Webinar-Based Capacity Building for Teachers: "Lifeblood in Facing the New Normal of Education"

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ABSTRACT

Webinars as an avenue for professional development training remain to be scarcely explored, impeding the innovations in human resource development, which, if left unresolved, could have detrimental consequences to the professionals and ultimately, the economy. This study responded to this gap by exploring and examining the meanings around webinars as capacity-building for professionals from the point of view of the teachers. Guided by the post-modern, constructivist philosophical stance, interpretive hermeneutic phenomenology research design, and the interpretive analysis of qualitative data, the virtual face-to-face interview of the purposively selected 35 teachers revealed four overarching themes: (1) Webinars as vital space for formal professional deliberations; (2) Webinars as matters of personal, environmental, technical, and financial tolls; (3) Webinars as prevue of what lies ahead in the new normal of education; and (4) Webinars as the lifeblood in facing the new normal of education. Overall, the themes purport that despite the different issues that teachers encountered in the navigation of webinar complexities, their learning and discovery, cultivated connections, and developed hope for the newer education system and continued professional growth in the future, are what makes webinars their lifeblood in facing the new normal of education. These findings can help human resource development personnel craft webinar training plans and protocols that are congruous to the present situations, common interests, and nature of professional teachers.

INTRODUCTION

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to create havoc in all sectors of the world's societies, the governments of many countries are conscientiously implementing

various measures to prevent and control its spread including home-quarantine and social distancing protocols, lockdowns, and surveillance activities among others (Clare, 2020; Kharpal, 2020). As a result, the people's mobility and congregation are restricted to their homes, leaving them to work, learn, and meet via online means (Ali, 2020; Chawla, 2020; Department of Labor and Employment, 2020; Shakya et al., 2020). As for the education sector, alternative academic methods including digital or technology-based approaches are put into place to ensure the continuity of its academic undertakings (Iivari et al., 2020; Li & Lalani, 2020; Lieberman, 2020). Now more than ever, technology has become a necessity for many schools and universities because it offers a quick and sometimes immediate resolution to various issues in education. While policymakers and education leaders are working rapidly for the execution of various alternative academic methods despite the limited time and resources, teachers are experiencing the brunt of it evident from their participation in various webinar-based capacity building training amidst the pandemic (Toquero et al., 2020; Verma et al., 2020).

Digital settings have become increasingly prevalent in education (Gegenfurtner & Ebner, 2019). Webinar-based capacity building or simply known as webinar has emerged as one of the important training platforms for professionals nowadays to acquire knowledge and skills necessary in their line of work since traditional live conferences and face-to-face capability-building activities take a backseat in this time

of the pandemic. A webinar or web-based seminar has almost the same configurations with the face-to-face seminars except that it is conducted over the internet and audio-visual means (Toquero et al., 2020). It is typically done wherein both participants and facilitators communicate live over the internet across distant geographical locations using shared virtual platforms (e.g Zoom, Microsoft Teams) for purposes like professional training, work, conference, lecture, marketing, and education among others. The possibilities that webinars offer have been explored in various scientific studies.

In the meta-analysis and systematic review study of Gegenfurtner and Ebner (2019), it was found out that webinars are more effective than asynchronous learning management systems and face-to-face classroom instruction. Ebner and Gegefurtner (2019) also discovered that learners' satisfaction in webinars is higher than asynchronous online instruction. The study of Gegenfurtner et al. (2019) also noted that participants across content areas of supply chain management, industrial management, early childhood education, and mathematics had positive reactions to webinars as they offer high levels of geographical flexibility. Indeed, the ubiquity and geographical flexibility are recognizable benefits of webinars that traditional, offline face-to-face interactions hardly offer. Moreover, other advantages were also explored such as cost-effectiveness, accessibility, and convenience (Gegenfurtner & Ebner, 2019; Gegenfurtner et al., 2019;

Lieser et al., 2018) which further the viability of webinars as a supplement for traditional conferences and capability-building training especially in this time of the pandemic (Toquero et al., 2020).

