Academic Credit Bank System in Korea

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Concept & Necessity of ACBS

Current Trends & Analysis of ACBS

Completion of Accredited Courses & Recognition of Prior Learning in ACBS

Conclusion
Concept of ACBS in Korea: An educational system that accredits various learning experiences and prior learning.

E.g., certificates, exam results inside & outside school according to the Act of Recognition of Credits, etc.

After the accumulation of a certain amount of credits, a diploma can be earned & treated as equivalent to that of regular university or college.

In 1995, the Presidential Commission for Educational Reform suggested ACBS as a means to achieve an open learning society, to build a lifelong learning society, and to expand the opportunity for higher education.

MEST commissioned the Setting & Implementing to Korean Educational Development Institute in 1997, managed by NILE since 2008, when NILE was newly established according to the revised Lifelong Edu. Act.
1. Concept & Necessity of ACBS

- Learning experience in school
- Learning+Certificate, prior learning
- Learning experience out of school

Accreditation

Diploma
(Bachelor's Degree, Associate Degree)
2. Current Trends & Analysis of ACBS

1. Earning Rate of Higher Education Diploma by Age Cohort

Source: OECD(2010), Education at a glance
2. Current Trends & Analysis of ACBS

Number of Registered Learners in ACBS
(1998-2011: 676,243, Associate Degree: 267,962, Bachelor’s Degree: 408,281)
2. Current Trends & Analysis of ACBS

Number of Degree Holders at ACBS per year
(Total: 273,922/ Minister: 255,350, President: 18,572/
Associate Degree: 105,150, Bachelor’s Degree: 168,772)
Recognition of Educational Institutes as ACBS

Recognition of ACBS-affiliated institutes: Initially, these institutes are not regular universities. Through strict evaluation, they become ACBS institutes/facilities with educational programs incorporating subjects, instructors, consulting systems, etc., which are all evaluated by MEST & NILE. After they are recognized, subjects can be managed; all subjects would be identified with those of notified Standardized Curriculum by MEST/NILE.

When learners enroll and complete recognized subjects at ACBS-affiliated institutes, credits are earned and accredited the same as those of regular universities or colleges, i.e. having an equivalency of formal credits.

In 2012, recognized ACBS-affiliated institutes amounted to 547. Half of them belong to universities or colleges. This shows us why universities and colleges do not oppose the growth of ACBS, even the number of regular students have been decreasing with the advent of a lower fertility society.
Type & Number of ACBS-recognized Institutes

Total 547

*Lifelong learning centers affiliated with universities or colleges: 226
*In-depth courses in college: 17
*Special schools & advanced technical training schools: 5
*Public vocational training institutes related to MOEL: 2
  (MOEL: Ministry of Employment & Labor)
*Recognized private vocational training institutes related to MOEL: 74
*Private vocational & training institutes: 22
*Private social studies institutes: 12/ *Private arts institutes: 10
*Central governmental or local governmental educational institutes: 20
*Military educational institutes: 28
*Lifelong educational facilities: 120
*Institutes for important intangible cultural heritage: 11
### 2. Current Trends & Analysis of ACBS

Comparison between ACBS and Regular Universities & Colleges (2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>ACBS (A)</th>
<th>Universities &amp; Colleges (B)</th>
<th>A/B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student No. (Enrolled learners)</td>
<td>121,425 (accumulated 676,243)</td>
<td>2,842,189</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma earners</td>
<td>48,604</td>
<td>482,183</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of universities &amp; colleges (educational institutes)</td>
<td>547</td>
<td>330</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Current Trends & Analysis of ACBS

Expansion of Higher Education Opportunities for Adult Learners

Learner’s Enrollment Trends of ACBS by Age Cohort and Year

\[ f(x) = e^{20s} \]
\[ f(x) = e^{30\sim40s} \]
2. Current Trends & Analysis of ACBS

Establishment of SCBS to Continuing Vocational Education

Number of Diploma Earners through ACBS After Graduation from Regular University or College

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>BA</th>
<th>AD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2,424</td>
<td>2,424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>7,670</td>
<td>5,888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>12,461</td>
<td>10,952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>9,310</td>
<td>7,670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>2,875</td>
<td>4,830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>2,424</td>
<td>5,888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>16,892</td>
<td>12,461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>10,952</td>
<td>9,310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>2,875</td>
<td>4,830</td>
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<td>16,892</td>
<td>9,310</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Standardized Curriculum (SC) in ACBS

SC helps educational institutes run their courses and subjects according to ACBS. It provides the criteria for recognition of educational institutes and for accreditation of learners’ credits.

SC suggests the categories for degrees, majors, major subjects, liberal arts subjects, optional general subjects & the credits to be completed for each subject to determine the requisites for earning a diploma.

SC can be managed flexibly. It is considered a labor market with a coincidence of social needs, academic validity, feasibility, and adequacy of construction of curriculum.

As of 2012, 109 majors in 24 categories of BA, 109 majors in 13 associate degrees are notified by the government.
Completion of Accredited Courses and Subjects by ACBS

Adult learners who want to earn a higher education diploma enroll at the MEST-NILE recognized educational institutes. They could learn at 547 online and offline institutes. In 2011, 19,919 offline subjects and 1,818 online subjects were recognized.

