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Do Francophone and Islamic schooling communities participate differently? Disaggregating parents' political behaviour in Mali

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ABSTRACT

Despite strong empirical evidence of the influence of religious brokers on political mobilisation in Africa, we know very little about the individual-level relationship between religious association and political behaviour. Drawing upon an emerging comparative literature on the effect of social service provision on political participation, this article asks whether Malian consumers of Islamic schooling are as likely to seize new democratic opportunities for electoral participation as their peers who send their children to public schools. Using an original survey of 1,000 citizens, exit polling and interviews, this analysis demonstrates that parents who enrol their children in madrasas are less likely than other respondents to report voting. Conversely, parents who send their children to public schools are more likely to participate in electoral politics.

In many African countries, religious authorities mediate their followers' relationships with the secular state by brokering electoral participation, fostering involvement in contentious politics (e.g. protests

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and demonstrations), and lobbying for specific legislation. Studies of Muslim-majority states in the Sahel, including Senegal, Niger and Nigeria, have demonstrated these links to be particularly salient (Sklar 1993; Villalón 1995; Schaffer 2000; Beck 2008; Idrissa 2009). In much of Muslim Africa, democratic transitions have facilitated greater religious discussion and debate; and the collapse of state-sponsored religious monopolies has enhanced possibilities for freedom of religious association.[1] While political candidates and parties remain predominantly elite and secular,[2] religious communities have engaged in non-electoral channels including vociferous debates over policies such as Family Code reform (Villalón 1996; Soares 2009; Wing 2012), state-sponsored activities viewed as anti-Islamic (Idrissa 2009) and in the case of Nigeria, the place of sharia law (Kendhammer 2013). However, political science knows very little about the effect of religious association on individual citizens' political behaviour in Muslim-majority countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Citizens in the Sahel consistently rank religion as very important in their lives, which makes it difficult to measure variation in religiosity/religious adherence using existing survey data.[3]

This article examines parents' school selection and consumption in order to better understand religious communities' political behaviour. Do parents who send their children to Islamic schools participate in politics differently than those whose children attend Francophone schools? An emerging comparative literature suggests that exposure to social services provided by politically or ideologically motivated actors may influence political behaviour (Cammet & MacLean 2011). For instance, Thachil (2011) has demonstrated the Hindu nationalist BJP's (Bharatiya Janata Party) use of schooling in India as a successful strategy for courting voters from outside of its traditional base. Similarly, Cammet & Issar (2010) have revealed the use of schooling as a recruitment strategy for electoral and non-electoral politics in Lebanon. Moreover, rebel groups have consistently used social service provision to win the support of host communities as well as their recruits (Weinstein 2007; Keister 2013). Finally, drawing upon the American policy feedback literature (e.g. Pierson 1993; Soss 2002; Campbell 2003; Mettler & Soss 2004), MacLean's (2011) analysis of Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana shows that citizens' consumption of public social services is correlated with greater political participation. Social service provision, especially in weak states, provides a venue for political authorities to connect with constituencies. What happens when states forgo this opportunity to forge connections with citizens, instead delegating this responsibility to private providers?

Concurrent with transitions to democracy and donor-led efforts to expand access to education, including the Millennium Development Goals and the Education for all Campaign, nascent African democratic states sought partnerships with religious providers and other private schools in order to increase enrolment. This liberalisation of the educational sector has facilitated expanded access to schooling opportunities. However, educational expansion has, in turn, precipitated what many refer to as a 'schooling crisis', or a tangible decline in the educational quality of public schools. The diversity of schooling providers, which include public schools, madrasas, and private secular schools, raises interesting questions about how different schooling providers might generate and/or cater to communities with distinct political preferences and patterns of political behaviour.

This question regarding Islamic schooling communities[4] is particularly salient considering their historic marginalisation by West African states. Fluency in the former colonial language remains a necessary condition for entry into the government bureaucracy, but Islamic schools continue to use Arabic as the dominant language of pedagogy. Given the traditional juxtaposition of political and traditional/religious authority, the rapprochement between the state and Islamic schools provides an interesting possibility for better integration of more pious religious constituencies into formal democratic politics. However, it is possible that participation in different schooling trajectories – French, Arabic-language based, secular or Islamic – could exacerbate the existence of what Idrissa describes as 'competing modernities' – one tied to the West and the other to the Muslim world (2009). By sending their children to madrasas, parents have less contact with the state in its role as a public service provider.

