



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 faith-integrated, skills training and support program designed to support African American family caregivers of older adults with dementia across Florida and the U.S. Adapting to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, ACTS2 launched a series of bi-monthly workshops via Facebook Live. These workshops provided practical information and resources on caregiving activities and self-care strategies. To evaluate this social media outreach initiative, a mixed methods approach was employed to measure the series' reach, viewer engagement, and effectiveness.

■ Family caregivers of loved ones with dementia are faced with a variety of challenges, ranging from refusal to partake in basic hygiene routines to potentially dangerous behaviors such as wandering (Cole et al., 2023). 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 negative physical and mental health conditions, particularly new hypertension, cardiovascular disorders and 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, underscoring the necessity for skills-training interventions and resources (Alfakhri et al., 2018).

Objectives

■ Assess the reach, engagement, and perceived effectiveness of the bi-monthly ACTS2 Facebook Live Workshop Series.

■ Evaluate the unique strengths and limitations of the ACTS2 Facebook Live Workshop Series using both quantitative and qualitative analytic methods.

■ Develop evidence-based strategies to improve ACTS2 Facebook Live programming for family caregivers and their care partners with dementia.

Methods and Results

Methods

■ Twenty-three ACTS2 Facebook Live workshops were delivered from May 2020 to August 2023. We used quantitative (Facebook and YouTube usage statistics, online pre-registrations, online evaluation surveys) and qualitative data (viewer engagement during workshops, online evaluation surveys) to evaluate viewer reach, engagement, and effectiveness of the workshops.

■ We utilized an inductive grounded theory approach to analyze the qualitative data. Qualitative data analyses are currently being conducted by three members of the study team (JB, MSP, & AP), with the rigor of each analysis subsequently assessed by a fourth member of the team (NML).

Results

■ The ACTS2 Facebook Live Workshop series garnered considerable interest, with 1,193 individuals registering in advance and at least 1,032 attendees participating in real-time during the live workshops. To date, the online outreach has been extensive, reaching at least 9,697 views on Facebook and 274 views on YouTube. Among the pre-registered participants, 111 completed evaluation surveys, where a significant majority described the workshops as "extremely informative" or "very informative" (92.9%), and affirmed the overall quality of the workshops as "excellent" or "good" (90.8%). 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 African American caregivers of loved ones with dementia. These preliminary results underscore the potential effectiveness of the ACTS2 Facebook Live Workshop series in actively involving and providing valuable information to family caregivers and other stakeholders across Florida and the U.S.

Facebook Live Workshop Representative Example: Navigating the Transition from Home to Long-term Assisted Care for Adults with Dementia" Workshop (August 17, 2023)

The screenshot shows a slide from a Facebook Live workshop. On the left, there are five small video thumbnails of the presenters. The main content area lists the following presenters:

- Leslie D. Provis, MSW**, Coordinator, West Florida Memory Disorder Clinic, Pensacola, FL
- Mary Beth Mann**, Senior Living Care Advisor, Assisted Living Locators, Pensacola, FL
- Felicia Reid**, Family Caregiver and Advocate, Blackwood, NJ
- Tomeka Norton-Brown**, ACTS2 Project Coordinator and Family Caregiver, Florida State University, College of Medicine, Tallahassee, FL

The slide also features the ACTS2 logo and the website acts2project.org.

Conclusions and Future Directions

Conclusions

■ Preliminary outcomes of the mixed methods assessment suggested that the ACTS2 Facebook Live Workshop Series was successful in engaging a broad audience of family caregivers and interested stakeholders throughout Florida and the U.S. Survey participants rated the workshops high on quality and informativeness. Initial qualitative analysis revealed three key themes that corroborated the positive results of the quantitative survey. Participants appreciated listening to the personal accounts of family caregivers of loved ones with dementia. This element was intentionally built into all ACTS2 Facebook Live workshops to amplify the voices of Black care partners of older adults with dementia and their lived experiences. Participants also appreciated the workshops' focus on providing community-based resources. Note that ACTS2 made a concerted effort to highlight dementia care programs that were culturally responsive.

Future Directions for Research

■ Qualitative analysis of feedback gathered from the ACTS2 Facebook Live participants is 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 eight essential keywords/terms for the first question and seven for the second question. This analytical framework will be used to categorize the responses for subsequent in-depth thematic analysis, thus providing a richer and more nuanced understanding of the workshops' outcomes and the capacity to inform strategies for enhancing future sessions.

References

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Cole, C. S., Dafoe, A., Tietbohl, C. K., Jordan, S. R., Huebschmann, A. G., Lum, H. D., & Jones, C. D. (2023). Care challenges of home health patients living with dementia: a pathway forward with palliative care. *BMC palliative care*, 22(1), 122. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12904-023-01247-9>