



Preliminary Evaluation of the African American Alzheimer's Caregiver Training and Support Project 2 (ACTS2) Facebook Live Workshop Series: A Mixed Methods Analysis

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Introduction

Background

- The African-American Alzheimer's Caregiver Training and Support Project 2 (ACTS2) is a program designed to support Black family caregivers of individuals with dementia in Florida, integrating faith-based elements with practical skills training and support. Adapting to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, ACTS2 launched a series of bi-monthly workshops via Facebook Live. These sessions aimed to provide the dementia caregiving community with essential information and resources on various aspects of support, including topics like self-care for caregivers and strategies for managing stressful caregiving scenarios. To evaluate this digital outreach initiative, a mixed methods assessment was employed to measure the series' reach, viewer engagement, and overall satisfaction.
- Dementia caregivers grapple with a wide spectrum of daily hurdles, ranging from handling the refusal of the care recipient to partake in basic hygiene routines, to addressing potentially dangerous behaviors like wandering. Compounding these challenges, caregivers must also navigate the complexities of meeting their own health and social needs. This includes finding time and energy to participate in health-promoting behaviors, such as exercise and maintaining a balanced diet, as well as social activities to prevent isolation.
- Extensive research points to a concerning trend: dementia caregivers are at a significantly heightened risk for deteriorating physical health outcomes and suffering from mental health conditions, particularly depression. The dual demands of caregiving and self-care create a high-stress environment that can lead to adverse health consequences for caregivers. The combination of such stressors may lead to an overall reduced quality and satisfaction with life (Alfakhri et al., 2018) underlining the necessity for supportive interventions and resources.

Objectives

- Learn about the objectives and purpose of the African-American Alzheimer's Caregiver Training and Support Project 2 (ACTS2) and how ACTS2 addresses the needs of Black American dementia caregivers and their care partners living with dementia.
- Evaluate the strengths and opportunities for improvement with the ACTS2 Facebook Live Workshop series, and formulate strategies to improve online programming for Black American family caregivers and their care partners with dementia.
- Assess the significance and approach of employing community-engaged mixed assessment methods, examining their relevance in evaluating the reach, engagement, and satisfaction of online programs for Black American communities.

