Operation Situation of Academic Credit Bank System for Academic Degree of Cosmetology & Academic Research Trends

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to analyze the operation situation & academic research trends in Seoul and Gyeonggi area, based on theoretical consideration on academic credit bank system, focusing on academic credit bank system where a lifelong education institute affiliated with a university produces graduates with associate’s degree. To find out about how academic credit bank institutes are operated in cosmetology field, the analysis of literature review was used, in reference to the literatures as well as administrative data from the Ministry of Education and institutes for lifelong education with respect to academic credit bank system. Further, dissertations and articles in journals were also reviewed for analysis, in order to see academic research trends with respect to academic credit bank system in cosmetology, and finally to provide the directions for a follow-up study in the future. It was found that about 120 junior colleges have cosmetology departments, while only about 20 4-year universities have them, where lifelong education systems such as lifelong education are essential for learners to have bachelor’s degree to go to a graduate school in reality. Every year more people want to learn and acquire the degree through a lifelong education institute affiliated with a university. In this regard, it is thought that there should be first positive social awareness towards a degree recipient from such educations and more administrative promotion and active engagement of government, businesses and schools, in order to vitalize academic credit bank system. Meanwhile, there are only about 10 academic literatures including the dissertations on the operation of academic credit bank system with respect to cosmetology, which is not sufficient number in academic research, compared to the increasing number of people who want to acquire the degree. Most of the preceding studies have been limited to education services and learners’ satisfaction level. Therefore, continuous follow-up study is required on how to improve social awareness as well as teachers and instructors’ satisfaction level, as well as how to develop industry-customized curriculum, in order to ensure active academic credit bank system.

Keywords : Academic credit bank system, bachelor’s associate’s degree, operation situation, academic research trends

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I. Introduction

Since May 31, 1995, the Korean government has set out educational reform plan to lay the foundations for open education system and lifelong learning society, as its important educational reform to implement learning society through continued education, as it put academic credit bank system in practice. Under the "Act on Recognition of Credits, etc.", the academic credit bank system enables learners to acquire a bachelor’s/ associate’s degree when their accumulated credits meet a specified criteria, in which their learning and qualification activities recognized as academic credits in various forms inside and outside of a school, finally implementing open education system and lifelong learning society.

In particular, the academic credit bank system has strength in Korea’s cosmetology field with less professionals compared to other fields, providing less opportunities for open channel or higher education to many adult learners already being engaged in that business. In addition, academic credit bank systems are more increasing both in terms of quality and quantity, due to surging needs of learners who need educational link to enter a graduate school for further study cosmetology, because there are no 4-year university courses at a university and academic credit bank operating at a 2-year junior college(I. Park, 2001). There are lifelong education programs in operation under academic credit bank system, named “Cosmetology major in associate’s degree in industrial arts” at 121 lifelong educational institutions(Academic Credit Bank System at Institute for Lifelong Education ACBS, 2011). Quantitative explosion due to such increasing social demands would often lead to qualitative deterioration. Therefore, it requires for steady studies through scientific and academic approach and analysis, to ensure standardized education in the system. It is time to require for further examination across the industry, in order to ensure stability and qualitative improvement. However, in reality, cosmetology field has suffered the lack of cooperation and exchange of education resources at every institution and social prejudice toward this job based on academic background, which has been much difficulty in efficiently nurturing beauty professionals and communication in education (Y. Kim, 2011).

In this study, the analysis was made on the operation situation of academic credit bank system operating at about 100 educational institutions located in Seoul and Gyeonggi area, to provide helpful information for their system operation and to produce bachelor of cosmetology in capital area. In addition, academic research trends were also analyzed to give right directions of what follow-up study should be continued to establish scientific and academic standardization as well as literature system with respect to academic credit bank for bachelor of cosmetology.

