

The intersection of urban-rural divisions and the enumerator effect on Malian opinions of Western military presence

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As the presence of extremist organizations expand into the Sahel, so does the projection of U.S. military power. The United States' most recent and poignant example of intelligence failure was the belief that the Iraqi population would treat the invading force of 2003 as liberators. Future events in Mali will have an outsized effect on the region. The receptiveness of Malians toward Western military presence and the ability to ascertain that information are important to intelligence, military, and diplomatic officials. In this study, I explore the effect that an interviewer, residing in either an urban or rural area, has on a subject's receptiveness to Western military presence. I argue that rural Malians, when interviewed by urban Malians, will be less favorable to Western military presence than if they were interviewed by a fellow rural Malian. The argument also supports the vice versa—urban Malians will be more open to Western military presence when interviewed by rural Malians, versus another urban Malian. I used the sixth installment of Afrobarometer data, specific to Mali, to conduct this study. The results revealed a relationship that was inverse to my hypothesis. The findings were not statistically significant under the traditional standard, but were close enough to warrant further research and have implications.

Introduction

You're a public servant of the United States Government entrusted with advising decision-makers on affairs in your area of expertise. You manage a multi-disciplinary interagency cadre that produces understanding and insights, for the consumption of government planners, on anything that touches your field. Although your work has never reached the President's desk, there is a lot of reason to be proud of your career, even if your impact is trivial within the scope of U.S. strategic interests.

An unforeseen, sudden, and tragic event occurs capturing the nation's attention. The precipitants and implications fall into your previously overlooked domain of experience and knowledge. Overnight you are thrust into a position where you and your team's assessments are informing the upper echelon of decision-makers on high stakes affair—some of that information is even being read by the President. While the weight of the decisions being made far exceeds the U.S. Government's capabilities to understand the situation, urgency requires that these momentous decisions be made with the advice that can be produced within the limitations of your team. The decisions you make now have the potential to carry extraordinary consequences.

That illustration will evoke many historical scenarios in the reader's mind. The Central Intelligence Agency's chief of station in Kabul on the heels of the black swan event September 11th, 2001.^{1 2} A State Department conference room lined with experts on Iraqi history and culture that are reviewing the occupation plan for the 21st century war with Iraq. The military planner gazing at a television screen in the Pentagon as Arab Spring protests erupt in Syria, without

¹ Rashid, 2000

² Taleb, 2010

foreshadowing the future humanitarian crisis, war, and emerging extremist organization that will monopolize American national discourse.

There are two reflexes to this thought experiment. One is to think back to those historical anecdotes. The other reflex, and the motivation that prompted this study's research, is to think forward to when history will repeat itself next. Most Americans would be caught off guard by the notion that Sub-Saharan Africa is the future theater of war for the United States. However, Americans are becoming more acquainted with this scenario, as recent events in 2017 are reaching the conglomerate news networks.

The United States sustained the first combat causality (an operator of the Naval Special Warfare Development Group) in Somalia since the infamous 1993 incident known in popular culture as "Black Hawk Down."³ In Niger, four members of the Army Special Forces were killed during contact with hostile forces.⁴ Another Special Forces soldier was murdered by two nefarious fellow special operation soldiers in Mali.⁵

There is ample reason to believe the U.S. national security apparatus will only become more entrenched in the Sahel region. While this might be the case, the Middle East dominates the resources of the national security apparatus and the U.S. government's capabilities to understand and forecast in Africa are lacking. A recent exercise of military strategy supports both sentiments that U.S. involvement in Sub-Saharan Africa will increase coupled with the inability to preempt large tragedies. Military planners took part in a simulation predicated on a major terrorist attack on U.S. soil, launched from West Africa, precipitating a protracted U.S. military occupation of Algeria, Mauritania, and Mali.

³ Cooper, 2017

⁴ Tomlinson, 2017

⁵ Maurer, 2017

Think about it again. You're a public servant of the United States Government entrusted with advising decision-makers on affairs of the West African nation of Mali. The decisions you make now will be of consequence—on some level—but won't be consequential on the scale of long-term U.S. geopolitical interests. However, you know that the separation, between that current reality and a reality where your decisions carry extraordinary consequences, could be as thin as a sudden single event. Knowing the advice you craft could abruptly underpin the direction of U.S. strategic interests for multiple generations compels you to not be content with adequacy in the present and to be diligent in safeguarding the future.

For most of the people reading this, that is not the case. But somewhere in Washington D.C. and other places around the globe, likely with an American flag flying in the near vicinity, that description captures the current situation of a real public servant. For most readers, the research presented in this study is, at the least, intellectually stimulating (or boring and irrelevant, and they are questioning why they are still reading) and, at the most, another incremental improvement to the scholarly knowledge of their field. But somewhere in the world, whether in high-tech offices or on unpaved dirt roads, there is a public servant that mulls over problems we will never know and they will never receive recognition for. The aspiration of this study is to provide actionable insights for those public servants described above that work in the United States Intelligence Community, Department of Defense, and Department of State.

Current situation in Mali

Mali's current state is arguably that of crisis. In 2013, the French deployed military assistance to Mali, which was followed by the deployment of a UN peacekeeping mission within

that year.^{6 7} These were in reaction to violence precipitated from a separatist movement in the northern part of Mali. The secular separatists sought to create the state of Azawad. Violence escalated with a spillover of well-armed Muslim extremists from the Libyan civil war and homegrown jihadist groups.⁸ While the intervention of French forces and the UN peacekeeping mission ameliorated the situation, conflict still characterize Mali's current state.⁹ Mali has become a theater for militant Islamist groups and the typical global stakeholders in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism.

The United States Military's Africa Command has viewed Mali as a strategic interest since early on in the War on Terror. While the U.S. has expressed interest in establishing more long-term military and intelligence facilities in Mali, they have not been met with enthusiasm. The aversion to expansion of U.S. military bases is a sentiment shared by the electorates of numerous African countries. However, the United States has still been able to disperse military hardware and highly trained units across the continent, Mali included. While Mali might limit the amount of American military presence on the ground, it has seen an increase in the use of its air space to carry out anti-terrorism operations. This trend will only increase with the construction a nine figure American drone base in neighboring Niger.

Mali's plight is not only limited to conflict in the north. Mali's strategic value is derived from being the access point to West Africa for North Africa. While this makes it attractive for extremists, it also makes it part of a smuggling corridor where African migrants seek to reach the Mediterranean Sea and then cross to mainland Europe.¹⁰ In the opposite direction, weapons flow

⁶ Operation Serval, 2017

⁷ MINUSMA Facts and Figures

⁸ Mali crisis: Key players, 2013

⁹ Karlsrud, 2015

¹⁰ Smith, 2015

from the Libyan conflict towards West Africa. Of lesser peril, Mali is also waypoint for the airborne trafficking of cocaine in to Europe. In addition, Mali's bottom tier performance on health metrics is only aggravated by the fact that female genital mutilation is prevalent across the country—the rate of any given area is well into the ninety percents.¹¹

Area of Research and Importance

This study will be examining, amongst Malians, if there is an apparent casual relation between urban/rural enumerator and their favorability to western military presence. More specifically, the mechanism being examined is whether two people's residence (interacting with each other in an interviewee/interviewer context) in either rural or urban areas primes them to be more or less amenable to a western military presence.

