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Article

Engagement, Effectiveness, and Impact: A Phenomenological Study of Webinar-Based Professional Development for Elementary Teachers

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Abstract

This study explored the factors influencing elementary educators' satisfaction and engagement with webinar-based professional development and examined how they perceive its effectiveness compared to traditional in-person training. Through a phenomenological approach, qualitative data was collected from educators who participated in webinar-based training. The thematic analysis revealed vital factors such as content relevance, presenter expertise, interactivity, and the usability of the technology platform as crucial determinants of satisfaction and engagement. The findings also highlighted the advantages of webinars, including convenience and accessibility, while noting the challenges related to reduced personal interaction. Participants expressed that hybrid models, combining webinars with in-person sessions, could maximize the benefits of both formats. The study's implications suggested that webinars are most effective when they are interactive, led by expert facilitators, and supported by user-friendly technology. Recommendations for future research included exploring the long-term impact of webinars on teaching practices and examining the potential of emerging technologies to enhance online professional development.

Keywords

Webinar-based training, professional development, educator engagement, content relevance, hybrid learning models, interactivity

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Introduction

The rise of webinar-based professional development has transformed the educational landscape, offering flexible and accessible learning opportunities for educators. These online platforms have become increasingly popular due to their cost-effectiveness and convenience, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, when many institutions shifted from face-to-face interactions to digital learning environments (Moorhouse & Kohnke, 2022).

Webinar-based training has positively impacted educators' teaching practices and professional growth. Webinars provide opportunities for educators to access diverse perspectives and specialized content that may not be available in their local contexts (Sharma & Alvi, 2022). Additionally, webinars allow on-demand access to learning materials, enabling educators to revisit content at their own pace and apply new knowledge when ready (Littlejohn & Hood, 2021). This flexibility is particularly beneficial for educators balancing teaching responsibilities with ongoing professional development, allowing them to continuously learn without disrupting their schedules. Studies also suggest that the design and delivery of webinars significantly impact engagement, with interactive features such as polls, discussions, and breakout rooms contributing to more meaningful learning experiences (Martin et al., 2021).

However, questions continue to be raised about the effectiveness of webinars compared to traditional in-person training, particularly in terms of the depth of engagement and sustained professional growth. While webinars provide flexibility and accessibility, recent studies suggest that they often fall short in replicating the social dynamics and immediacy of face-to-face interactions (Blau et al., 2023; Kiguli-Malwadde et al., 2023). Research indicates that webinar-based professional development tends to rely heavily on self-reported satisfaction rather than demonstrable changes in pedagogical practice, thereby limiting empirical evidence of long-term impact (Dang, 2020; Couto et al., 2024). Moreover, online engagement remains a persistent challenge, as participants often experience screen fatigue, multitasking, and diminished social presence, which collectively reduce attention and active learning (Reyna et al., 2022; Lepp et al., 2022).

Despite efforts to enhance interactivity through breakout rooms, polls, and chat features, these strategies seldom reproduce spontaneous collaboration and peer learning integral to in-person formats (Gao et al., 2024). This gap reveals the need to move beyond satisfaction surveys toward a deeper, experience-based understanding of how educators perceive and navigate webinar-based training. Hence, the central problem addressed in this study is the limited understanding of how educators experience engagement, effectiveness, and pedagogical impact within webinar-based professional development contexts.

Addressing this need, this phenomenological study explored the lived experiences of elementary educators participating in webinar-based professional development, focusing on three core dimensions: engagement, perceived effectiveness, and influence on teaching practice. By interpreting these lived experiences, this study explained how webinars shape professional learning in real contexts and generated grounded insights for designing more interactive, meaningful, and sustainable online training programs.