II. Academic credit bank system

Academic credit bank system features lifelong learning and open education, where education is provided anytime anywhere under the Act on Recognition of Credits, etc (Yang, 2008). Then those with accumulated credits received from a college or a specified institute, are recognized as college graduates or those with equivalent degrees, or as a stepping stone to acquire bachelor’s degree or associate’s degree as a junior college graduate. Eligibility for this
system are: first, those who have had no opportunities for higher education in their best age; second, those who want continued education since college dropout; third, qualified workers without a diploma; fourth, those who want to major in any new field even with a diploma already; fifth, those who want to receive a diploma through academic credit bank system after passing the tests step-by-step for bachelor’s degree as self-education. All these people are keenly interested in academic credit bank system (Korean Educational Development Institute KEDI, 1998). In line with lifelong learning trends getting more important, academic credit bank system has seen its 17th year, since March 1998, reaching the number of about 570 educational institutions for academic credit bank system, producing about 290,000 learners as well as nearly 110,000 degree recipients, being positioned at Korea’s rapidly growing and representative open education and lifelong learning system (Institutes for life long education ILE, 2015). As such, much experienced adults can use academic credit bank system, using their various experiences and meeting the needs of rapidly changing society, to acquire not only a degree but also recent information. In particular, higher education institutions are facing the need for drastic change, due to rapidly changing society and economy, development in science & technology, and emerging learning society focused on knowledge & information. Now university and college need to further make meaningful contribute to adults who have not completed university/ college courses for any reason, providing them flexible opportunities of learning (M. Park, 2009). Learners under academic credit bank system, are raising their voices that there should be active promotion on good education providers and the enhanced related promotions and laws, pointing out many issues caused by Korea’s discrimination between academic degrees in order to make improved social recognition. According to them, important keys to ensure academic credit bank system are that financial support should be provided for learners participating in academic credit bank system; support extended in connection with an educational institution; channels for credits diversified; more numbers of learning methods in academic credit bank system; and such new teaching methods should be developed and introduced (Pyo, Y., & Kim, Y. (2013).

In addition, academic credit bank system is known to be flexible because it can be easily connected to other types of system. Academic credit bank system allows learner with credits to be eligible for test for bachelor’s degree as self-education. According to Article 7 ‘Act on Recognition of Credits, etc.’, learners with 35 or more credits recognized, are given with eligibility to take a test for basic major curriculum (Step 2 of test for bachelor’s degree as self-education), while those with 70 or more credits recognized may take a test for advanced intensive major course and those with 105 or more credits may take a comprehensive test to obtain a degree. To obtain a degree requires 140 credits for bachelor’s degree course at least and 80 credits (120 credits for 3-year college) for associate’s degree course. For both cases, 42 credits are required as annual maximum credits to complete, but not in excess of 24 credits per school semester. Per subject, one credit is composed of 15 units of learning course for 4 weeks or longer (one unit takes 50 minutes), while one credit (100 minute-class) is required for experiment and practices. There are two ways to grant a degree through academic credit bank system, which is given either by Minister of
III. Operation situation of academic credit bank system for academic degree of cosmetology

Cosmetic business is getting positioned as high value added industry in Korea. As Korea’s good cosmetics brands become more popular in Asia, the trends are making big market in terms of sales volume. Unlike others, cosmetic business is evaluated on the basis of its services, where a product purchased and evaluated at the same time. As it is a type of person-to-person service, human resources are more important than any other business. Even though many educational institutions have produced people with beauty-related certificates, success of this business depends on professionals and human resources who can read customers’ mind and get a good evaluation.(N. Shin, 2014). That is, good human resources can make sustainable growth in this industry. In this context, many educational institutions in various forms need to make develop specialized/ detailed curriculum in the corresponding fields, to making effort to produce professionals.

