

From screen to action: Influencers as drivers of critical SRH dialogue among youth and young adults in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal.

Empowering Youth Through Influence: 'C'est La Vie!' Redefines SRH Discourse in Senegal, Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire with Digital Strategies and Influential Voices

Kinty Ndiaye, Rabiadou Sangare**, Deffa Wane**, Mbatio Diaw**, Aminata Sira Niang**, Philip Massey**

**Réseau Africain pour l'Éducation à la Santé et la Citoyenneté (RAES) ; *University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)

PURPOSE

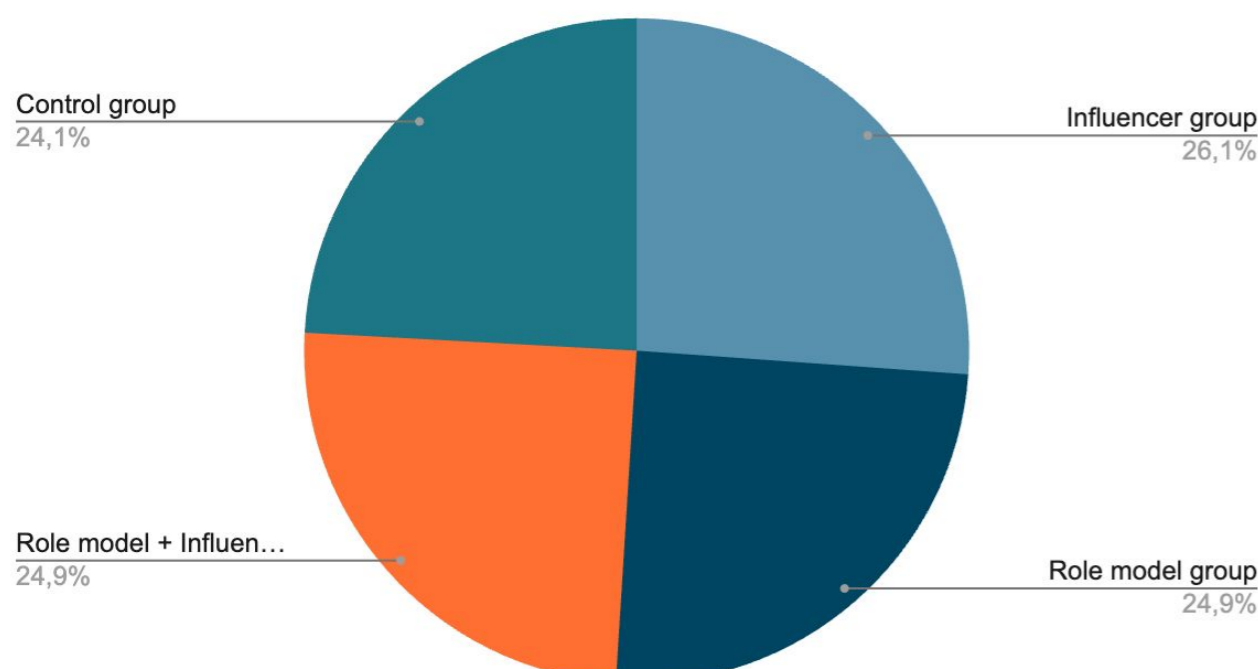
The "C'est La Vie!" program aims to enhance sexual and reproductive health among young Africans, who often face obstacles in accessing health resources. This initiative leverages insights from social and behavioral sciences to develop effective health strategies. The TV series reaches over 40 million viewers in Africa, supported by digital initiatives that analyze the impact of online strategies on social media platforms like Facebook.

These efforts aim to enhance young people's decision-making regarding family planning. The program uses digital tools to shift social attitudes and eliminate barriers to accessing family planning services, guiding youths to online counselors and direct service options. Despite low internet access in West Africa, where over 42% of the population use social media, the program effectively addresses health issues online, particularly among young males in this second phase.