Literature Review

The emergence of webinar-based professional development (WBPD) has shifted how educators engage in continuous learning. Webinars offer an accessible, cost-effective way for teachers to develop new skills, with increasing relevance in the post-pandemic era. Recent research has focused on the pedagogical implications of WBPD, highlighting that webinars' flexibility allows educators to participate in professional development without geographical constraints (Blau et al., 2023). However, studies have also raised concerns about the effectiveness of these platforms in fostering deep engagement compared to traditional, face-to-face training (Reyna et al., 2022). A key theme in WBPD literature is the importance of engagement in virtual environments. Active engagement is crucial for successfully transferring knowledge from webinars to classroom practice (Moorhouse & Kohnke, 2022). However, maintaining participant engagement is challenging due to the limitations of digital format, such as screen fatigue and reduced social interaction (Gegenfurtner et al., 2023). Innovative strategies, such as incorporating interactive elements and providing opportunities for peer collaboration, are both challenging and crucial in enhancing engagement and improving learning outcomes (Martin et al., 2021).

In terms of effectiveness, recent studies have shown mixed results regarding the impact of WBPD on teaching practices. While webinars offer convenience and access to diverse perspectives, some educators find them less effective than traditional methods due to limited opportunities for hands-on learning and immediate feedback (Perkasa, 2023). Nevertheless, many educators report positive experiences with WBPD, mainly when webinars are designed with clear objectives and incorporate interactive components that mirror real-life teaching scenarios (Littlejohn & Hood, 2021). This aligns with findings that suggest well-designed webinars can be just as effective as in-person professional development in promoting teacher growth and innovation (Sharma & Alvi, 2022).

The impact of WBPD on professional growth extends beyond the immediate acquisition of new skills. Research indicates that webinars can play a critical role in fostering a continuous learning culture among educators. By offering opportunities for self-paced learning and access to a broad range of experts, WBPD contributes to long-term professional development (Sharma & Alvi, 2022). Moreover, WBPD is particularly beneficial for educators in remote or underserved areas, providing them with resources that might otherwise be unavailable (Blau et al., 2023). This makes webinars an essential tool in the broader effort to democratize access to quality professional development.

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore factors influencing educators' satisfaction and engagement with webinar-based training. A phenomenological approach was chosen to capture participants lived experiences, allowing an in-depth understanding of how they perceive and experience webinar-based professional development.

Participants

The participants in this study were educators from various elementary schools across the Southern Philippines. A purposive sampling method was used to select 15 participants who had attended at least one webinar-based professional development session in the past year. These participants were chosen to ensure a range of perspectives across different educational levels and teaching experiences. All participants provided informed consent before participating in the study.

Data Collection

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews conducted via online video conferencing platforms. The interviews were designed to explore participants' experiences with webinar-based training, focusing on factors influencing their satisfaction and engagement. The interview guide included open-ended questions: "What aspects of webinar-based training contributed to your satisfaction?" and "How do you engage with the content during webinars?" Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes and was recorded with the participants' permission.

In addition to interviews, participants were asked to complete a brief demographic survey, which provided information on their teaching background, years of experience, and frequency of participation in webinars. This survey data helped contextualize the qualitative findings.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the interview transcripts. The analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step framework, which includes familiarizing the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. The transcripts were read multiple times to ensure a deep understanding of the content, and initial codes were generated based on recurring patterns in the data. These codes were then grouped into broader themes that captured the essence of participants' experiences.

To enhance the reliability of the analysis, two independent researchers coded the data, and any discrepancies were discussed and resolved through consensus. NVivo software was used to assist in organizing and analyzing the data, ensuring that the themes were grounded in the participants' responses.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to ethical guidelines for research with human participants. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before data collection, ensuring they were aware of their rights, including the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Confidentiality was maintained by anonymizing participants' data, and the recorded interviews were stored securely to protect participants' privacy. The ethics review board approved the research protocol of the host institution.