Cosmetology educational institution at a domestic college/university includes and is classified as beauty high school, regular 4-year universities and 2-year junior college equipped with department of cosmetology, cyber university, lifelong education center, courses provided by college-affiliated academic credit bank system and beauty schools, general institute with department of cosmetology, cultural center, adult & continuing education center and vocational training institute. Cosmetology education began at institutes in Korea. However, more colleges tend to more increasingly have department of cosmetology, making great influence on cosmetology education. Korea’s cosmetic business has started out standardized education since 1960s, before beautician license system introduced by law in 1961(H. An, 2012). Since 1980s with rapid economic growth due to active overseas trade, it has grown and reached current type of cosmetology institute system. Such economic growth has increased academic demands with keen interest in cosmetology (K. Lee & J. An, 2014). In the results, the number of cosmetology departments has increased to 110, since the first one was equipped with a junior college in 1991, while that at about twenty 4-year course spots as well as about 20 cosmetology-related departments even at graduate schools, contributing to both qualitative and quantitative academic growth. That is, the research literatures showed that only 120 junior colleges have department of cosmetology, while only about 20 4-year universities have it, which is remarkably low number. As learners definitely need, in reality, lifelong education system including academic credit bank system to obtain bachelor’s degree needed to go to a graduate school, more people want to acquire a degree through lifelong education institute affiliated with a university every year.

Therefore, this study was focused on academic credit bank system affiliated at a university.
### Table 1. Seoul & Gyeonggi Academic Credit Bank System for Cosmetology

| Lifelong education institute affiliated with college/university | Seoul | Gyeonggi area | Degree type |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|---------------|-------------|
| 4-year university course                                   | 6 universities | 5 universities | Bachelor’s degree in cosmetology |
| 2-year                                                      | 3 colleges | 1 college     | Associate’s degree in cosmetology |

The results of examination into 4-year courses at lifelong education institutes affiliated with university. KK University has opened 77 subjects, D Women’s University 35 subjects, SK University 47 subjects, SS Women’s University have 44 subjects and HS School have 35 subjects, with bachelor’s degree courses in operation under academic credit bank system. Meanwhile, schools with academic credit bank system in operation of 2-year courses at lifelong education institutes affiliated include S Healthcare College, JH Art College and MJ junior college, with 16 subjects, 31 subjects and 13 beauty-related subjects, respectively. In Seoul and Gyeonggi area, 4-year university courses under academic credit bank system at lifelong education institute affiliated include SG University (31 subjects), SH University(19 subjects), YI University(28 subjects), EJ University(28 subjects) and KN University (15 subjects) as bachelor’s degree course for cosmetology, while S Women’s College among 2-year colleges have produced graduates with associate’s degree in cosmetology. This means that most of learners are concentrated in Seoul and Gyeonggi area, with more educational institutions compared to other areas.

### IV. Academic research with respect to academic credit bank system for degrees in cosmetology

It was examined only into master’s and doctoral dissertations and domestic journals with respect to academic credit bank system for bachelor’s degree in cosmetology(cosmetology majors), and analyzed mainly on the purpose of a study, theme and research results.

Academic researches with respect to academic credit bank system have been actively conducted across various majors, while those with respect to cosmetology were only 8 dissertations and journal articles in total. This is thought as there has been the lack of research activities, considering for the increasing number of learners. In addition, most of such papers were about analysis on influential factors on learners’ satisfaction level, while the remaining were about satisfaction with educational service, that in curriculum and that of teachers and instructors, that in institution facilities as well as achievement level.

The analysis of D. Seo(2013) with cosmetology students as subjects, was focused mainly on the impact of academic credit bank system providers’ educational service quality and
satisfaction with education on students’ achievement level, their intent to re-register and word-of-mouth. Researchers like M. Park(2010) and N. Shin(2014) have also analyzed learners’ satisfaction level, while N. Shin(2014) reported that the highest satisfaction level in teaching methods shown in the entire programs, with different factors of satisfaction by major. A study of M. Park(2009) reported that research subjects regarded lifelong education such as academic credit bank system as very important, with high satisfaction level in cosmetology education. In addition, M. Park(2010) said that there was correlation between learners’ satisfaction level in curriculum and programs and positive awareness toward cosmetology education, where setting stable and faithful education content and program are to be a key to the operation of academic credit bank system. Further, Y. Kim & Choi(2011) and Y. Pyo & Y. Kim(2013) suggested, in their studies, the need to develop and improve various educational programs through which learners’ satisfaction level can be enhanced. In this context, there is a need not only for developing curriculum to raise learners’ satisfaction and activate programs, but also for a follow-up study in the future.

