Profiling the Learning Styles of Students in Cyber University

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Abstract

Web learning is considerably different from traditional ways of learning; learners must adjust to new learning strategies and patterns in order to adapt to a different learning environment. This article focuses on developing a typology of web-based learning styles. The research subjects are students in the Cyber University at the National Sun Yat-San University in Taiwan. Based on the literature review and field observation, we collected and analyzed the students' learning records from the system log files. Six measures were used to perform cluster analyses: the number of attendances; the number of postings; the number of discussions; reading duration; pages read; and percentage of scheduled progress achieved. The results revealed four different learning styles, viz.: aggressive knowledge-seekers; active participants; silent cultivators; and heavy sleepers. The analyses demonstrated that academic achievement, and the decision to discontinue schooling, differed among the cluster groups. Implications for learning, assessment, and teaching are also discussed.

Key words：Cluster analysis; Learning style; Web learning