Trustworthiness of the Study

To ensure the study's trustworthiness, several strategies were implemented. Member checking was conducted by sharing preliminary findings with participants to confirm that the themes accurately reflected their experiences. Additionally, the study utilized triangulation by comparing interview data with relevant literature on webinar-based professional development. Peer debriefing sessions were also held with fellow researchers to review the coding process and thematic analysis, enhancing the credibility of the findings

Results and Discussion

The findings of this study revealed the impact of webinar-based training on educators' teaching practices and their professional growth, several key factors influencing their satisfaction and engagement with webinar-based training, and their perceptions of the effectiveness of these sessions compared to traditional in-person professional development. The discussion below elaborates on these findings about existing literature and highlights their implications for future practice.

A. In what ways do educators feel that webinar-based training has impacted on their teaching practices and professional growth?

The first research question explored the factors that influenced participants' satisfaction and engagement with webinar-based training. The thematic analysis revealed several significant factors, including content relevance, presenter expertise, interactivity, and the usability of the technology platform. These themes are discussed with existing literature, highlighting their implications for webinar-based professional development.

Content Relevance and Quality

Participants consistently emphasized the importance of content relevance and quality as a critical determinant of their satisfaction with webinar-based training. When the content directly addressed their professional needs and was applicable to their classroom practices, participants reported higher levels of engagement. This finding is supported by research that underscores the necessity of aligning professional development content with educators' specific instructional contexts to increase the likelihood of application and impact (Desimone & Garet, 2015). Furthermore, content perceived as up-to-date and research-based contributes to the perceived value of the training, as Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) suggested. Therefore, for webinar-based training to be practical, it must be carefully tailored to address educators' immediate needs and challenges.

Moreover, participants expressed that content relevance was not only about topic alignment but also about the depth and contextualization of examples provided. When webinar facilitators incorporated real classroom scenarios, localized case studies, or discipline-specific examples, participants felt a stronger connection between the training content and their professional realities. This contextualized approach fosters greater cognitive engagement and supports the transfer of learning to practice (Guskey, 2014; Kennedy, 2016). In contrast, generic or overly theoretical presentations often failed to sustain interest, leading to passive participation and limited retention of key concepts.

Additionally, participants highlighted that content quality was closely linked to the credibility of the presenters and the pedagogical design of the sessions. Webinars facilitated by experts who integrated current research, interactive materials, and reflective discussions were viewed as more meaningful and professionally enriching. Consistent with Borko et al. (2021), sustained professional learning occurs when educators engage with content that is both evidence-based and situated within authentic practice contexts. Thus, ensuring that webinar content is timely, research-driven, and grounded in participants' pedagogical realities enhances not only satisfaction but also long-term instructional transformation.

Presenter Expertise and Engagement Skills

Another critical factor influencing participants' satisfaction was the expertise and presentation skills of the facilitators. Participants appreciated webinars led by knowledgeable presenters who could effectively engage the audience. This finding aligns with existing literature, which indicates that the presenter's credibility and ability to convey information engagingly significantly impact participants' engagement and overall satisfaction (Guskey & Yoon, 2009). Effective presenters deliver content and create a learning environment that encourages participation and maintains attention throughout the session. Therefore, selecting expert presenters who are skilled in online facilitation is crucial for the success of webinar-based professional development.

Participants also emphasized that beyond subject-matter expertise, facilitators' ability to humanize the virtual environment significantly shaped their engagement. When presenters used interactive strategies—such as real-time polls, breakout discussions, and storytelling—participants reported a greater sense of connection and motivation to learn. Research supports this, noting that presenter immediacy behaviors and instructional presence enhance learners' emotional engagement and perceived value of the session (Richardson et al., 2017; Martin et al., 2020). Conversely, monotonous delivery and lack of responsiveness were cited as disengaging, reinforcing the importance of dynamic facilitation in maintaining participant attention and satisfaction.