The function of a webinar is intrinsically educational in nature. Both the students and teachers interact synchronously online anywhere, in contrast with the typical asynchronous interaction that various learning management systems provide (Ebner & Gegenfurtner, 2019; McKinney, 2017). During the teaching-learning process done through a webinar session, features can include didactical activities similar to the traditional, offline class such as screen sharing of videos and lecture presentations, facilitating classroom interaction through question and answer, providing real-time feedback, and conducting follow-up analyses and evaluation. These explain the satisfaction and enjoyment of students, lecturers, and educational leaders in webinar participation (Cornelius & Gordon, 2013; Gegenfurtner et al., 2018; Kear et al., 2012; Wang & Hsu, 2008) especially when webinar is integrated in distance education and blended learning programs (Gegenfurtner et al., 2018; Testers et al., 2019). Hence, webinar as capacity building for professionals, albeit needing further exploration (Gegenfurtner et al., 2019), is implicitly presented. While it is noted that webinar has increased its utility in education and viability for training and human resource development, these do not imply the webinar's optimal affordances. This is due to several boundary conditions that can mediate its successful conduct.

Recent studies on the conduct of webinar and online education have indicated different issues such as the technical requirements needed (e.g smartphones, laptops, and software) and those related to internet connectivity and power supply (e.g. Bean et al., 2019; Luongo, 2018; Olesova et al., 2011; Srichanyachon, 2014; Sinha & Bagarukayo, 2019). The characteristics of webinar participants can also be an intervening factor as studies have shown that age and gender (Khechine et al., 2014; Lakhal et al., 2013), motivations, (Barbour & Reeves, 2009), and critical literacies like creativity and flexibility (Kop, 2011) are crucial for online education and webinar success.Another aspect is the environment. Bao (2020) found out that learners have difficulty focusing in their online classes due to a number of distractions in their homes that cause their stress (Händel et al., 2020). Professional teachers share the same experience, specifically, their missing social connection at work instigated by the unusual setup (e.g web-based teaching) (Stadtlander et al., 2017, Stadtlander et al., 2014).

The aforementioned literature and studies generally show how webinar as a special case of web conferencing strongly supports the educational function of teaching and learning as well as its viability for human resource development and training despite several boundary conditions. Scientific studies about webinar are far from adequate (Gegenfurtner et al., 2019) and many problems and issues around it as a form of professional development remain to be unresolved. These gaps could

have detrimental consequences to the citizens and ultimately, the economy. Hence, this study aimed to explore and examine the meanings around webinars as capacity-building for professionals from the point of view of the teachers. Furthermore, this paper aimed to discover how teachers relate the meaning of their webinar participation to the context of implementing the new normal of education. This study sought to answer the following research questions: What is the lived experience of teachers in webinar-based capacity building?; and How do teachers make sense of their experience of webinar-based capacity building training in relation to implementing the new normal of education?

Philosophical Stance

As this study aimed to explore and examine the teachers' standpoint on webinar as a form of capacity-building for professionals and how the meaning of their webinar participation to the context of implementing" the new normal of education, this study adhered to the postmodern, constructivist philosophical stance. It posits that the meaning of reality is created through internal (constructivist) and social (constructionist) processes (Gergen, 2009) wherein the understanding of self and the world is co-constructed from the personal narratives of those who have lived the experience (Angus & McLeod, 2004) and personal interpretation of the interviewer. Thus, it creates a shared meaning of the phenomenon studied. Imbued with this view, researchers adhere to the hermeneutic approach of inquiry where sense-making of the phenomenon is done through the individual and collective responses (Oxley, 2016). This is consistent with the belief of the researchers that the "truths" being perceived in the world and the current ways of understanding the world are not a product of objective observation, but a product of intertwining social processes and interactions in which people are constantly engaged with. Accordingly, the researchers gather multiple perspectives to produce a kind of truth about webinar participation in times of pandemic through the lenses of all the people participating in the study.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study utilized an interpretive hermeneutic phenomenology (IHP) to explore the meanings of webinar-based capacity building from the point of view of the teachers who are making sense of it. IHP is a qualitative methodology used to understand the subjective, lived experience of individuals using an idiographic approach – an in-depth exploration of individual experience – to develop a general claim (Paley, 2018). With the situation of the pandemic that is constantly evolving and decision making is apparently uncertain, the utilization of this kind of phenomenology is viable because it capitalizes on topics that are "complex, ambiguous, and emotionally laden" (Smith & Osborn, 2008). Moreover, the use of IHP for this study is in line with the postmodern, constructivist philosophical stance as this methodology places special importance on the subjectivity, biases,