This study explores this topic to offer actionable information to intelligence officials, military planners and foreign policy actors. For reasons that will be enumerated in later sections, Western powers are not only going to pursue increasing military presence on the African continent, but in Mali in particular. While Africa has a history of head of states that are resistant to public opinion, they are not entirely immune. The opinions of inhabitants will affect the decision-makers responsible for the degree to which the United States and other Western nations project military power within their nations.

Further, the subsequent sections shall also enumerate as to why urban-rural divisions are of interest for Western strategists. Divisions such as gender and race are arguably the most prominent divisions amongst humans. This is not surprising given that sight is paramount in our repertoire of senses and the aforementioned classifications can be patently deduced without

¹¹ Mali: Report on Female Genital Mutilation, 2017

failure from our vision. This obviousness elicits a magnifying glass from researchers. Thus, this study hopes to be consequential by contributing to the literature of a less flushed out but still deterministic quality.

Another subject under the proverbial magnifying glass is the enumerator effect of interviewers. Social desirability bias and the subconscious effects of priming are well studied. Their effect on the validity of research makes them an ongoing interest of academics, among other reasons for their perpetual appearance in scientific literature. This study adds to the literature on the effects evoked by the convergence of the two concepts. More importantly, it examines a characteristic at play, urban/rural residency, that is more subtle than the characteristics often examined and attempts to predict its effect.

This study will be carried out using data provided by the Afrobarometer's sixth round of data collection. This data will be limited to the subject from surveyed Malians.

Findings

The results and analysis suggest that the interviewer, in the study's context, questioning a subject of the alternate residence (i.e. urban or rural) substantially affects the subject's responses on multiple questions related to favorability towards Western military presence. This is in comparison to responses given by the subject when questioned by an interviewer of the same residency. This finding was not statistically significant; however it was close enough to the domain of statistical significance to warrant further investigation.

The findings also demonstrate a strong and very statistically significant relationship between responses indicating favorability to Western military presence and the region a subject lives in, as it relates to geographic area occupied at the height of the northern Mali crisis.

Interestingly, the effect alone of the subject residing in either an urban or rural area was only moderate and not close to being statistically significant. This is despite the significant effects of both the interviewee-interviewer mismatch and proximity to formerly occupied areas and the high statistical significance of the proximity to formerly occupied areas.

Background

General

Mali, officially referred to as the Republic of Mali, is a landlocked and relatively large country, whose territory inhabits both West Africa and North Africa. Mali's challenges are multifarious. In the 2016 Human Development Index (HDI) it ranked 175th out of 188.¹² Yet, its HDI score has doubled in the last 25 years since it was first included in the index. The majority of Mali's territory is situated in the Sahara Desert. However, the southernmost portion of the country lies in a tropical savannah environment with a band of semi-arid climate, known as the Sahel, separating the savannah from the Sahara. At least three quarters of the populations resided in these two climates south of the Sahara Desert. Some estimates put the percentage at over 90%

Muslims compose over 90% of the 18 million Malian population¹³. The official language for the country is French, however the lingua franca is Bambara. There are over 40 indigenous African languages spoken by dozens of ethnicities in Mali.¹⁴ The plurality are the Bambara. The majority of Malians live in rural areas and the agricultural sector is a dominant industry, contributing 80% of Mali's exports in conjunction with livestock. The largest export is cotton.

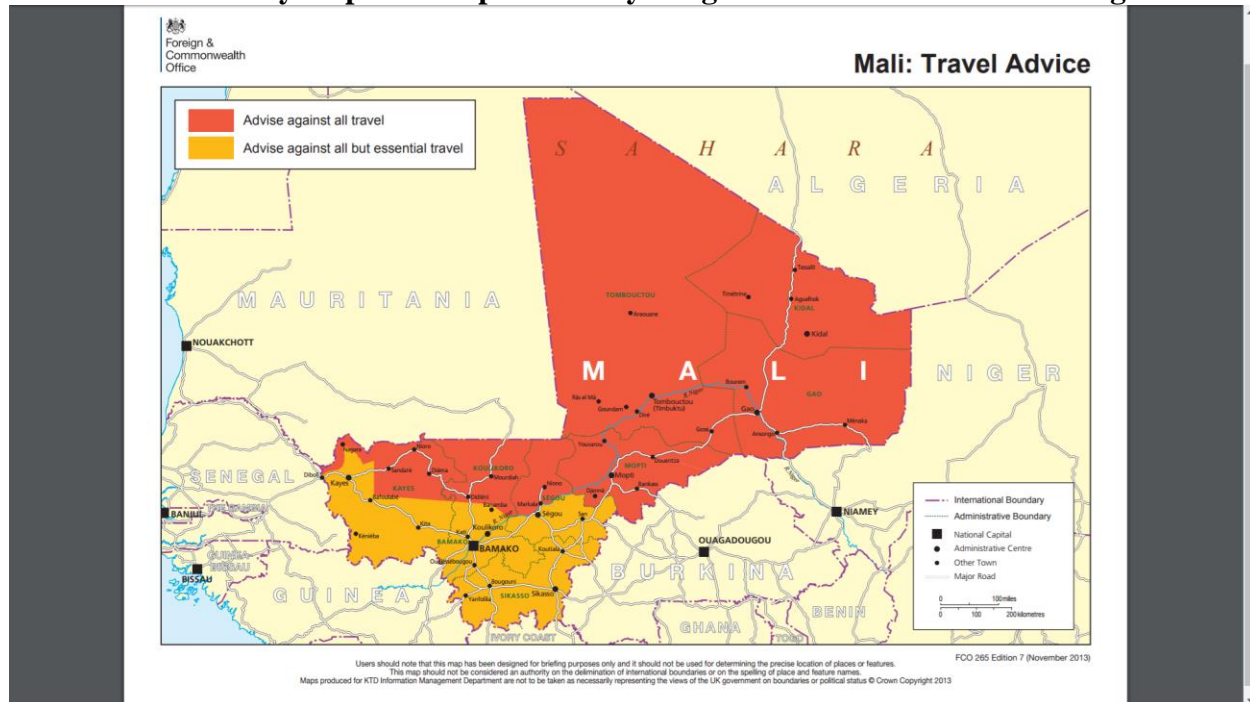
¹² Human Development Reports, 2015

¹³ Demographics of Mali, 2017

¹⁴ Mali, Countries and Their Cultures

However, gold is the most lucrative export; Mali is the 3rd largest producer of gold on the resource-rich continent.

FIGURE 1
Travel advisory map of Mali provided by the government of the United Kingdom



Contemporary relevance

Violence and conflict are not new trends to Africa, since the colonial times. Africa has been dominated by intra-border conflicts rather than the inter-border conflicts that characterize the history of Western powers. The nature of this intra-border violence is reflected in the size of the armed actors, which usually remain in the range of small militias to the state military. However, there has been trend towards larger forces, with superior capabilities, that are multinational or unilateral Western powers intervening in intra-border conflicts.