Furthermore, participants valued presenters who demonstrated pedagogical adaptability and technological fluency, seamlessly integrating digital tools to sustain interaction and support understanding. Effective webinar facilitators are not only content experts but also instructional designers who can balance cognitive load, manage virtual discussions, and scaffold learning experiences (Hew & Cheung, 2014). This dual competence contributes to a richer, more participatory learning climate that mirrors the benefits of in-person professional development. As noted by Hilliard and Stewart (2019), professional learning environments are most impactful when facilitators skillfully combine expertise with authentic engagement strategies that invite reflection, dialogue, and collaboration.

Interactivity and Engagement

The level of interactivity in webinars emerged as another important theme. Participants valued opportunities for interaction, such as Q&A sessions, polls, and breakout rooms, which helped them stay engaged and feel connected to the content and their peers. This finding is consistent with research by Martin and Bolliger (2018), which suggests that interactive elements in online professional development contribute to higher engagement and satisfaction levels. Interactive components allow participants to clarify their understanding, ask questions, and exchange ideas with others, creating a more collaborative and dynamic learning experience. Therefore, incorporating interactive features in webinar design can enhance participants' engagement and overall satisfaction.

Participants also pointed out that meaningful interaction goes beyond merely including technical features; it depends on how these tools are intentionally integrated into the learning process. When facilitators used polls, chats, or breakout rooms as extensions of discussion rather than isolated activities, participants experienced a stronger sense of community and shared learning. This aligns with the concept of social presence, which highlights the importance of building authentic connections in virtual environments to sustain engagement (Garrison, 2017; Lowenthal & Dunlap, 2020). Without purposeful facilitation, however, these tools risk becoming superficial add-ons that do little to promote deep learning or reflective dialogue.

Moreover, interactive strategies that encouraged collaboration and co-construction of knowledge were found to increase motivation and cognitive engagement. When participants were invited to share best practices or reflect on challenges with peers, they demonstrated greater ownership of the learning process and a stronger commitment to applying new insights (Banna et al., 2015). Research supports this notion, showing that engagement in webinars is maximized when learners are active contributors rather than passive recipients of information (Martin et al., 2020). Hence, designing interactivity that fosters both social and cognitive engagement is critical for ensuring that webinar-based professional development leads to meaningful and sustained learning outcomes.

Usability of Technology

The usability of the technology platform used for the webinar was another factor that influenced participants' experiences. A smooth, user-friendly platform contributed to a more seamless and enjoyable learning experience, allowing participants to focus on the content rather than grappling with technical difficulties. These finding echoes research that highlights the importance of reliable and accessible technology in online learning environments (Bennett & Lockyer, 2022). Conversely, technical issues can detract from the learning experience, causing frustration and reducing engagement. Therefore, ensuring the chosen technology platform is reliable, easy to navigate, and accessible to all participants is essential for successful webinar-based professional development.

Participants noted that intuitive platforms with clear navigation, stable connectivity, and integrated communication tools enhanced their ability to participate actively and confidently. When technological systems operated smoothly, they reported greater cognitive focus on the learning objectives rather than on troubleshooting or system navigation. This observation aligns with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which posits that perceived ease of use directly influences user satisfaction and engagement in digital learning environments (Davis, 1989; Scherer et al., 2019). Thus, optimizing platform usability is not merely a technical concern but a pedagogical necessity that shapes learners' emotional and cognitive investment in webinar-based training.

In contrast, participants who experienced frequent connectivity issues, lagging audio, or complicated interfaces expressed decreased motivation and engagement. Such barriers disproportionately affected participants from regions with unstable internet infrastructure, underscoring persistent inequities in digital access (Rapanta et al., 2021). This digital divide can compromise the inclusivity and effectiveness of webinar-based professional development, particularly in low-resource educational contexts. As emphasized by Bozkurt and Sharma (2023), equitable access to reliable technology must be prioritized to ensure that all educators, regardless of their location or technical capacity, can fully benefit from online learning opportunities.

B. How do educators perceive the effectiveness of webinar-based training compared to traditional in-person professional development?

