"'No (blank) zone' should only be allowed when it is subject to socially advantaged people (unlike children, minors and the elderly)," one internet user wrote.

"Only 20 percent of professors are privileged in public perception. There is a structural problem causing discrimination and exploitation within university society, and generalizing the profession as a group will make analysis and resolution of the discrimination more difficult," Kim said.

discourage, hierarchial, brag, discriminatory, disparity, point of view, feedback

What is your opinion of the bar owner's notice?

Do you think the notice will work?

Do you think discrimination is ever justified in the service industry?

Do you think professors have too much power over their students?

Is bragging wrong?

Where do you and your friends go to relax and chill? Would you be comfortable if you saw one of your professors there?

Should professors ask for students' feedback about the semester?