The increasing deployment of multinational forces can be observed in the uptick of pan-African and regional block military interventions. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has been very militarily active in the 21st century with five military

interventions.¹⁵ Mali was recipient of one in the 2013 northern Mali crisis. The most recent occurred this year, 2017, with an invasion the Gambia to fulfill the outcome of their democratic election.¹⁶ The African Union has deployed troops for peacekeeping purposes as well; Sudan in mid 2000s, Somalia since 2007, and there is prospect for a new peacekeeping mission in South Sudan.¹⁷

Increasing presence of multinational military forces also occurs through platforms broader than the African continent. United Nations (UN) peacekeeping began in the Cold War, but the end of that era was followed by a dramatic growth the UN peacekeeping force. Robust peacekeeping operations in Africa started in 1989. There have since been 22 completed peacekeeping missions, representing two-fifths of past peacekeeping missions on the globe. Of the existent peacekeeping missions, nine out of the sixteen are in Africa. Limiting it to missions with at least military troops in the four-digits, Africa comprises six of the seven major peacekeeping operations.

Not only has the number of UN peacekeeping missions increased, but the scope of peacekeeping operations has also expanded. In 2013, the UN took the unprecedented step of authorizing the first offensive action in UN peacekeeping history. Resolution 2098 formed the United Nation Force Intervention Brigade within the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO).¹⁸ The resolution designated the unit's mission as the proactive and forceful disarmament of armed rebel groups in the Kivus of Eastern Congo.

¹⁵ The 5 previous West African military interventions, 2017

¹⁶ Saine, 2017

¹⁷ South Sudan conflict, 2016

¹⁸ United Nations, 2013

The trend in multinational militaries occupying soil they are foreign to is a valid reason to understand how native populations perceive foreign military presence, including Western presence. However, a trend that is even more of a signal of increasing Western military presence is the expansion of terrorism and violent extremist organizations (VEOs). In the 21st century, terrorism is arguably the best predictor of conspicuous Western military presence. The United States, the world's unparalleled military superpower, is particularly incited by terrorism. This study's author assumes, for better or for worse, that as long as terrorism evokes a visceral reaction in the American electorate, counter-terrorism efforts will be the corner stone of U.S. foreign policy and the projection of military power. The United States and its over 800 overseas military bases are undaunted in pursuing terrorism afflicting the United States, wherever it goes.

In the minds of many Westerners and Americans, terrorism is geographically synonymous with the Middle East. However, terrorism and extremism has encroached far into the African continent. Aside from the existence of Al-Shabaab in Somalia and Boko Haram in Nigeria, potential terrorism on the continent can be seen as driven from north Africa by militants embroiled in the violent conflicts. However, the spread of that extremism has steadily been making its way down south.

The Sahel, a semi-arid belt straddling the south of the Sahara, is a strategic region for the passage of extremist human capital and resources from North Africa to the rest of the continent. The Sahel has become the lynchpin of the effort to contain violent extremism. The Sahel is mostly composed of Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad, and Sudan, although it includes other countries such as Burkina Faso. Mali's position in the Sahel is pivotal in the Sahel. Not only does it occupy a significant swath of the Sahel, but also it is a critical piece of West Africa. Whatever happens in Mali will have an outsized influence on the region.

An influx of extremists into Mali has been fueled by access to capital and arms. The dissolution of the Gaddafi autocracy left tens of thousands of weapons unaccounted for and dispersed extremists across the region.¹⁹ Weapons and militants have steadily flowed from Libya into Mali. This flow has been lubricated by cash from drugs going in the opposite direction. Narcotics are trafficked from West Africa into North Africa, where they will head to their end destination in Europe, through Mali. Capital from the drug trade combines with ransom money to fund regional VEOs.²⁰

Connecting the dots, you can see that the U.S. and Western powers will continue to bolster military presence around the Sahel to preclude VEOs from expanding south into the continent or carrying out overseas attacks. Just as the Sahel is the gatekeeper to Sub-Saharan Africa, Mali is the gatekeeper to West Africa and thus attracts increasing Western military presence.

Even without drawing connections between these facts, there are numerous documented Western military commitments to expansion in Africa. Starting in 2014, German politicians have been pushing for increased military contributions to the continent. While the discourse has not settled on what criteria needs to be met to solicit German military aid, this rhetoric has already proven consequential.²¹ The French have continued to maintain their military commitment to the Sahel with 3,000 troops allocated to Operation Burkhane.

The U.S. Military counter-terrorism effort in Africa that we have come to know of today can be traced back to the Pan-Sahel Initiative starting in 2002.²² The first permanent military base on the African continent was Djibouti; an oasis of calmness sandwiched between Eritrea

¹⁹ Transnational Organized Crime in West Africa, 2013

²⁰ Welsh, 2012

²¹ Hanisch, 2015

²² Turse, 2015 Nov. 20

and Somalia (albeit more accurately bordering stable Somaliland) strategically positioned at the bottleneck of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. The base, Camp Lemonnier has been used to launch counterpiracy operations and counterterrorism operations in the Arab Peninsula and in the region. Thus far, Camp Lemonnier is the only permanent military base in Africa. However, it is important to not interpret that fact superficially; there is an array of U.S. Military facilities across Africa, often termed “Forward operating Sites” or “Cooperative Security Locations.”²³ While they are technically not “Main Operating Bases”, they have not been proven as anything other than de facto permanent bases.

The cornerstone of American counter-terrorism in areas where it has not declared war is the use of drones. Currently, there are eleven known active American drone bases in Africa.²⁴ They span from Seychelles to Tunisia and Ethiopia to Burkina Faso. They fight “VEOs,” violent extremist organizations, that range from Al-Shabaab to Boko Haram through bases in Somalia and Cameroon, respectively.²⁵ The U.S. Military’s commitment can be epitomized with a 100 million dollar drone base being constructed in Agadez—geographic/territorial heart of Niger—to carry out operations against terrorism in the Sahel.²⁶

Where one looks, one can find a doubling down on these “non-permanent” installations. The United States has opened multiple supporting facilities in Cameroon. Its proximity and apparent lack of strong-handed action to human rights abuses by Cameroonians on shared military facilities speaks to the degree that the U.S. Military might be co-mingled with African military forces.²⁷ The United States has continued to fortify bases in both Agadez and Niamey of

²³ Pike

²⁴ List of United States drone bases, 2017

²⁵ Hammer, 2016

²⁶ Turse, Sept. 29

²⁷ Trafford, 2017

Niger, even though one of the reasons for creating the base at Agadez was to drawdown the hardware in Niamey.²⁸ Even the sole permanent base on the continent wasn't satisfactory for the American military ambition. The U.S. Military in 2013 began the creation of a drone facility in Djibouti outside the permanent Camp Lemonnier.²⁹

In 2006, 1% of all overseas commandos were in Africa.³⁰ In 2010, that figure was 3%. By 2016, it had climbed to 17%.³¹ currently there are at least 6,000 troops on the continent that conduct over 3,500 exercises, programs, and engagements every year.³² According to the head of special operations command in Africa, Army General Donald Bolduc, "at any given time, you will find SOCAFRICA conducting approximately 96 activities in 20 countries." In October of this year, after doing a briefing with Secretary of Defense James Mattis, Senator Lindsey Graham told reports "You're going to see more actions in Africa, not less." Perhaps most telling was a recent expansive war game conducted by the war colleges of all military branches and other entities in the military apparatus. The war game depicted a major terrorist attack on American soil that prompted an invasion of West Africa to combat the safe havens of Al-Qaida.³³