and prejudices of both researchers and informants of the study. Hence, a shared understanding of the phenomenon under study is achieved through the reciprocal process of interpretation during the in-depth interaction of the researchers with the study's informants (Spence, 2001). Following this can generate in-depth, meaningful findings on webinar participation that numbers and statistics in quantitative design can hardly provide.

The informants of this study are the 35 teachers who were purposively selected through the following criteria: a) teachers who had participated in webinars more than five times intending to be capacitated with fundamental knowledge on the new normal of education; b) teachers who can thoroughly and willingly share their lived-experience in webinars; and c) teachers who perceived webinar as a novel way of capacity-building. All these criteria are necessary to produce a meaningful dialogue about webinars in times of pandemic – a fundamental consideration of sense-making using IHP.

The number of informants of this study was conceived using the tenet of data saturation wherein the information gathered after multiple interviews from the informants of the study becomes repetitive at a certain point (Fusch & Fusch, 2015; Fusch & Ness, 2015). Of the 35 educators, 17 are teaching at the secondary level, nine are teaching at the elementary level, and nine are teaching at the college level. All of them have more than five years of teaching experience.

The data in this study were collected through virtual, individual, face-to-face interview that ranged from 60 to 90 minutes in length with English language as the medium of communication. A retrospective interviewing technique was utilized to capture the informants' past experiences with webinar-based capacity building training and the meaning they have derived from these in relation to implementing the new normal of education. The interview formally began with an opening question, "Could you share your experience on webinar-based capacity building?" followed by different prompts such as: "Tell me more about …"; and "Could you give specific occurrence or example…" Afterward, they were asked "How do you relate the meaning of your webinar experience to the implementation of the new normal of education?" Then, follow-up questions on this matter were asked as well.

Consistent to the study's philosophical stance and IHP methodology, steps in making sense of the interview transcripts were followed as excerpted in the works of Heidegger (1996), Kvale (1996), and Patton (2002). First, the interviews were transcribed and then read several times thereafter (second step). The transcriptions were presented in the form of significant statements or statements that directly answer the research questions. Then, the identified significant statements were clustered according to similar meanings and relationships to induce a general "sense" of informants' lived experience of webinar-based capacity building. This process forms the sub-themes of this study. Finally, another

clustering of sub-themes with similar sense based on the interpretation of the researcher was done to conceive different major themes that represent the shared meaning of webinar-based capacity building training.

Ethical Consideration

An informed consent form (ICF) in Portable Document Format (pdf) was provided to each informant via personal email address. After their confirmation to participate evidently from their affixed electronic signature in the ICF, the details of the study were carefully explained by the researchers including the purpose of the study, potential risks, and confidentiality and anonymity statement. Further, the tenets of voluntary participation and freedom to withdraw in the interview were also explained.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After a thorough analysis process of the study's informants' responses, four themes emerged that described the meaning of the teachers' experience in webinar-based capacity building training. These are: Webinars as vital space for formal professional deliberations; Webinars as matters of personal, environmental, technical, and financial tolls; Webinars as prevue of what lies ahead in the new normal of education; and Webinars as the lifeblood in facing the new normal of education.