Methods and Findings

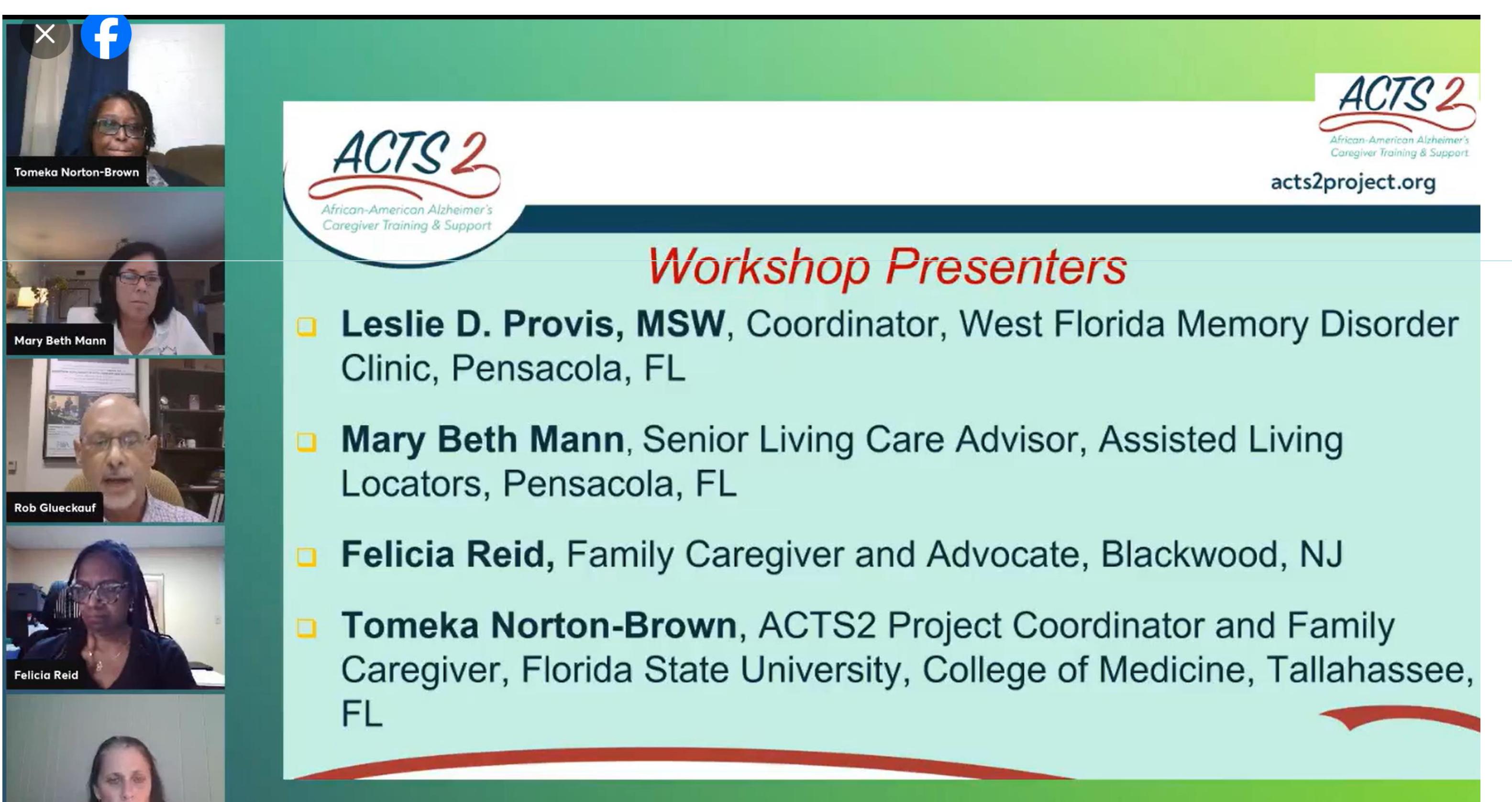
Methods

- Quantitative and qualitative data associated with the evaluations of 23 Facebook Live workshops hosted by the ACTS2 program from May 2020 to August 2023 were used to evaluate viewer reach, engagement, and satisfaction. Quantitative data included Facebook and YouTube usage statistics, online pre-registrations, and online evaluation surveys. Qualitative data included viewer engagement during workshops and online evaluation surveys.

Results

- The ACTS2 Facebook Live Workshop series garnered considerable interest, with 1,193 individuals signing up in advance and at least 1,032 attendees participating in real-time during the virtual workshops. To date, the online outreach has been extensive, reaching at least 9,697 views on Facebook and 274 views on YouTube. A thematic analysis of participant interaction highlighted three key patterns: (1) requests for further details and access to community support resources, (2) participants sharing personal stories from their caregiving journeys, and (3) expressions of appreciation for the insights provided during the workshop sessions. Among the pre-registered participants, 111 completed evaluation surveys, where a significant majority described the workshops as "extremely informative" or "very informative" (XXX%), and affirmed the overall quality of the workshops as "excellent" or "good" (XXX%). The survey data revealed three salient themes: (1) a sense of thankfulness for the personal accounts shared by workshop presenters, (2) contentment with the resources provided by the ACTS2 community, and (3) the pivotal focus on the experiences of Black caregivers of those with dementia. These preliminary results underscore the effectiveness of the ACTS2 Facebook Live Workshop series in actively involving community members across Florida and offering a valuable informational resource to Black caregivers managing dementia care.

Screenshot from "Navigating the Transition from Home to Long-term Assisted Care for Adults with Dementia" Workshop. August 17, 2023



Conclusions and References

Conclusions

- Preliminary outcomes of the mixed methods assessment indicate that the ACTS2 Facebook Live Workshop series effectively engaged a diverse audience of community members throughout Florida and the wider United States. These sessions not only reached numerous individuals but also served as a vital platform for disseminating information and community resources tailored to the unique needs of Black caregivers of individuals with dementia. The series has shown potential as an advantageous tool, however, further investigation is essential to enhance the design and delivery of online programs aimed at supporting Black American caregivers and their care recipients living with dementia. This would ensure that these interventions are as accessible, effective, and responsive to the caregivers' needs as possible. Continued research and iterative development will contribute to refining these online offerings, ultimately striving to optimize the support for this community.

Continuing Research

- Qualitative analysis of feedback gathered from the ACTS2 Facebook Live workshops is currently underway. Survey participants provided detailed responses to the following two questions: (1) "What specifically did you find helpful or valuable about this ACTS 2 workshop?" and (2) "What would you change about this workshop?" To facilitate this analysis, a codebook has been developed that includes 8 essential keywords/terms for the first question and 7 for the second. This analytical framework is being utilized to methodically categorize and scrutinize the responses for insightful content related to the efficacy and impact of the workshops. Upon its culmination, this evaluation will be integrated with the quantitative data obtained from survey responses to offer a comprehensive assessment. This will provide a richer, more nuanced understanding of the workshops' outcomes and inform strategies for enhancing future sessions, ensuring they are even more responsive to the needs and preferences of the community.

References

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