²⁸ Turse, 2017, Oct. 26

²⁹ Turse, 2015, Oct. 21

³⁰ United States, Government Accountability Office

³¹ Turse, 2017 May 18

³² Turse, VICE News

³³ Turse, 2017, Oct. 22

Theory

Urban-rural divisions

The relevance of this whole study is predicated on the fact that urban-rural upbringings manifest tangibly, whether the identities are salient or latent at the time. The division between urban and rural identities is not only well documented, it is a pillar of how academics understand the Africa's history from colonialism to the modern day.³⁴

However, scholarly work was limited on how urban-rural residence affects perception of western militaries. In the absence of that specificity, with the lens of urban-rural divisions, I will look at the broader issue how it can affect attitudes towards Westerners. Likewise, the field of literature is not as rich as preferable. Instead, I will be taking a comparative approach to infer dynamics between urban-rural divisions and attitudes towards Westerners. This study will instead use case examples of Ebola as proxy scenarios to explore how familiarity with Westerns affects the uptake of Western prescribed practices. The concept is that the Africans residing in urban areas will have higher exposure to Westerners and thus be more likely to adopt practices encouraged by Westerners. The relation can then be generalized to how urban-rural residency will affect a person's openness to Western military presence, wherein greater exposure correlates with increased favorability.

The 2014 Ebola outbreak in West Africa took the world by surprise. Prior to 2014, there had only been 18 major outbreaks (at least double-digit human infections).³⁵ The highest number of human cases was 425 in Uganda at the beginning of the century. The highest number of

³⁴ Agiri, 1976

³⁵ Ebola, 2017

deaths, 318, was in 1976 in what was then Zaire. With at least 28,616 human cases and 11,310 deaths, the 2014 Ebola outbreak had more than ten times the number of human cases than all previous outbreaks combined and had death toll forty times higher than the previous most lethal outbreak—Zaire 1976.

The global healthcare apparatus was tested in a way that it had not been before and the world was reeling in its wake. The event demonstrated that global health emergency preparedness was not sufficient and was vulnerable to infectious disease outbreaks with a different dispersive journey (e.g. if it disseminated in Lagos) or diseases with higher transmissibility. Since then there has been a lot of post-mortem research conducted to rectify the deficiency in global emergency medical responsiveness.³⁶ So while the outbreak was a recent event, the availability of the literature makes it a convenient case study to infer how differences in rural and urban areas manifest tangibly

The differences in urban and rural outcomes can be quite distinct with regards to Ebola. Typically outbreaks of Ebola are contained in distant rural areas with limited accessibility. This has been the pattern in five Ebola outbreaks in Uganda from 2000 to 2012. However, one outbreak spread from its rural origins to a densely packed urban district. This case highlights the differences in rural and urban.

The rural communities were quick to mobilize and quarantine the infected persons and the people that had substantial contact with them.³⁷ researchers attributed the ability to mobilize quickly to strong communal spirit within the rural community. Whereas, the urban district was not only afflicted by the population density, but also by the fact that people did not abide by orders from authority figures.

³⁶ Mastroianni, 2017

³⁷ OKware, 2017

The differences in attitudes could be explained through exposure and acculturation to the West—the progression from collectivism to individualism. As Africans move to urban centers and experience Western culture more routinely in their lives, they adopt more Western attitudes.³⁸ This is supported by quantitative research, with a small sample size, in Kenya that depicted a negative association between education and urbanization (reflectors of Western exposure) and self-concepts of collectivism.³⁹ Research on other parts of the world comes to similar findings.⁴⁰ The observation that Africans residing in urban areas are more exposed to the West and thus embody more “Western” attitudes naturally leaps to the conclusion that those urban dwellers are more favorable to the West.

In the 2014 Ebola outbreak, a devastating cycle was documented. Rural communities in Liberia already experience severe poverty and food insecurity. Poor nutrition and insufficient health services amplified the impact of Ebola in the rural areas of Liberia. Further, Ebola reduced the available human labor, in turn reducing the agriculture yield and furthering food insecurity.⁴¹ The repercussions of this will be felt beyond the outbreak of Ebola, especially in the disruption of education, which will have longstanding impacts.

Liberians in urban areas benefited from more pre-existing infrastructure and better living conditions, as well as, being more accessible for international organizations. Liberians residing in the urban areas also appeared to more easily adopt education from international organizations. Researchers surveying community leaders found that community leaders did not want basic information about Ebola.⁴² Their constituents had already internalized that information. Instead

³⁸ Argyle, 1967

³⁹ Ma, 1997

⁴⁰ Altrocchi, 1995

⁴¹ Stanturf, 2015

⁴² Abramowitz, 2015

they were seeking more technical information—training and best practices—that would be actionable for the population. This is juxtaposed to what the researchers studying Ebola in rural Liberia noted, “[c]ultural beliefs and practices, such as washing corpses before burial and touching at funerals, played an important role in transmission of EVD.” This apparent easy uptake of rudimentary information regarding Ebola aligns with the idea that urban Liberians would find practices from Westerners more palatable than rural Liberians. This would indicate that urban Liberians are more receptive to the West than rural Liberians.

Effects of two party interactions

On its face, the data presented here could represent important insights and have ramifications for U.S. and Western policy. However, the data is limited by the fact that it represents one point in time and is quantitative information from questions crafted by a third party. This alone is not actionable for Western powers. As would be expected, the United States and its allies would take the diligence to conduct their own assessment, pivoting on intelligence they gather. The ability to collect accurate intelligence is at the core of the intelligence organizations and international network that serve Western powers. In conjunction, these entities also lay the groundwork for future official military deployments through a series of covert activities. These activities often hinge on the receptiveness of locals that are working with Westerners.

In investigating how urban-rural residency effects favorability for Western military presence, this study will also touch upon how the urban or rural residence of two individuals affects the receptiveness of one participant and in turn their opinion on Western military

presence. It is the aspiration of this study that these insights will have practical application for how Western powers go about ascertaining and influencing the opinion on the ground.

The available literature will help to understand how another person affects the interactions of the person of interest. The data being used was gathered in an interviewer-interviewee format. The validity of data obtained through an interview is a topic of high importance in the scientific community. The literature is clear that features of the interviewer do manifest consequentially in results. It has been demonstrated that the race of an interviewer affects attitudinal, behavioral, and even political-knowledge indicators.^{43 44 45} The research shows that female interviewers disclosed more information on sensitive topics and are told more egalitarian answers.^{46 47 48 49}

While urban and rural features are not as apparent as gender or race, it is still more than plausible that those features would affect the data obtained in an interview. This is particularly conceivable in Africa where urban-rural residency can manifest in superficial appearance, mannerisms, or attitudes. Policy makers should be cognizant of the influence that the dynamic of two people's residency/upbringing can have on the data collected. Extensive research on priming has demonstrated that the actions of humans are quite susceptible to subtle stimuli.⁵⁰ This study will attempt to demonstrate that the dynamics of interviewer-interviewee's residence are consequential in the interactions of the interviewee.