Theme 1: Webinars as Vital Space for Formal Professional Deliberations

When the informants of the study were asked about their experiences in webinar-based capacity building training all of them have learned that it is a vital space for formal professional deliberations in times of pandemic. As expressed by Informant 20:

"Participating in webinars enables one to connect with colleagues. Although you already have social media and other means to connect with them, but webinars give a sense of formality in the connection. You get to talk about professional life and career in a formal way unlike in social media where you just talk about everything without reservations… Also, the webinar-based capacity building does not only further my ability to do new things, but also enhances my ability to function and continue to stay relevant in the 'new normal'."

The rest of the informants have the same tenor of the response of Informant 20 describing how a webinar can connect with colleagues with formality, which gave them the opportunity and space to talk about professional matters that require a serious tone. With the advent of webinars as an innovative form of professional training, indeed, digitalization has reached every aspect of human activities including the transformation of human-resource development mechanism design, delivery, and implementation (Goe et al., 2018; McKinney, 2017). Webinars in this time of crisis have proven their ingenuity by providing the people, most especially the professionals, a safe way to keep their professional engagements going while

maintaining physical distance. Similarly, this finding provides more evidence to the past literature that technology-enhanced training using digital and blended learning approaches provide positive perception to the trainees (e.g. Amhag, 2015; C. L. Johnson & Schumacher, 2016).

Other study's informants expressed that webinars afford ubiquitous access to training material, high levels of geographical flexibility, and interactive mode of learning modality that can facilitate various content-topic organization, lesson delivery, and assessment methods. This further fortifies their ideas that webinars can become a hot trend in the new normal of professional training, and remote education can become the new normal in the teaching-learning landscape. As expressed by Informant 14:

> *"Because webinars give you the opportunity to have a serious talk about professional matters, you are able to get your head working, making you realize on many things like how technology can offer the teacher in terms of organization and delivery of different learning topics using computer software or phone applications. I think webinars can become a hot trend for professional trainings because I am able to learn many things using it. It also provided me an idea that remote learning is a feasible strategy in the new normal of education."*

The continuity of any business undertakings in academic, sales, and social service sectors in this time of pandemic has become a primary concern for all (Hernando-Malipot, 2020; Paulo, 2020; United Nations, 2020). This propelled the implementation of different digital communication platforms to communicate with employees and stakeholders, making work environments more flexible, feasible, and innovative. Inferring from the responses of the study's informants, webinar-based capacity building has become their professional lifeline in times of pandemic especially that it played a crucial role in helping their academic undertakings to keep up, cope with, and transform for the better. In recent years, webinars have gained growing attention (Carrick et al., 2017; McMahon-Howard & Reimers, 2013; Stout et al., 2012) primarily because these make synchronous online education and training possible from anywhere with internet connectivity. However, many webinar-related studies only tackle the field of mental health training (Harned et al., 2014), psychotherapy (Kanter et al., 2013), health professions (Liu et al., 2016), marketing (Harrison, 2014), and topics related to teachers' meaning-making of webinar participation are scarce. Although there are several studies that gauge webinars as a teaching and learning tool in promoting student achievement, mostly they are systematic reviews and analyses (e.g. Cook et al., 2010; Taveira-Gomes et al., 2016) which usually fail to capture the meanings of webinar participation. Qualitative studies on webinars exist (C. M. Johnson et al., 2011; Wang & Hsu, 2008) yet, they adhered to different methodologies and philosophical

stances which can produce different results although equally important.

Theme 2: Webinars as Matters of Personal, Environmental, Technical, and Financial Tolls

As the informants continued to share the advantages they have drawn out from participating in various webinar-based capacity building training, their sharing apparently shifted to the issues and limitations relating to personal, environmental, technical, and financial aspects.