The second research question explored how educators perceive the effectiveness of webinar-based training compared to traditional in-person professional development. The responses revealed a nuanced understanding of both formats, highlighting their advantages and limitations. The discussion here delves into these perspectives while linking them to existing literature.

Perceived Effectiveness of Webinar-Based Training

One prominent theme that emerged was the convenience and accessibility of webinar-based training. Participants frequently emphasized that webinars provided a flexible and time-efficient mode of professional development, enabling them to participate from their homes or workplaces without the constraints of travel or scheduling conflicts. This flexibility was especially beneficial for educators in geographically isolated or resource-limited areas, where attending in-person sessions would otherwise be impractical. These findings echo recent research that highlights the democratizing potential of online professional development in extending access to quality learning opportunities across diverse educational contexts (Hawkes & Halverson, 2022).

Despite these advantages, participants also noted that the **absence of personal interaction** in webinar-based training sometimes undermined the richness of the learning experience. Many reported missing the spontaneous dialogue, networking, and collegial exchange characteristic of traditional in-person workshops. This observation aligns with studies suggesting that while online professional learning enhances accessibility, it can also constrain the relational and affective dimensions that foster collaborative knowledge construction (Trust & Horrocks, 2019; Blau et al., 2023). Consequently, the lack of immediacy and non-verbal communication in webinars may reduce engagement depth and limit opportunities for immediate feedback and professional connection.

Moreover, participants' perceptions of the **overall effectiveness of webinar-based professional development** were closely linked to the quality of learning transfer and the applicability of acquired knowledge. Those who could integrate webinar learnings into their teaching practice viewed the experience as highly effective, whereas others perceived the training as theoretical or disconnected from classroom realities. This finding reflects existing literature suggesting that professional development is most effective when participants can translate new knowledge into authentic pedagogical contexts (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Kennedy, 2016). Hence, the perceived effectiveness of webinars depends not only on accessibility and convenience but also on the degree to which learning experiences promote meaningful application, reflection, and sustained instructional improvement.

Hybrid Models and Blended Learning

Participants acknowledged that while webinars are effective for content delivery, they may yield greater benefits when integrated with traditional in-person training. This perspective reinforces the growing advocacy for hybrid or blended learning models, which combine the flexibility of online modalities with the interpersonal richness of face-to-face engagement. Recent literature supports this view, emphasizing that blended models enhance professional development by balancing self-paced learning with collaborative, experiential activities (Hadar et al., 2020). Through such integration, educators can enjoy the convenience of webinars while still participating in discussions, simulations, and peer learning that occur more naturally in physical settings.

Additionally, participants highlighted the potential for webinars to function as ongoing supplementary learning platforms rather than complete substitutes for conventional training. They regarded webinars as effective for staying updated with new pedagogical approaches, policy reforms, and instructional technologies between more comprehensive in-person workshops. This perception aligns with studies suggesting that online professional development serves best as a continuous learning mechanism that sustains teachers' growth over time (Desimone & Garet, 2015; Dede et al., 2021). Webinars, therefore, can bridge professional learning gaps by providing immediate access to relevant

updates and reflective dialogues, ensuring that educators remain adaptive to evolving classroom challenges.

Moreover, the integration of hybrid professional development models encourages a culture of sustained learning and reflective practice among educators. When online sessions are intentionally aligned with in-person components, participants can reinforce theoretical insights through authentic, practice-based applications. Research indicates that such multimodal approaches not only improve knowledge retention but also enhance teacher self-efficacy and collaboration within professional communities (Korthagen, 2017; Trust et al., 2022). Consequently, adopting hybrid models can transform professional development into a more holistic, iterative process that supports both immediate learning needs and long-term pedagogical growth.