⁴³ Schaeffer, 1980

⁴⁴ Cotter, 1982

⁴⁵ Davis, 2003

⁴⁶ Lueptow, 1990

⁴⁷ Kane, 1993

⁴⁸ Flores-Macias, 2008

⁴⁹ Benstead, 2010

⁵⁰ Ariely, 2008

Research on psychology concerning global warming beliefs provides guidance for how the aforementioned effects will manifest. Numerous studies have been published that demonstrate that people with opinions that diverge from the scientific literature (i.e. humans only contribute a little to global warming, global warming is a hoax) are arriving at their opinion independent of factors that would be expected (e.g. education level) and it can be predicted by variables associated with group identity.⁵¹ One study of 1,540 Americans revealed that people identified as dismissive of climate science were more dismissive as scientific literacy and numeracy increased.⁵² The people identified as predisposed to credit the climate science had a decrease in dismissiveness as scientific literacy and numeracy increased. The authors suggest that cultural polarization is driven by conflict of rationality at the individual level and collective level.

The most poignant example in this genre, is an experiment that examine the effect of exposure to evidence, objectively supporting the scientific consensus, of global warming had on beliefs. The experiments was constructed that exposed subjects to an anecdotal piece of scientific literature that could not rationally be interpreted any other way than the anecdote supporting the conclusion that global warming is real and primarily caused by humans. Intuitively, one would expect that all subjects' opinions would move closer to certainty in global warming being a human-made phenomena. Instead, researchers found that the subject's original belief was only intensified. People that believed global warming was real and human-caused believed in that belief stronger. Yet, people that believed global warming was a hoax or not caused by humans became stronger in the disbelief.

⁵¹ Mooney, 2012

⁵² Kahan, 2011

This study posits that a similar dynamic will occur with the interviewee. Opposing traits between the respondent and the interviewer that have strong cultural implications will lead to an effect that resembles the outcomes of the global warming psychology research. Urban and rural cultural divisions will be significant if the interviewee is interviewed by an interviewer from the contrary residence. In those situations a culturally polarizing effect will manifest.

Hypothesis

This study accepts the premise that Malians from urban areas will have more exposure to the Westerners than rural Malians. Thus, Malians from urban areas will, to a degree, represent Western influence in the eyes of rural Malians. Therefore, being interviewed by an urban Malian will educe a polarizing dynamic that evokes stronger anti-western feelings in a rural Malian. This will manifest in rural Malians having less support for Western military presence when interviewed by an urban Malian than when by a fellow rural Malian.

Vice versa should also hold. An urban Malian will see a Malian from a rural area as turning way from modernity. Therefore, urban Malians when confronted with a rural interviewer will have an emotional reflex to double down on Western influences. Thus, urban Malians will be more favorable to Western military intervention when interviewed by rural Malian than when interviewed by a fellow urban Malian.

H₀: Malians, when interviewed by an interviewer that resides in the complementary residency, will have more or less favorability to Western military presence than if interviewed by someone of the same residency

Data and Methodology

Source of Data

The data used in this study was survey data collected in Mali in 2014 by Afrobarometer. Afrobarometer describes itself as “a pan-African, non-partisan research network that conducts public attitude surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions, and related issues.” Afrobarometer surveys Africans in various countries every two years. This data comes from their sixth round, which was released in 2016 and surveyed 36 African countries. In 2001, Mali was one of two countries in the very first round conducted. It has since been present in the last three of six total installments.

Interviewers have one business week of training.⁵³ The content includes survey methods, field protocol, and local language considerations. The survey is typically conducted in the popular indigenous language. The data is encoded and vetted by their national partners and then checked by data managers at and external to Afrobarometer.

The sampling of the Afrobarometer survey is designed to be nationally representative. Beyond random sampling at multiple stages, the sampling is devised so any individual's probability of being selected is proportional to the population size relative to geographic area.⁵⁴ The gender of the subject is deliberately alternated each sequential interview. Sample sizes per country are typically 1,200 or 2,400 participants.

The Afrobarometer survey asks questions regarding multiple topics. Most topics are regarded as central topics and thus some questions' presence is consistent longitudinally and across all countries surveyed. Some topics are considered special topics and their relevance can

⁵³ Surveys and methods, Afrobarometer

⁵⁴ Round 6 Survey Manual, 2014

depend on the survey round. There are also country-specific questions. The survey consists of one hundred questions asked to the respondent. However, the majority of these questions have multiple parts. Combined with questions answered by the interviewer, the survey produces data points numbering around the low hundreds. Variables of interest are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Descriptive Statistics

	% of n		Std. Dev	
Favorability towards Western military presence	13.3		0.34	
Urban Malian interviewed by Rural Malian	8.6		0.28	
Rural Malian interviewed by Urban Malian	50.1		0.50	
Reached tertiary education	1.4		0.12	
Some formal education	26.8		0.44	
No formal education	64.1		0.48	
Atheist/apatheist	4.6		0.21	
Follower of traditional religion	1.3		0.11	
Denominational Muslim	10.8		0.31	
Muslim	78.2		0.41	
Denominational Christian	3.4		0.18	
Resides in rural area	74.7		0.44	
Resides in region distant from area previously occupied by extremists	60.7		0.49	
Resides in region previously occupied by extremists	10.0		0.30	
Arab-Berber	2.8		0.16	
Non-Mande Sub-Saharan African	24.8		0.43	
Mande Sub-Saharan African	60.8		0.49	
Female	50.0		0.50	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Not receptive to interviewer	2.2	1.7	1	13
Age	40.2	14.6	18	86

Notes: All variables, except “not receptive to interviewer” and “age,” are coded as a binary nominal value.

Dependent variable

The primary outcome of interest, receptiveness to Western military presence—our dependent variable, is an amalgam of three questions from the Afrobarometer data. The participant must suffice two criteria to be coded as favorable toward Western military presence.

The first is that they are open to foreign military presence. This is determined by providing a specific response to at least one of two questions.

Question *Q85A_MLI* is one question, wherein a participant's response could lead to them being coded as receptive to Western military presence. *Q85A_MLI* asks "[i]n your opinion, which of the following options offers now the best chance of resolving the crisis in northern Mali." The available responses are: none of these options, negotiations between the Government and armed groups, the war between FAMA and armed groups, the intervention of foreign armed forces, north secession, and don't know. The answer "intervention of foreign armed forces" bluntly broaches the subject of foreign military presence. Participants that respond with this answer suffice the first criteria—openness to foreign military presence—for determining support for Western military presence.

Question *Q86B1_MLI* is the second question that can establish receptivity to foreign military presence. Question *Q86B1_MLI* asks "[w]hat would you consider the best way for the Government to be more effective in treating the problem of armed groups in northern Mali? And what would be the second best way." The first answer is coded into question *Q86B1_MLI*, whereas the second response is coded into *Q86B2_MLI*. The secondary response to *Q86B2_MLI* is omitted because a corresponding second response is not collected for *Q85A_MLI*. The second response of *Q86B2_MLI* is excluded to preclude disproportionate weighting towards question *Q86B*_MLI*. This decision was also made because there is greater reliance on inference to deem a participant as open to foreign military presence from this question (as will be enumerated on below).