This article explores these questions in Mali, which was once considered a leading democracy in West Africa due to its history of relatively peaceful elections and two executive alternations of power. Since the survey was conducted in 2009, there have been dramatic political changes in Mali: a military coup disrupted nearly 20 years of democratic rule, and rebels seized three northern regional capitals (Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal), eventually leading France to intervene to liberate the North of the country. The involvement of actors purporting a hardline sharia agenda makes the question of religious communities' participation with the secular, bureaucratic Malian state particularly pressing. As Mali prepares for a new round of elections, these data offer important evidence regarding the integration of different schooling communities into the previous democratic system.

Mali has followed liberalisation and expansion strategies consistent with those described above. Further, gross primary enrolment rose from less than 30% before the democratic transition in 1991 to nearly 80% in 2009. In an environment of unprecedented access to public and private Francophone education, there has been a consistent increase in the percentage of parents enrolling their children in madrasas. In the 2009–2010 school year, 13% of Malian primary students were enrolled in madrasas, modern Islamic schools that use Arabic as the language of instruction.[5] In Mali, where Muslim constituencies have expressed their most cohesive political action through contentious channels such as protest, we know little about religious constituencies' participation in the electoral realm or about their broader engagement with the state.

This analysis leverages an original survey of 1,000 Malian citizens hailing from five regions, interviews with educators and university students, and exit poll data from the 2009 municipal elections, to highlight the differences in political participation between religious and state-sponsored schooling communities. The survey data capture respondents' schooling decisions, as well as their political attitudes and reported behaviours using closed-ended survey questions, and citizens' qualitative justifications for their beliefs and actions. These unique data allow us to probe the mechanisms behind statistical correlations. To test and confirm the survey results, I use exit poll observations of voter characteristics. Additionally, I use a focus group of university students from rural areas to further probe one of the posited mechanisms linking public schooling consumption to increased political engagement: linguistic brokerage.

The article makes two contributions. First, it demonstrates that madrasa-schooling consumers are reluctant to participate in electoral channels. Drawing on more than a year of fieldwork, I demonstrate that Malian citizens who enrol their children in madrasas are less likely to report that they participate in electoral politics than citizens who do not have children enrolled in school. Secondly, the data reveal that parents who send their children to public schools are more likely to indicate that they campaigned and voted than citizens who do not have children in school. Evidence from exit polling in the 2009 municipal elections confirms these general trends. These findings suggest a need to broaden our conceptualisation of political constituencies beyond the narrow realm of regional and ethnic politics that is typically applied to Africa. It also raises important questions concerning the inclusion and representation of Islamic schooling communities in Mali. Finally, it offers evidence to further support MacLean's claim that public services link parents to political – particularly electoral – participation (2011).

The article proceeds as follows: it begins with a brief discussion of participation in the Malian context and describes pervasive scepticism around electoral politics in Mali. It then offers a brief history of the tension between Islamic schooling and secular authority in the colonial and post-independence state in Mali. Next, it introduces survey data from 10 school districts in Mali to demonstrate the variance in reported political behaviour of two types of schooling consumers: parents who send their children to madrasas and those who send their children to public schools. I complement the regression analysis with exit-polling and focus group data before discussing potential causal mechanisms. The article concludes with a discussion of the implications of my findings for democratic deepening in Mali and Muslim-majority countries on the continent.

POLITIKI MAN ɲI: DEMOCRATIC POLITICS IN PRE-COUP MALI

In order to probe the relationship between schooling consumption and political engagement, it is important to first contextualise political participation in Mali where, like many countries in Africa, elected officials operate parallel to the authority of religious and traditional elites. In 'democratic' Mali, there was widespread scepticism about politics and elections. The Bamana word for politics and elections, *politiki*, is often coupled with *man ɲi* – meaning bad. Perhaps the most telling piece of evidence was public apathy regarding the coup d'état: more than 60% of Bamakois surveyed supported the junta's seizure of power (Guindo 2012). Malian scepticism toward parties and politics was further evidenced by paltry voting rates —a mere 40% of the population— which are among the lowest on the continent. One female respondent from Kayes, Kadiatou explained her disinclination to embrace any political party, 'We have tried a lot of different paths in vain (K55). When asked if they were close to any political party, other respondents would say: 'they [parties] are all the same'.[6]

However, voting, campaigning and affiliation with parties were not the only ways for Malians to participate in politics. Many Malians participated through the mediation of a religious or traditional leader. Interviews with Malian citizens revealed a juxtaposition of 'legitimate' and clean religious leadership with dishonest and 'dirty' electoral politics. These conversations are consistent with Afrobarometer findings that most

Malians prefer to consult with traditional or religious leaders rather than contact elected officials (Coulibaly & Diarra 2004: 17). Respondents often described relationships with parties as inconsistent and temporal in contrast to organic and continual relationships with religious leaders. Like many others, Djeneba, a 30-something year old mother living in a rural area of Kayes, noted the discrepancy between elected officials' behaviour before the electoral cycle and after it: 'Officials only come to visit during elections (K52)'. Traditional or religious leaders' lives are entwined with those of their constituents, and they are typically viewed as more accountable. Djeneba explained that '[y]ou can count more on [religious leaders] to help you resolve your problems', as opposed to the president or other elected officials where 'the situation never changes, they are comfortable (K52)'.