### Table 2. Academic Research with Respect to Academic Credit Bank System for Degrees in Cosmetology

| Type | Degree | Theme | Researcher | Key word |
|------|--------|-------|------------|----------|
| Thesis | Master | Survey on Operation situation and learners’ satisfaction level | M. Park (2010) | curriculum awareness level/ satisfaction level |
| | | Survey on Curriculum awareness level & learners’ satisfaction level | N. Shin (2014) | |
| | Doctoral | Impact of educational service quality and satisfaction with institution and achievement level on intentions to re-register and word-of-mouth | D. Seo (2013) | satisfaction with educational services/ achievement level |
| Journal | Paper | Survey on Impact on purpose of learning engagement on satisfaction with education | Y. Pyo, & Y. Kim (2013) | learning engagement level/ satisfaction with education |
| | | Academic credit bank system of cosmetology education status | M. Park (2009) | cosmetology education status |
| | | Demands on adult education by people engaged in cosmetic business | M. Pyo (2003) | adult education |
| | | Survey on learner’s satisfaction level in academic credit bank system and regular university | Y. Kim, & S. Choi (2011) | learners’ satisfaction level |
V. Conclusion and Contemplation

The analysis was made on the operation situation in academic credit bank system in Seoul and Gyeonggi area and that on recent academic research trends in academic credit bank system for degrees in cosmetology as follows:

1. Under academic credit bank system, the cosmetology degree granting educational institutions can be classified into regular 4-year university courses, 2-year college affiliated adult & continuing education centers, recognized vocational training institutions, distant colleges and vocational training institute. Since 2008, the academic credit bank system has allowed them grant and issue diploma in their names, instead of the name of the Minister of Education, which has led to more learners who intend to receive the degrees from academic credit bank system in operation at affiliated institutes.

2. Looking into how many 4-year university courses at lifelong education institutes affiliated with university in operation in Seoul and Gyonggi area, it was found in Seoul that 4-year university courses in operation at 6 universities and associate’s degree courses in 3 junior colleges under the academic credit bank system. In Seoul and Gyonggi area, it was found that 4-year university courses in operation at lifelong education institute affiliated with 5 universities under the academic credit bank system. Most of them said that they would establish new subjects and make the programs more active. Among 2-year colleges, S Women’s University was only one to produce its graduates with associate’s degree in cosmetology.

3. Academic researches with respect to academic credit bank system have been actively conducted across various majors, while those with respect to cosmetology were only 8 dissertations and journal articles in total. This is thought as there has been the lack of research activities, considering for the increasing number of learners. In addition, most of such papers were about analysis on influential factors on learners’ satisfaction level, while the remaining were about satisfaction with educational services, that in curriculum and that of teachers and instructors, that in institution facilities as well as achievement level.

4. Every year more people want to learn and acquire the degree through a lifelong education institute affiliated with a university. In this regard, it is thought that there should be first positive social awareness towards a degree recipient from such educations and more administrative promotion and active engagement of government, businesses and schools, in order to vitalize academic credit bank system. Therefore, it is time to realize the reality that cosmetology field is not concerned only with practice in field, but requires for more professional and academic development, where academic studies are required in various form rather than just staying on those to just analyze learners’ satisfaction level.

5. This study is the analyzed results limited to academic credit bank system, dissertations and articles published in journals focused on lifelong education institutes affiliated with universities/colleges especially in Seoul and Gyeonggi area, and this study needs to be careful when you try to extensively apply to the cases of the entire educational institutions and academic fields.
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