The answers to question *Q86B1_MLI* are: nothing, the Government is already effective in fighting them, strengthen military response or capabilities, working with traditional leaders to

tackle the problem, working with religious leaders to address the problem, improve the economy and create more jobs, improve the education system, govern more effectively/deliver better public services, treat the communities of original extremists fairly, give more power to local authorities to make their own decisions, negotiations, and don't know. Respondents that answer "strengthen military response or capabilities" are classified as favorable to foreign military presence. The reasoning for this deduction is that substantial improvement in the abilities of the Malian military requires the training and logistical support of advanced Western militaries. Further, the concept of improving the abilities of the Malian military is heavily associated with Western military aid. That is the rhetoric used to justify many of the Western military initiatives currently in Mali and it is the rhetoric that likely surfaces in discourse among Malians.

Once favorability to foreign military presence is established, the next step is to qualify it to *Western* military presence. We arrive at this conclusion through sufficing the second criteria—favorability to the West. This is assessed through question *Q80A*, which asks "[i]n your opinion, which of the following countries, if any, would be the best model for the future development of our country." The respondent answers were classified as either the United States, China, colonial power (ie. France, United Kingdom, Portugal), India, South Africa, "We should follow our own country's model," a country not listed, and don't know.

Presumably respondents were not prompted by the interviewer verbally saying "colonial power." It is the understanding of this study that respondents answering with any former colonial power were categorized as "colonial power." That data of the individual former colonial countries cited by the respondent is not available, which is unfortunate. However, it is reasonable to conclude that the decisive majority of those answers would have been France, Mali's colonizer and key modern Western ally.

If the interviewee's response, to question *Q80A*, is either the United States or a colonial power, then it is considered to be favorable to the West. If receptiveness to foreign military presence is established—through the appropriate response to either aforementioned questions—and receptivity to West is established, then both criteria have been sufficed to categorize a respondent as open to Western military presence.

Z = Preference for foreign military intervention in northern Mali crisis (Q85A_MLI)
Y = Belief that government needs to improve Malian military to respond to crisis (Q86B1_MLI)
X = Opinion that a Western power is the best model for Mali (Q80A)
J = Favorable to Western military presence (Dependent variable)

$$(Z \cup Y) \cap X = J$$

This can be further broken down into:

Z = Preference for foreign military intervention in northern Mali crisis (Q85A_MLI)
Y = Belief that government needs to improve Malian military to respond to crisis (Q86B1_MLI)
W = Opinion that the United States is the best model for Mali (Q80A)
V = Opinion that a former colonial power is the best model for Mali (Q80A)
J = Favorable to Western military presence (Dependent variable)

$$(Z \cup Y) \cap (W \cup V) = J$$

The sample size for each of these conditions is presented:

$$(95 \cup 291) \cap (229 \cup 389) = J$$

These values are then condensed (there was an overlap of 54 between Z and Y):

$$(332) \cap (618) = J$$

The final aggregation yields a sample size of 160 respondents classified under condition *J*:

$$160 = J$$

Independent Variable

The potential causal conditions we are investigating, the match/mismatch of interviewee's and interviewer's residency (urban or rural)—our independent variable, is a

product of two questions from the Afrobarometer data. These two binary questions produce four distinct categorizations that that an interviewee will be coded into. Both of these questions are answered by the interviewer.

The two questions used are *URBRUR* and *Q115*. Question *URBRUR* is the third question in the survey and the first if we discount the first two (respondent number and if the back of the house was checked) as logistical questions. This question would be filled out before questions, with recorded answers, are directed at the interviewee. *URBRUR* is concerned with whether it is an urban or rural primary sampling unit. The only two responses are urban and rural. Question *Q115* is in the section that succeeds questions directed at the interviewee. This section is answered by the interviewer and constitutes the conclusion of the data points collected. Question *Q115* asks “[d]o you come from a rural or urban area.” The only possible answers are rural and urban.

The matrix below in Figure 2 depicts the four classifications produced from these two questions:

FIGURE 2

Breakdown of independent variable: interviewee-interviewer residency match/mismatch

	Residency	Interviewer	
		Rural	Urban
Interviewee (AKA respondent or subject)	Rural	Rural/rural match	Rural/urban mismatch H ₀ : ↓ Favorability to Western military presence
	Urban	Urban/rural mismatch H ₀ : ↑ Favorability to Western military presence	Urban/urban match

Intermediary Variable

This study also examines a suspected intermediary variable—interviewee receptiveness to the interviewer, which is an agglomeration of six questions from the Afrobarometer data. This variable aggregates six ordinal questions, on a one through three scale, into a single value lying within a six through eighteen scale. This thirteen-point continuum is a composite of questions answered by the interviewer post-interview about the demeanor of the interviewee. These questions are the entire Q110 series (A through F denotation).

The questions are as follows: “[w]hat was the respondent’s attitude toward you during the interview Was he or she: friendly, in between, or hostile” (Q110A); “[w]hat was the respondent’s attitude toward you during the interview Was he or she: interested, in between, or bored” (Q110B); “[w]hat was the respondent’s attitude toward you during the interview? Was he or she: cooperative, in between, or uncooperative” (Q110C); “[w]hat was the respondent’s attitude toward you during the interview? Was he or she: patient, in between, or impatient” (Q110D); “[w]hat was the respondent’s attitude toward you during the interview? Was he or she: at ease, in between, or suspicious” (Q110E); “[w]hat was the respondent’s attitude toward you during the interview? Was he or she: honest, in between, or misleading” (Q110F).

Respectively, the responses are as follows:

	1	2	3
Q110A	Friendly	In between	Hostile
Q110B	Interested	In between	Bored
Q110C	Cooperative	In between	Uncooperative
Q110D	Patient	In between	Impatient
Q110E	At ease	In between	Suspicious
Q110F	Honest	In between	Misleading

$T = \text{Interviewee receptiveness to interviewer (intermediary variable)}$

$$\sum_{k=A}^F Q110_n = T \quad T \geq 6, \quad T \leq 13$$

Results

A multivariate logistic regression was carried out to evaluate the relationship of the study's dependent variable—favorability to Western military presence—with the independent variables of interest and control variables.

$$Y_i = Z_0 + Z_1X_{1i} + Z_2X_{2i} + \dots Z_kX_{ki} + \varepsilon_i$$

Where, for each individual i , Y represents the favorability towards Western military presence, X_1 through X_k represent all independent variables, Z_0 represents the intercept, Z_1 to Z_k represent the regression coefficients, and ε_i is the error term. The results are illustrated in Table 2

TABLE 2
Precipitates of favorability to Western Military Presence in Mali

	Supports Foreign Military Presence and has Favorable View of the West
Not receptive to interviewer	-0.04 (0.06)
Urban Malian interviewed by Rural Malian	-0.71 t (0.46)
Rural Malian interviewed by Urban Malian	0.41 t (0.25)
Reached tertiary education	0.05 (0.63)
Some formal education	0.24 (0.48)
No formal education	0.16 (0.49)
Atheist/apatheist	0.67 (0.85)
Follower of traditional religion	0.39 (1.09)
Denominational Muslim	0.61 (0.82)
Muslim	0.41 (0.77)
Denominational Christian	-0.27