They had to first think about a learning plan or learning design according to the Standardized Curriculum notified officially by MEST-NILE, and choose a degree type, major and subjects (major, liberal arts, and general).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Bachelor’s Degree</th>
<th>Associate Degree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-year</td>
<td>3-year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>140 credits &amp; more</td>
<td>80 credits &amp; more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major subject</td>
<td>60 credits &amp; more</td>
<td>45 credits &amp; more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal arts subject</td>
<td>30 credits &amp; more</td>
<td>15 credits &amp; more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optional general subject</td>
<td>48 credits &amp; more</td>
<td>36 credits &amp; more</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3. Completion of Accredited Courses & Recognition of Prior Learning in ACBS

**Recognition of Prior Learning 1: Certificate Acquirements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>No. of Certificates</th>
<th>No. of Accredited Certificates in ACBS (Total 581)</th>
<th>Rate of Accreditation (2012)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Certificate</td>
<td>512 under MOEL</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>69.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Certificate except NVC (NC)</td>
<td>132 under 23 Ministries</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officially Approved Private Certificate</td>
<td>88 under 12 Ministries</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>95.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Certificate</td>
<td>About 2,610</td>
<td>non credit</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company Certificate</td>
<td>About 110 under 55 Companies</td>
<td>non credit</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recognition of Prior Learning 2: BA Degree Exam for SDL

NEBD enables the self-directed learner to get a BA degree by passing the required exam. NEBD aims to facilitate lifelong learning through a 4-stage process of qualifying exams.

4 steps of the applicant’s qualifications for a BA degree:
* 1<sup>st</sup> step: liberal arts exam; if passed, has the qualification equivalent of having taken a liberal arts course at a regular university or college
* 2<sup>nd</sup> step: major-basic exam
* 3<sup>rd</sup> step: major-advance exam
* 4<sup>th</sup> step: comprehensive exam

9 Majors at NEBD: Korean Language and Literature, English Linguistics and Literature, Business Administration, Law, Public Administration, Early Childhood Education, Home Economics, Computer Science, and Nursing

Even one fails or dropouts in the midst of pursuing a degree, s/he can be accredited credits until the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage.
3. Completion of Accredited Courses & Recognition of Prior Learning in ACBS

Recognition of Prior Learning 3: Possession or Transmission Education
Results of Important Intangible Cultural Heritage (IICH)

In modern society, it is becoming more and more difficult to preserve the IICH that is easily disappearing. Transmission education does not count as a formal education. Disciples who want to a degree must attend formal universities or colleges outside transmission edu. institute.

ACBS accredits learning experiences from a traditional transmission education as formal credits.

There are 119 kinds of IICH, so 119 majors and 7 different categories of degrees were notified: traditional handicraft, traditional music, traditional performance, traditional dance, traditional liquor-making, traditional food-making, and traditional martial arts.

The ACBS also accredits transmission education certificates as credits unequally from masters, master assistants, completers, and to disciples or learners.
3. Completion of Accredited Courses & Recognition of Prior Learning in ACBS

Recognition of Prior Learning 4: Completion of Part-time Courses at School

Completion of part-time courses can occur in regular universities or colleges. After part-time students learn at school, they would be accredited by the ACBS.

Recognition of Prior Learning 5: Acquirement of University or College

Acquirement of a university or college credit helps people who have dropped out of regular school. The credits they previously achieved can be accredited through the ACBS, allowing them to continue their learning process.

Also, if one desires to pursue another degree other than the one s/he has already achieved, s/he only has to take part of the courses. In such a case, there is no need to repeat any courses, thus saving time and money, allowing one to learn more advanced courses.
ACBS works as a successful educational system as lifelong learning society today requires higher education, new skills, and knowledge. The reasons for success: no particular enrollment process, higher accessibility to educational institutes, a flexible curriculum, many majors.

Most importantly, ACBS includes recognition of prior learning so that learners can save time and money, enabling one to learn more advanced courses.

Recognition of prior learning as credits in ACBS: recognition of credits for various certificates, examination results of the National Examination for BA, transmission education results of important intangible cultural heritage, part-time learning results, and the credits from regular universities and colleges.
4. Conclusion

Since 2008, Accounts for Lifelong Learning (ALL) records, accumulates, and provides the opportunity to get elementary and junior secondary school diplomas. Adult literacy education, prior learning which cannot be recognized by the ACBS due to a lower level than higher education, private certificates, author, patents, volunteer activities, and job background.

ACBS will continue to expand by continuously corresponding needs of the lifelong learning society, the demands of learners and institutes, and the government’s request. Accreditations to Industrial masters, professional technologists, talented people in arts and sports, military career, international certificates, and prior learning from foreign countries for international migration of labor will be forecasted.
Quality control is more required, institutes will be compete each other for more learners, online classes overly expanded, degradation of ACBS and degree mills will be happened under the neo-liberalism. These kinds of expansion without quality control threatens the raison d’être of the ACBS.