All the informants have learned how webinar participation is a matter of personal toll for them. More specifically, 17 of them shared about the need to have a long attention span and 18 shared about the need to be open-minded. Informant 9 expressed:

> *"Participating in webinars is a matter of attention span, meaning the quality of your participation will depend on how much you can sustain your attention listening to the speaker. It is a challenge for me to join in webinars because I am the kind of participant who wants to be more engaged rather than be passive. So, what happens is that I'll just do my other work at home and set the webinar on loudspeaker so I can still listen. Also, participants need to be open-minded that webinar is a new training approach because if not, it can make them question the worth of their participation."*

The responses above show how webinars are being delivered passively to the teachers, that compelled them to sustain an all-speaker-talk discussion. This does not suit to adult learners as they are in nature active participants in the training or learning process (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011; Hoggan et al., 2009). Accordingly, webinar trainers should also consider that in this time of pandemic, many are feeling disconnected and isolated because of distance (Tanucan & Bojos, 2021); hence, webinars conducted passively could only make the participants' dire situation worse. Online classes and webinars must be designed in a way that is engaging for them to capture students' interests (Hodges et al., 2020) and, at the same time, receptive to the present situation.

Conversely, the responses have also indicated that webinars should be implemented with open-mindedness to be successfully accepted and executed. Just like what the study's informants explained, if the participants cannot make themselves open to the webinar as a training modality, it can cause qualms as to whether or not webinar participation is worthy of their time and effort. This shows that there are some who are critical in the use of webinars. Some of these reasons can be explained in past literature on technology adoption such as the studies of Ertmer (1999), Hew and Brush (2007), and Kopcha (2012) that explained the five categories of technology adoption barriers – Access, Vision, Beliefs, Time, and Professional Development; the study of Christensen and Knezek (2008) that

explained how technology attitude, digital competency, and access to technology affect the level of technology integration into classrooms; and the studies of Hayes (2007), Park and Ertmer (2008), Sugar and Kester (2007) that noted how vision and belief about the usefulness of technology can affect staff resilience of using it when encountering difficulties. With the multiplicity of factors that are needed to be considered before the webinars are adopted in the teaching and learning process including the training of professionals, education leaders and implementers could have conducted initial conversations with teachers to ensure their optimal and successful participation.

On the other hand, all the informants have learned how webinar participation is a matter of environmental toll for them. Twenty of the study's informants pointed out that webinar participation requires a well-ventilated and lighted surrounding especially when the training obliges the participant to turn on their audio and video for monitoring and participation purposes. Moreover, another 15 participants explained the need to have a less-distracting environment when joining a webinar because unnecessary, incommodious background noises are disconcerting not only to other participants, but also in the training in general. Informant 12 said that:

> *"It is highly encouraged that all participants in the training be in an environment that is noise-free because background noises such as the barking of dogs, the crying of children, and others can be distracting to the other participants and to the overall flow of the webinar training. However, this is easier said than done because teachers like me do not have the luxury of working space at home."*

Furthermore, another 11 informants – the group with no prior experience in the use of webinars – have pointed out the lack of people who can support or help them in carrying out the complicated tasks of webinars. As Informant 33 expressed:

> *"I am not familiar with the different software introduced in the webinar; even the webinar itself is new to me. This is worsened because there is no one who can help me in different complicated tasks that the trainers are asking me to do…I usually end up doing and learning nothing."*

Participating in webinars brings professional and personal aspects of life together which is difficult to manage. Although there may be those who have the luxury to find a less-distracting space at their homes, for professionals whose income is enough only for their daily commodities, webinar participation is a challenge. As the pandemic has led to a massive relocation of work and classes to the people's respective homes, those who are frequently attending various webinars can relate to the seemingly unavoidable issues such as the usual demands and responsibilities at home, lack of academic peer support, and the feeling of isolation and disconnectedness. For instance, many

learners found it difficult to focus during their online teaching in comparison to on-site teaching because many think that they are in an inappropriate learning environment (Bao, 2020), making them to feel overloaded and stressed out (Händel et al., 2020). This situation is also true for professionals. According to the study by Stadtlander et al. (2017), teachers who are in unconventional work environments such as web-based teaching feel that they are unconnected to their employer, resulting in their unfavorable working conditions and employer-employee interaction.