	(0.98)	
Resides in rural area	-0.33	
	(0.34)	
Resides in region distant from area previously occupied by extremists	-0.58	***
	(0.22)	
Resides in region previously occupied by extremists	-1.16	***
	(0.41)	
Arab-Berber	1.17	*
	(0.62)	
Non-Mande Sub-Saharan African	0.82	**
	(0.37)	
Mande Sub-Saharan African	0.55	‡
	(0.34)	
Age	-0.02	***
	(0.01)	
Female	-0.03	
	(0.19)	

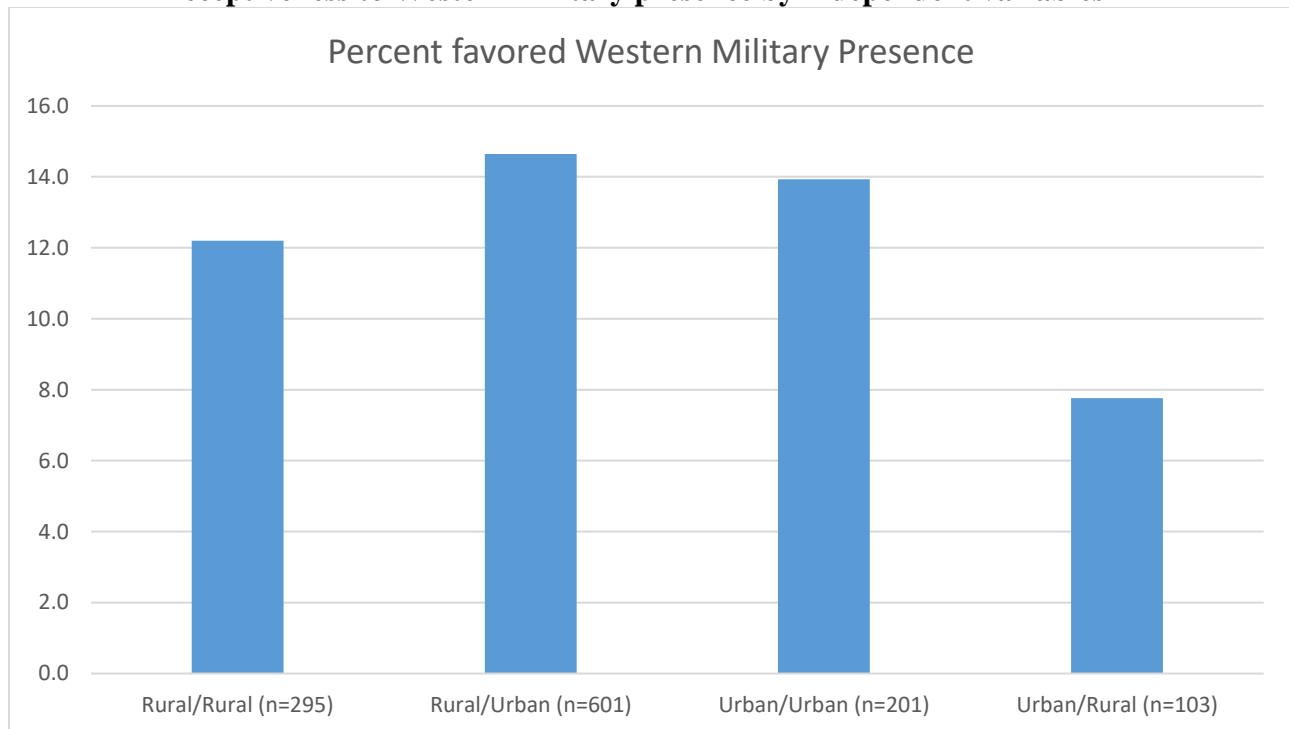
Notes: asterisks reflect statistical significance. ‡, *, **, and *** denote a p-value less than 0.15, 0.10, 0.05, and 0.01, respectively. These classifications are respectively referred to as relevant, moderate, strict, and strong statistical significance in the paper.

One of the two independent variables of interest, interviewee and interviewer rural and urban mismatch respectively, had an effect size of 0.41. Rural Malians interviewed by an urban Malian were 41% more likely to respond with answers that indicate they would be in support of Western military presence. However, it could only be classified as relevantly statistically significant in any form with P-value of 0.102. Yet it was on the verge of being moderately statistically significant.

The other independent variable of interest, interviewee and interviewer urban and rural mismatch respectively, had a relevant statistical significance (p-value of 0.120). However, the proximity to the realm of moderate statistical significance should be noted. It had substantial impact with an effect size of -0.71. Urban Malians interviewed by a rural Malian were 71% less likely to respond with answers that indicate they would be in support of Western military presence.

These results do not meet the more stringent standards of statistical significance used in academia. However, those findings cannot be categorically dismissed as not having a relation. Further research is warranted. The effects the variables have where opposite to the effects predicted by the hypothesis, as depicted in Figure 3.

FIGURE 3
Receptiveness to Western military presence by independent variables



The intermediary variable, receptiveness to the interviewer, was outside the range of statistical significance with a p-value of 0.479 and yielded an effect size of -0.04. Wherein, respondents were 4% less likely to support Western military presence for every unit that they increased on the 13-point metric of their receptiveness to the interviewer.

There were four control variables, of the 16 evaluated, that met strict statistical significance—three of which had a strong statistical significance. Age had the most statistically significant results with a P-value of 0.003. Yet, an effect size limited to -0.02.

A predictable outcome was that a region's proximity to the northern Mali crisis would have an instrumental effect on the dependent variable. The most pronounced results were whether a subject resided in a region distant from, affected by, or occupied by the extremists forces at the height of the northern Mali crisis. The region affected by extremists forces was omitted in the regression. Being distant from areas that had conflict at the peak of the extremists occupation where 58% more likely to not be supportive of Western military presence. This -0.58 effect size was coupled with a strong P-value of 0.008. Even more impactful was the effect of residing in the regions that were occupied by extremists forces. the P-value was 0.005 and the effect size was -1.16. A person residing in regions occupied by extremists at the height of the northern Mali crisis were 116% more likely to not respond with answers that indicated favorability to western military presence. This was the strongest effect towards disfavoring Western military presence of any of the variables measured.

Respondent ethnicity had varying statistical dependency depending on the ethnicity. The ethnic classification of a mix between Arab-Berber and Sub-Saharan African was left out. A person's ethnicity being Sub-Saharan African (and not part Mande group of ethnicities) had an effect of 0.82. This result was strictly statistically significant with a p-value was 0.028. The Sub-Saharan Africans that were part of the Mande ethnic umbrella had an effect size of 0.55, but only relevant statistical significance. The p-value was 0.111. Arab-Berber ethnicity had moderate statistical significance, with 0.057, and the strongest positively correlated effect size of any of the variables tested. At an effect size 1.18, the respondent being Arab-Berber led to a 118% increase in favoring Western military presence.

The remainder of the variables evaluated were not statically significant in any form.

Conclusion

Decision-makers in the U.S. Intelligence Community, Military, and State Department want to know: are Malians receptive to an increase in American military hardware, does residing in an urban or rural area affect views on increasing foreign military presence, does a rural person faced with an urban person become more resentful towards the West, will the accuracy of human intelligence be affected by subtle dissimilarities between a subject and interviewer. This study contributes to the information that will be taken into account when decision-makers in the United States Government attempt to answer those questions.