Participation in politics is also perceived as corrupting traditional elites. Boubacar, a 60-something Songhai respondent from Timbuktu, complained: 'Religious authorities can act like those in political power. [Religion/religious practice] should be different than politics' (T39). In rating his confidence in religious authorities, Abdoulaye, a 40-something Tuareg respondent from Timbuktu, gave a zero vote of confidence: 'They are ruined now; even [religious and traditional leaders] – they take part in politics (T6)'. It should be noted that the typical Malian understanding of 'politics' or *politiki* refers exclusively to the electoral realm. Most respondents compartmentalised voting and campaigning from more general activities related to governance and policy. For instance, it is common for Malians to distinguish between *kalata wati*, or the campaigning period, and normal time.

Religious movements can mobilise constituents to the polls, as evidenced by the Mourides in Senegal; however, in Mali, these groups have been most successful using protests or other contentious tactics to accomplish political goals. In recent years, public protests led by major religious groups, such as the High Islamic Council, have overturned an amendment to annul the death penalty, gender quotas for political parties, and most recently, the 2009 Family Code.[7] Therefore, citizens do not merely choose between participating electorally and not participating. Rather, they also have the option of engaging in a wide range of contentious activities.[8]

However, while contentious participation can generate favourable policy outcomes, it does not solidify relationships between formal state institutions and citizens. As Hirschman (1970) argues, democratic institutions require engagement to be made accountable to populations and to be prevented from falling into a cycle of slack. Therefore, in an environment of pervasive scepticism about electoral participation, a major question becomes who is willing to engage in elections and other 'formal' institutional channels. This article posits that state-led welfare activity can generate such participation and that Islamic schooling is less likely to be associated with participation in elections. The next section describes reasons why different respective schooling consumers might engage in different types of political behaviour: ideological determinants and a social service effect.

THE STATE AND SCHOOLING IN MALI

In the Sahel, madrasas and Quranic schools are tied to a specific history of contestation with the secular state. When the Europeans arrived in West Africa, Quranic schools were already widespread (Johnson 1975; Sanankoua 1985; Brenner 2001). Originally established by Muslim traders and intellectuals, Quranic schools indoctrinate students into the Islamic religion through the memorisation and repetition of texts. Quranic schools are generally decentralised; students work under the apprenticeship of their teacher, or *marabout*, and slowly gain access to the more esoteric elements of Islamic knowledge (Soares 2005). Madrasas arrived in the first half of the 20th century as Malians with a cosmopolitan vision of a pan-Muslim community returned from education in Islamic universities abroad (Brenner 2001: 54). Madrasas offer a modern curriculum, in addition to religious studies, and use Arabic as the language of instruction. Initially, many of their founders identified with an emerging 'reformist' version of Islam that aimed to align Malian religious practice with that of the broader Muslim world.[9] For religiously minded parents, madrasas offered an attractive option, mixing 'modern' pedagogy, as well as their Islamic values (Villalón 2012; Villalón *et al.* 2012).

Historically, Islamic education faced resistance by the French colonial authorities. The French feared 'Islamic fanaticism' and saw it as a significant challenge to the 'mission civilisatrice'.[10] The French built their own Franco-Arab schools in an attempt to co-opt local populations (Brenner 2001: 4). Madrasas were particularly threatening as they offered a 'modern' brand of formal education, which potentially linked students to a worldwide network of Muslims (Amselle 1985; Sanankoua & Brenner 1991; Brenner 2007). The colonial administration restricted the curriculum that some madrasas could legally offer by classifying them as 'Quranic schools' and attempting to prohibit them from teaching in Arabic or French (Brenner 2001: 15, 82; Brenner 2007: 213).

The French government refused to grant licences that would qualify these schools for state aid, such as that which was received by the Catholic schools. Ironically, as the French built infrastructure, Islam and Islamic education spread rapidly through the rest of the country (Launay & Soares 1999; Soares 2004).