Nonetheless, all the informants have learned how webinar participation is a matter of technical toll. Twenty-five informants said that having audio-visual technologies, strong internet connectivity, and virtual communications software or applications and the affordance on how to use them are the things that webinar participants have to prepare to ensure smooth and uninterrupted involvement. As shared by Informant 26:

> *"If you are not a digital native person like me, participating in webinars can compel you to buy the technologies that you have not bought or used in your life. Like for me, although I know what the Zoom application is about, but I never tried using it in my life until now... So, because we are now in the new normal, I have no other better options but to buy and learn at the same time audio-visual visual technologies and computer software even if they are expensive."*

Reflecting on the above response, it is understood that training delivered via webinar platforms is feasible for those who have the capacities and capabilities to navigate them. The technology gap or digital divide between the well-off and less well-off teachers can be a problem in the full participation and implementation of webinar-based capacity building training. This elucidates how webinars necessitate from the participants the minimum technical requirements such as smartphones, laptops, and digital software programs including the affordances on their usage. It has been known in the principle of digital or technological training that participants have to understand and feel comfortable with the technology they are using and with many other types of technology in order for them to realize the full benefits of the training. Unfortunately, even in more stable contexts with adequate infrastructure and connectivity, many professionals like the teachers lack even the most basic information and communication technology (ICT) skills which in many research studies pointed out as one of the barriers to the effective conduct of online education (Bean, et al., 2019; Luongo, 2018; Olesova et al., 2011). In other words, the successful conduct of webinar-based activities entails an understanding of the technological resources and capabilities of the participants which in this time of pandemic were not comprehensively considered, resulting in problems related to stress, pressure, work overload, and webinar fatigue.

Finally, for this theme, all the informants have learned how webinar participation is a matter of financial toll for them because it requires and demands from the participants the appropriate working space and the needed technical requirements. As for Informant 8:

> *"I bought a new laptop in order for me to participate in webinars and prepare for the new normal in education. If I do not do it, I think in the future I will encounter problems because I do not have the right tools…It is stressful on my part to do this because the money you spent on the technology could be used for the needed food and medicine in this pandemic."*

While webinar-based capacity building training aims to provide the needed professional development for teachers especially in the midst of rolling out remote learning approaches in education, one has to consider that not all have the capabilities and capacities to access this opportunity. The start-up cost for online learning can be expensive as ICT equipment and digital software and applications do not come cheap – a factor that instigates unfavorable perception and adoption of online education (Sinha & Bagarukayo, 2019; Srichanyachon, 2014). This is on top of the perennial issue regarding the slow and unreliable network connections. Many literature have cited the long-standing concern with regards to the digital divide or the unequal access to technology inlcuding how people engage differently with digital resources (Belet, 2018; Benson et al., 2002; Hargittai, 2003). Access to technology has always been stratified with racial and ethnic minorities. People from the lower socio-economic backgrounds and those who are in rural areas less likely afford to buy or access computer and internet connectivity (Clark & Gorski 2002; Hargittai 2003). Unequal access to technology can contribute to lower rates of digital literacy that can put students and professionals with meager income at a disadvantage in online educational settings. Hence, implementing webinars quickly without providing technical and/or financial support can produce stark divides for both students and professionals who can afford and those who cannot, and those who are native in technology and those who are not.

Theme 3: Webinars as Prevue of What Lies Ahead in the New Normal Of Education

As the informants share about their experience (good or bad) in participating in different webinar activities, all of them have realized that webinars are a prevue of what lies ahead in the new normal of education. Nineteen informants shared specifically how education is possible amidst social distancing and home quarantine. Informant 25 expressed:

> *"Participating in webinars makes me realize that education amidst the home quarantine is possible… Learning a lot in webinars, especially the different online and offline means to educate a child,*

gives me hope that our students in the new normal of education will still get the best learning that they deserve."

On the other hand, 16 informants particularly highlighted the future issues and problems that students would encounter when doing remote synchronous learning. The majority of their sharing anticipated that the different struggles encountered during their webinar participation might be similar to what their students would encounter in the future. Informant 9 said:

"Given that I had a lot of problems during my webinar participation like the problem on internet connectivity, distractions in the house, lack of knowledge on the use of different technologies, I think these too would be the same struggles of my students ...The good thing is that I had experienced these problems first hand because if I hadn't experienced them, I would probably end up less emphatic to my students."

