UNIT 2.

STRENGHTS AND

WEAKNESSES

AIM

The aim is to compare the strong offline functionality systems with other online applications through the analysis of their strengths and weaknesses

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Unit 2. Strengths and weaknesses

2.1. Introduction

Nowadays, various teaching methods in education are trying to replace traditional teaching and learning. The different methods of imparting education have become more enjoyable to be known and discussed these days. Despite the potential and capabilities of mobile devices, numerous issues and challenges may arise when it comes to adopting e-learning and m-learning offline practices (AVANZO, 2022; Easy LMS B.V., 2022; FAO, 2021; Paradiso Solutions, n.d.).

2.2. Strengths

- It encourages self-training and avoids the direct dependence of the student on the teacher. Students can find all necessary and complementary resources and activities on the platform, which they can consult as many times as they need.
- The student is placed at the centre of the training process. Contrary to generic books, the resources are interactively developed for and focused on the students. Therefore, formats change, so what used to be expressed in two pages of a textbook is now a video or an infographic.
- Everyone can easily create Courses, Exams and Assessments of any topic based on existing ones or from scratch. Most of the time, the creation and editing options are extensive, as with the offer of courses.
- While face-to-face or online synchronous training requires schedules, offline learning offers the flexibility of work at any time, without the availability of an internet connection (mobile data or Wi-Fi) or teachers.
- With reduced dependency on traditional learning methods like the face to face or classroom setting, the teaching/teacher's costs get considerably reduced. The same happens in regions with the necessary knowledge; fewer teachers are required, and they can act as coordinators of the offline content.
- Everyone receives the same quality in their training, without depending on different trainers, with greater or lesser knowledge and pedagogical skills.
- Efficient reporting opportunities for teachers and students, which allows to keep track of progress and give insights into the students' performance. Therefore, teachers and students can identify weaknesses and reinforce training in these topics.
- They can set their own pace of learning, which benefits their experiences and results and retain information better. There is no need for quicker students bored and waiting students that require more time, or the latter not completing the task because there is a higher rhythm in the session.
- The learning process becomes easier as the learners do not have to travel to attend the classes every day. Hence, the dropout rate reduces, while the company experiences a better return on the invested time and money for well-informed employees or students.

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- Costs for students are reduced. They only need to download content in a place with an internet connection from time to time. So, there is no need for an ultrafast data mobile or home Wi-Fi connection that usually is costly. Moreover, as the frequency of transport to learning centres is significantly reduced, costs in transportation or fuel also do.
- Offline learning also translates to the reduced cost of implementation for schools. They require less material; only a computer is needed for producing/verifying the electronic material.

2.3. Weaknesses

- The screen size on some devices (mobile phones, tablets, or even computers) makes it difficult to access resources that require proper visualization, such as technical images, equations, or data input. Moreover, in some applications, content is not downloaded with full resolution.
- Different mobile devices run different hardware/software, each with its own rules. Learners using other devices can experience problems in educational settings, as applications may not be compatible with their platform.
- Limited storage for offline downloads, mainly for not so modern devices.
- Poor battery life, especially when running gaming applications, or when running several applications simultaneously.
- Mobile devices' lifespan is limited and depends on how a device is handled and used, often proving costly both for learners and the environment. Moreover, planned obsolescence can be a problem.
- Security and confidentiality of private information and other safety issues due to cybercrime, identity theft and cyberbullying. Protocols and technologies should be improved to accommodate m-learning requirements.
- Cost can be a barrier to widespread use, especially for the new generation, full-featured models.
- Distracted learning because of time spent in front of a screen can become addictive, and learners can be easily distracted by social media while learning.
- Despite its strong potential, m-learning is fragmented and remains limited to single projects and initiatives.
- Poor digital infrastructure, digital illiteracy and irregular power supply, connectivity and technology provision are some aspects that limit m-learning, especially in developing countries.
- The content to download must be carefully selected; otherwise, the instruction is interrupted for an extended period.
- Lack of valuable content, especially in local languages, and inadequate national-level implementation policies are additional issues that prevent many learners from capitalizing on the full potential of m-learning. Many countries now have policies to ensure that everyone has access to the Internet. The international community and governments have supported a range of initiatives and facilitation mechanisms, working together with mobile operators, telecom providers and Internet service providers. Universal Service and Access Funds are public funds financed primarily through contributions made by mobile network operators dedicated to expanding Internet connectivity.

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