This study set out to answer the question: is an opinion on Western military presence, of a Malian residing in an urban or rural area, affected by the interviewer residing in the opposite area. In this study, I posited that urban-rural divisions, while subtle, were tangible and asserted that enumerator effects were consequential. I took the position that the respondent would be primed by the interviewer residing in the opposite area as them and that it would precipitate the respondent being more likely to voice opinions that were opposite of opinions associated with the interviewer's residency. This study argued that a rural Malian interviewed by an urban Malian would be less likely to support increasing Western military presence and that an urban Malian interviewed by a rural Malian would express answers more favorable to Western military presence.

This study found a relationship that was inverse to the expected relationship. The result of the independent variables—mismatch of subject and interviewer residency—was not statically significant but close enough to justify further research. More statistically significant and impactful was where a person lived in context to the area occupied at the height of the Northern

Mali crisis. Ethnicity had varying statistical significance, yet remained substantial in effect. Age was very statistically significant, but with mild effects.

The lack of statistical significance by either of the independent variables suggest that being interviewed by a person of the opposite residency is not as consequential as anticipated. However, the fact that the results were approaching statistical significance indicates that a causal relation, of dissimilarity with the interviewer polarizing responses, does exist. This examination will need to be repeated to determine statistical significance. The effect size depicts enumerator effects being noticeably tangible.

Statistically significant results of strong effect with ethnicity and living proximity, to the area occupied at the height of the northern Mali crisis, reflect overlapping cleavages. This association aligns with the distribution of those features over geographic area. Perplexing was the strongest correlation towards favorability to Western military presence was the Afro-Berber ethnicity. Whereas, the strongest inverse correlation was the regions most affected by conflict, which are the regions Arab-Berbers inhabit most. This appears to mostly likely be explained as a weighting issue. While Arab-Berbers are most commonly found those in specified regions, they are still aren't even a plurality in them.

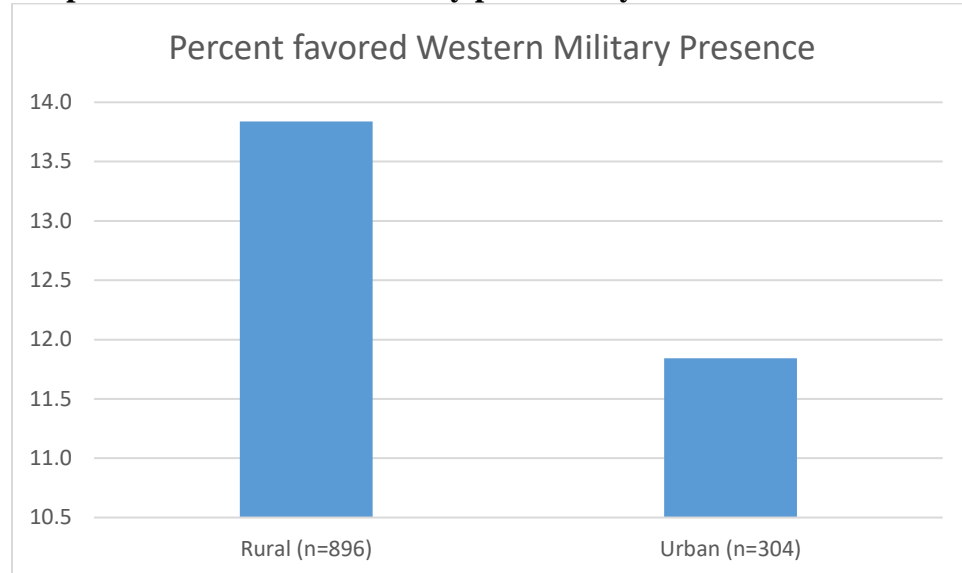
The most statistically significant results reinforce intuitive knowledge that a person's ethnicity and proximity to violence carried out with ethnic undertones will affect a person's receptiveness to the proposition of a foreign military, in this case a Western military, intervening to halt the violence. However, the most intriguing result is that the relationship between the independent and dependent variable was the inverse of what was theorized.

There are a few explanations for this. One is that the enumerator effect was present, but instead of being polarizing, it manifested as social desirability bias. Another is that the

assumption that rural individuals in Africa are less receptive to the West military presence because they are less exposed to the West is wrong. The argument I put forth was that less exposure to the West by rural individuals was the proximal cause of less favorability. It could be the case that one of the links in that chain of causation was an inference too far. However, this outcome should be observable in other African countries.

It is when the specific context of Mali is accounted for that the most plausible explanation appears. Perhaps, I asserted the correct argument that there would be a tangible polarizing social enumerator effect, but I assumed the wrong premise. It is unlikely that rural people across Africa are more receptive to a Western military than their urban compatriots. What is more likely is that Mali is the exception to this trend. The effects of the northern Mali crisis—a secular civil war that was exacerbated by the emergence of multiple VEOs with fluid structures that were combatted with superior Western military systems and further complicated by regional, continental and international peacekeeping actors—will be profound on the population's opinions. The conflict has affected mostly rural Malians. It would be understandable that the rural-urban script is flipped in this case. This explanation aligns with breakdown of favorability for Western military presence by just residency exhibited in Figure 4. A fact that the social desirability bias explanation cannot reconcile.

FIGURE 4
Receptiveness to Western military presence by rural or urban residency



A psychology professor won't walk away from this paper with a conclusive answer as to what will prompt a social desirability bias versus a polarizing enumerator effect in these situations. A collections management officer in Bamako won't be able to create a definitive field guide that will yield the most accurate human intelligence after reading this paper. A Foreign Service officer won't come away wielding the levers of soft power differently in the west African bloc. However, they will know that the answers do exist out there and that they are one more step closer to it. One more *practical* step.

The academic is now cognizant of how inconspicuous traits between two interacting individuals can affect their opinions on macro issues. The intelligence operative will seek to marginalize the role of subtle extraneous variables and factor in a larger margin of error for qualitative information collected. The diplomat knows the demographics in Mali whose opinions of the United States have the most room for improvement and what the optimal demographics are to be the messenger of the American image.

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From November of 2012 to December of 2016, the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, A German foundation, carried out nine surveys of Malians concerning the Mali crisis. It particularly asks Malians various questions about their opinion of foreign military presence, including the United States, France, the European Union, the United Nations, and ECOWAS. This was perhaps the most pertinent resource for the paper. Unfortunately it was not included because of the time it would have taken to apply the data to the figure. After roughly translating it (it's written in French), it became apparent that the questions have significant modifications each iteration. For example, in the first iteration, the poll surveys favorability on American military presence. This later on evolves into opinions of permanent military presence and then duration. In some cases, American military is absent all together from an iteration. There are instances where the same question asked about the American military is in the next iteration but asked about the French. This would have required more time construct and understanding of what occurring longitudinally, because the data shows that opinions shift from any given iteration. To accurately utilize the data, it also would need to be analyzed in the context of the events occurring during that four year span. My advisor encouraged me to not concentrate excessive amount of time on just this one source. The aspiration is to use that data in a future study to test the validity of the dependent variable constructed in this study. The chief weakness of this paper were the inferences required in making the dependent variable. The polling series by Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung combined with analysis of the 5th and 6th Afrobarometer data can test the validity of the dependent variable.

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