Quality of Interaction and Engagement

A key theme that emerged from the participants' reflections was the quality of interaction and engagement in webinars compared to traditional professional development formats. Participants emphasized that webinars often lack the dynamic, participatory atmosphere of face-to-face sessions, where they can actively engage in small-group discussions, hands-on activities, and collaborative problem-solving. The relatively passive nature of webinars—where attendees mostly listen to presentations with limited opportunities for dialogue—can diminish motivation and reduce the overall learning impact. This concern is consistent with research showing that the degree of interactivity in online professional development significantly influences participants' engagement, satisfaction, and perceived learning outcomes (Martin & Bolliger, 2018).

To address these limitations, participants suggested that webinar-based training could be enhanced through the inclusion of more **interactive and collaborative components**, such as breakout sessions, real-time polls, and problem-based activities. These strategies promote a sense of connection and participation, fostering a more active learning environment even within virtual spaces (Bennett & Lockyer, 2022). Incorporating tools that facilitate peer exchange and feedback allows participants to share best practices and co-construct knowledge, thereby improving both engagement and retention. As a result, webinars designed with purposeful interactivity can approximate the social and cognitive depth traditionally associated with in-person professional development.

Moreover, fostering **social presence and authentic engagement** within webinar environments is essential to sustaining educators' motivation and commitment to professional learning. Studies have shown that when participants feel seen, heard, and valued within online communities, their cognitive engagement and persistence increase substantially (Richardson et al., 2023; Gray & DiLoreto, 2016). Facilitators play a crucial role in this process by modeling openness, encouraging dialogue, and using digital tools to personalize the learning experience. Ultimately, improving interaction quality in webinars not only enhances immediate engagement but also nurtures a sense of belonging that supports long-term professional growth.

C. What factors influence educators' satisfaction and engagement with webinar-based training?

The third research question explored how educators perceive the impact of webinar-based training on their teaching practices and professional growth. The thematic analysis revealed that participants experienced both positive and nuanced effects, including increased access to new teaching strategies, opportunities for reflective practice, and professional networking. These insights are discussed considering the existing literature, offering a deeper understanding of the transformative potential of webinar-based professional development.

Adoption of New Teaching Strategies

Another emerging insight was that the adoption of new teaching strategies from webinars was most effective when participants had opportunities to reflect on and contextualize their learning. Several participants emphasized that while webinars offered innovative ideas, successful classroom implementation required adaptation to their students' needs, curriculum demands, and institutional policies. This finding supports Desimone's (2009) framework, which underscores the importance of coherence and contextual alignment in professional development to facilitate meaningful change in teaching practices. Hence, webinars that encourage reflective activities, such as journaling or peer discussion, can strengthen the transfer of learning from theory to practice.

Moreover, participants shared that continuous exposure to webinar-based professional development fostered an ongoing cycle of experimentation and improvement in their teaching. They noted that periodic engagement with webinars allowed them to revisit and refine strategies over time, promoting sustained professional growth rather than one-time implementation. This finding resonates with the work of Opfer and Pedder (2011), who assert that professional learning is most effective when it is iterative and embedded within educators' daily practices. Consequently, webinars designed with follow-up supports such as mentoring, collaborative forums, or feedback sessions—can help educators internalize and sustain newly acquired instructional strategies.

Finally, the ability of webinars to introduce **emerging pedagogical innovations** was also recognized as a major benefit. Participants valued how webinars exposed them to global educational practices and technology-enhanced approaches that might otherwise be inaccessible in traditional, localized training contexts. Studies have found that online professional development platforms broaden teachers' perspectives, connecting them to diverse teaching communities and global best practices (Trust et al., 2016). Therefore, webinar-based training serves as both a professional bridge and a catalyst for innovation, enabling educators to continually evolve with the rapidly changing educational landscape.

Reflection and Continuous Learning

Another significant theme that emerged was reflection and continuous learning. Participants mentioned that webinars encouraged them to reflect on their teaching practices, prompting them to critically evaluate what works and what needs improvement. This reflective process is essential for professional growth, fostering a deeper understanding of one's instructional approaches and promoting lifelong learning (Schön, 1987). The flexibility of webinars, which allows educators to revisit recorded sessions and continue learning at their own pace, further supports this ongoing reflective practice (Bennett & Lockyer, 2022). Thus, webinars contribute to a culture of continuous improvement where educators are empowered to refine their practices over

time.