The above responses connotethat webinars have a major role in providing a glimpse of what future lies ahead for students in remote synchronous learning. Further, it has provided the teachers with a more empathetic stance on the future struggles and problems of the students as they had experienced them first hand during their webinar participation. This finding is a fresh perspective of webinar participation

as past studies on this matter were more directed to effectiveness, satisfaction, and student outcomes (e.g. Cornelius & Gordon, 2013; Gegenfurtner et al., 2018; Taveira-Gomes et al., 2016) and rarely that this topic is explored.

Theme 4: Webinars as the Lifeblood in Facing the New Normal of Education

Within the span of a few months after the outbreak of COVID-19 in Wuhan, China, hundreds of countries had closed their schools and universities indefinitely following the social distancing measures recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO). This has affected more than a billion students. While many governments are quick to respond to this academic problem by implementing remote learning, many teachers have hastily transformed their existing teaching and learning resources digitally using the knowledge they have acquired from different webinar-based capacity building training. Informant 4 expressed:

"Despite the different challenges I encountered during my webinar participation, I can see that my sacrifices and effort are worth it because webinars are not just there to hassle and stress us out, but they serve as our lifeblood in facing the new normal of education. You see, without the different webinars provided for us, it would be impossible to transform our lessons digitally, reconnect with our colleagues, and talk about

important professional matters. Traditional face-to-face training activities are not feasible during this time, thus, whether we like it or not, webinars saved us from our uncertainties."

All of the informants have realized that despite the different problems and apprehensions they encountered as they navigate through the complexities of webinars in times of pandemic, the things that they have learned and discovered, connections that they have reclaimed, and hope that they have built for the newer education system and continuity of their professional career in the future are what make webinar-based capacity building training their lifeblood in facing the new normal of education. Indeed, webinars can assemble individuals from various locations and of different backgrounds under a single platform to discuss topics that matter (European Institute for Training and Development, n.d.). As teachers are confounded with several challenges in their profession (Tanucan, 2019; Tanucan & Hernani, 2018), the use of technology including the adoption of and participation in webinars can be a wise decision as they can become an ally in surviving the new normal of education.

CONCLUSION

The lived experience of teachers in webinar-based capacity building training contains a combination of learning and realizations on the affordances of webinars and remote learning. More specifically, the teachers have learned that webinars can expand their potential in presenting their respective lessons digitally whether in synchronous and asynchronous formats through the different tools, knowledge, and experience they have acquired from their participation. Webinars also served as a virtual avenue for formal professional deliberations in times of pandemic. Furthermore, teachers have learned that navigating the complexities of webinars takes a heavy toll on them as it demands personal, environmental, technical, and financial necessities.

On the other hand, teacher participants' realizations include a more considerate stance for students in their remote learning, the inevitability of struggles and problems in the process, and the understanding that webinar participation, amidst its challenges and stress, is their lifeblood in facing the new normal of education.

RECOMMENDATION

As current empirical studies on webinars in contexts of training, human resource development, and adult education are scarce, the findings of this study are instrumental in responding to this gap. As such, this study recommends that human resource development officer be guided in crafting webinar training plans that are congruous to the present situations of professional teachers who are playing multiple roles in the work-from-home set-up. Many of them are adult learners who are in nature active participants in training and, at the same time, parents who can shift their focus to their

regular household undertakings anytime when webinar sessions do not give them interest and/or active engagement. Further, as student-centeredness has already been applied in its full sense across all curricula, participants in webinars should feel that they are learning in a kind of experience where active engagement is highlighted. This positions the teachers and trainers of webinars as facilitators of learning and not salesmen of ideas. Finally, future studies on webinars should be expanded beyond measures on student outcomes and satisfaction because webinar participation can produce a multitude of meanings which can vary based on whoever is making sense of it. Hence, if sought, fresh perspectives and insightful dialogues in the academic community are stimulated.

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