METHODS

The "C'est La Vie !" campaign employs digital strategies alongside influential role models and influencers to expand its reach and impact. Targeting youths aged 15–24 in Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, and Burkina Faso, the campaign attracts them through Facebook ads. To ensure the campaign's content aligns with the actual needs and concerns of the youth, formative research was conducted. This research identified key sexual and reproductive health (SRH) topics relevant to the target demographic. Following this, a detailed mapping of influencers was conducted. These influencers, who were popular and credible among the local youth, were then trained in Social and Behavioral Change (SBC) approaches. This training ensured that their engagement with the campaign was both effective and aligned with health promotion best practices. The campaign divides 515 participants into four groups: *control*, *influencer*, *role model*, and a *mixed group* (see Graph 1). Each group receives customized content to determine which method is most effective for engagement and behavior change. The campaign closely monitors

Graph 1 - Research group - 515 participants



CONCLUSION

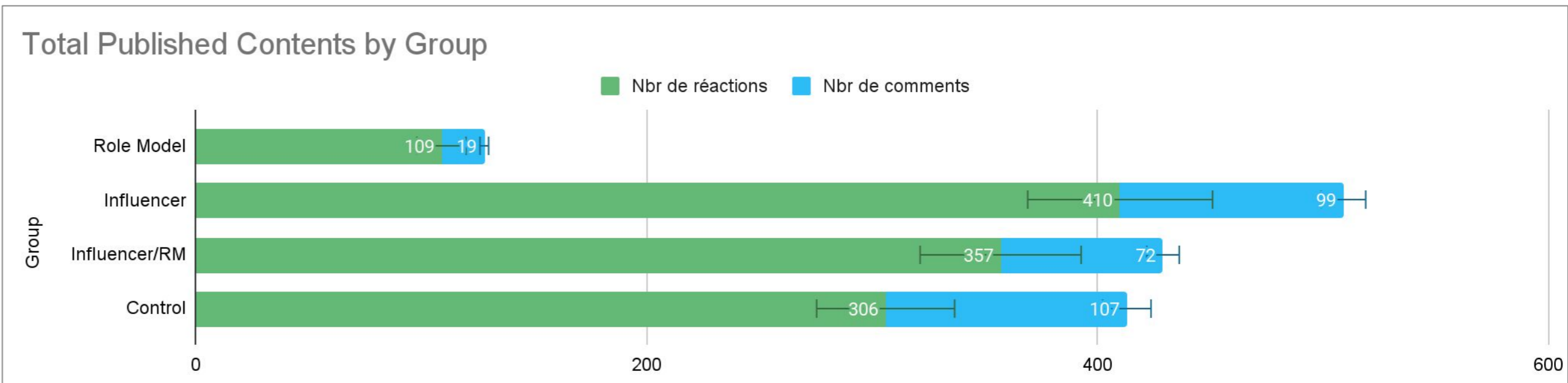
The "C'est La Vie !" campaign, driven by influencers, has proven remarkably effective in involving West African youth in important discussions about sexual and reproductive health (SRH). This approach has not only enhanced understanding and shifted youths' perspectives on health matters but has also encouraged a culture of open dialogue about personal experiences. The campaign underlines the importance of tailored messaging and the inclusion of men in health conversations to underscore the advantages for all genders.

RESULTS

Feedback revealed substantial engagement, particularly among influencers, who recorded 410 reactions and 99 comments, illustrating successful awareness-building and youth involvement. Discussions highlighted improved access to SRH information, improved comprehension of contraception, and decreased stigma associated with these subjects. The influencer-driven approach additionally fostered open discussions on traditionally sensitive topics, free from stigma.

Groups	Total published contents	Contents produced by RM	Contents produced by influencers	Animated contents (poll, announcement, draw...)
Role model Group	26	12	-	14
Influencer Group	32	-	11	21
RM/Influencer Group	37	6	5	26

Control Group	Total published contents	extracts published	Infographics	Animated contents
	28	6	5	17



Charnelle Ngoss
(participant)

"I would like to see the topic of sexuality in upcoming sessions, particularly parents taking the initiative to discuss it. I don't understand why this subject is taboo in our families."

Bénazire Kiembe
(participant)

"Health comes first. Therefore, condoms are a priority. But for those who wish to, they should first undergo the necessary tests before deciding to abandon condoms."