In addition, participants emphasized that webinars serve as catalysts for **self-directed professional learning**. The accessible and asynchronous nature of webinars enables educators to take ownership of their learning trajectories, choosing topics that align with their professional goals and classroom challenges. This aligns with the principles of adult learning theory, which emphasize autonomy, relevance, and intrinsic motivation as key drivers of effective professional development (Knowles et al., 2015). By fostering agency and self-direction, webinars encourage educators to become proactive learners who continuously seek opportunities for growth beyond formal training contexts.

Moreover, participants noted that webinars often create spaces for **collaborative reflection** through post-session discussions, online forums, and peer learning communities. Such interactions extend learning beyond the initial training, enabling participants to exchange experiences, share challenges, and co-construct new pedagogical insights. Research supports that collaborative reflection deepens professional learning by integrating personal experience with collective wisdom, leading to more meaningful changes in teaching practice (Loughran, 2019). Therefore, webinar-based professional development not only promotes individual reflection but also cultivates a community of inquiries that sustains continuous learning among educators.

Professional Networking and Collaboration

The theme of professional networking and collaboration also emerged from the data. Although webinar-based training may lack the face-to-face interaction of traditional professional development, participants noted that it offered opportunities to connect with educators from different regions and backgrounds. These virtual connections facilitated the exchange of ideas, resources, and experiences, enriching participants' professional networks (Trust & Horrocks, 2019). Networking is a critical component of professional development, as it allows educators to collaborate, seek advice, and share best practices, all of which contribute to their professional growth (Lieberman & Mace, 2010). Webinars, especially those with interactive features like breakout rooms and discussion forums, can foster meaningful professional relationships even in a virtual setting.

Furthermore, participants observed that these online interactions often extended beyond the duration of the webinar, leading to the formation of **sustained professional learning communities (PLCs)**. Through group chats, online follow-ups, and social media platforms, educators-maintained communication, shared teaching materials, and continued reflecting collaboratively on their practices. This finding aligns with the work of Carpenter and Krutka (2014), who emphasized that digital networks enable ongoing collaboration and peer learning across institutional and geographic boundaries. Such sustained engagement transforms webinars from one-time learning events into dynamic ecosystems of professional exchange and continuous development.

Additionally, the **global and interdisciplinary nature** of webinar-based networking emerged as a unique advantage. Participants appreciated the opportunity to interact with international educators and experts, gaining insights into diverse educational systems, pedagogical innovations, and cultural perspectives. This global exposure broadens teachers' worldviews, fostering cross-cultural understanding and inspiring the integration of new practices within their local contexts (Trust et al., 2016). Hence, webinars not only strengthen professional collaboration but also democratize access to global

knowledge networks that empower educators to become globally competent practitioners.

Empowerment and Professional Confidence

Finally, participants reported feeling more empowered and confident in their teaching after engaging in webinar-based professional development. The exposure to new ideas, tools, and networks enhanced their professional confidence, enabling them to experiment with innovative teaching approaches and tackle challenges with greater assurance. This sense of empowerment is critical for fostering a growth mindset among educators, as it encourages them to take risks, innovate, and continuously improve their practice (Dweck, 2006). The literature supports the idea that professional development that enhances teachers' self-efficacy and confidence can lead to sustained improvements in teaching quality (Desimone & Garet, 2015).

Participants also highlighted that webinar-based learning reinforced their **sense of professional agency**—the belief that they can influence their teaching environments and drive positive change. By gaining access to expert insights and peer experience, educators felt more capable of making informed instructional decisions and adapting new strategies independently. This finding aligns with the work of Priestley et al. (2015), who emphasize that teacher agency is cultivated through professional experiences that promote autonomy, reflection, and empowerment. Thus, webinars serve not only as platforms for skill acquisition but also as spaces for teachers to reclaim their voice and authority as reflective practitioners.

In addition, participants described moments of **transformational learning**, where their perspectives on teaching and learning evolved through critical engagement with new knowledge and collaborative dialogue. Such transformation strengthened their professional identity and reinforced their sense of belonging within a broader learning community. Research on teacher professional growth suggests that empowerment and collective efficacy are intertwined—when educators feel supported and connected, their confidence in enacting meaningful change increases (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Therefore, webinar-based professional development can act as a catalyst for both personal and collective empowerment, fostering resilient, innovative, and self-assured educators.

Implications and Recommendations

The findings from this study illuminate several practical considerations for refining webinar-based professional development. While webinars offer notable benefits such as convenience, accessibility, and flexibility, they should not be considered a complete substitute for traditional in-person training. Instead, a hybrid approach that marries the strengths of both formats may offer the most effective solution for meeting the diverse needs of educators.

To enhance the effectiveness of webinar-based professional development, several key recommendations emerge. First and foremost, it is crucial to prioritize the relevance and quality of the content presented in webinars. Ensuring that the material addresses the specific needs of participants will significantly boost its practical value. Furthermore, selecting expert presenters with strong online facilitation skills is essential for maintaining participant engagement and delivering high-quality learning experience.

Incorporating interactive elements into webinars can also greatly enhance engagement and foster a more collaborative learning environment. By integrating interactive tools and features, webinar designers can create a more

dynamic and participatory experience for participants. Equally important is the choice of technology platform; it must be user-friendly and reliable to ensure a smooth and effective learning process.

Despite these advancements, webinars alone cannot replace in-person sessions' depth of interaction and collaborative experiences. Therefore, adopting a hybrid approach that combines online and face-to-face interactions may provide a more comprehensive professional development experience. Webinars can serve as an ongoing resource for learning, while in-person sessions can offer the deeper, collaborative engagement that virtual settings often lack.

To maximize the benefits of webinar-based training, it is advisable to include follow-up opportunities, such as in-person sessions or small-group workshops, to complement the online content. These follow-up activities can help solidify learning and provide additional avenues for collaboration and networking. Moreover, incorporating reflective exercises and opportunities for peer collaboration within webinars can further deepen the impact on participants' professional growth.

By implementing these recommendations, educational institutions can significantly enhance the quality and effectiveness of their webinar-based professional development programs. This approach will support educators in their continuous professional journey and contribute to improved teaching practices.

Suggestions and Further Research

Future research could explore the long-term impact of webinar-based professional development on teaching practices and student outcomes, addressing a gap in the current literature. While this study has identified factors that influence satisfaction and engagement, understanding how these experiences translate into sustained changes in classroom practices remains underexplored. Additionally, comparative studies examining webinar-based training across different educational contexts, such as rural versus urban settings or primary versus higher education, would provide deeper insights into the effectiveness of webinars for diverse educator populations. Finally, future research could investigate the role of emerging technologies, such as virtual and augmented reality, in enhancing the interactivity and engagement of webinar-based professional development programs (Bennett & Lockyer, 2022; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Conclusion

This study highlights the significant factors influencing educators' satisfaction and engagement with webinar-based professional development, including content relevance, presenter expertise, interactivity, and technology usability. While webinars offer notable advantages in terms of convenience and accessibility, they also present challenges related to reduced interaction and engagement compared to traditional in-person sessions. The findings suggest that webinars are most effective when they are carefully designed to be interactive, led by expert facilitators, and supported by user-friendly technology. Additionally, the study underscores the potential of hybrid professional development models that combine the strengths of both online and face-to-face learning formats. These insights contribute to the growing research on online professional development and offer practical recommendations for designing more effective webinar-based training programs.

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