When the French built the first French-language schools in the late 1800s, they faced resistance and distrust from local populations (Gérard 1997; Brenner 2001; Ba 2009). Many Malians, suspicious of colonial rule, refused to send their children to French schools – preferring instead to send them to Islamic schools. The French authorities courted the sons and relatives of chiefs and notables, but village chiefs would often send children of lower-caste village members to the European school, while keeping their own children far from French control (Gérard 1997: 99). The population's suspicion of French education, as well as the limited penetration of colonial infrastructure into Malian territory, begot one of the lowest literacy rates of any African nation. At independence, only 7% of the Malian population was literate in the former colonial language, compared with an African average of 39%.[11]

Post-independence governments did little to accommodate the needs and desires of Islamic-schooling communities. Keita's Marxist government was strongly secular and nationalised one of the largest madrasas in Bamako as well as the French, colonial era madrasas. The schools were required to teach in French and Arabic but were stripped of their religious curriculum. Keita planned to do the same with other madrasas in Mali before succumbing to a military coup in 1968 led by Moussa Traoré (Brenner 2001: 212). Similarly, efforts by Islamic associations (e.g. the Muslim Cultural Union) to integrate into the political sphere were thwarted post-independence and then later under Moussa Traoré (Amselle 1985).

Following the 1968 coup, the education system foundered under the Traoré dictatorship. A World Bank report estimates that the gross enrolment ratio had dropped to 20% in 1973 (Bender *et al.* 2007; Lange & Diarra 1999). Under the Traoré dictatorship, there was only one recognised Islamic organisation – AMUPI (Malian Association for the Unity and Progress of Islam). Even without state assistance or recognition, madrasas flourished, particularly during the 1970s with the influx of petrol-dollars from the Middle East. Brenner estimates that enrolment in madrasas outstripped enrolment in public schools in the 1980s (Brenner 2001).[12] Madrasas educated 6% of primary learners in 1960, but they represented a full 25% of all primary enrolment by the 1980s (Brenner 2001: 170, 172). Traoré reluctantly integrated

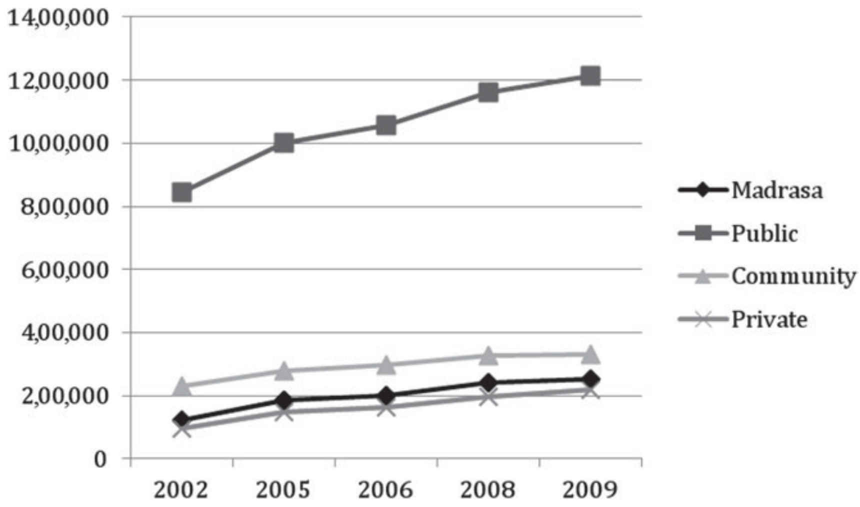

FIGURE 1
Primary enrolment over time by school type. Graph calculated using Brenner (2001), The Annual Ministry of Education Reports for 2004–2009. There are no available data on Quranic schools.

madrasas into the Ministry of Education in 1985; however many schools viewed the attempt as 'domestication' reminiscent of French efforts to control Islamic schooling at the turn of the century.[13] Gross primary school enrolment rates remained dismally low, estimated at approximately 26%, leading up to the democratic transition in 1991.

The transition to democracy constituted a break from past policy and a dramatic opening for Islamic civic society, including advocates for madrasa schooling.[14] Following democratisation, Mali witnessed a vast proliferation of religious associations and public discourse surrounding Islamic principles and practices (Launay & Soares 1999; Soares 2005; Villalón 2010). Democratisation opened the door for the creation of a multitude of diverse religious organisations and Islamic self-help associations. In addition, democracy facilitated the unprecedented growth of schooling opportunities as the state and other donors increased funding for basic education and the private schooling sector blossomed. Gross primary enrolment increased more than 300% in the 20 years following the transition.[15] A greater number of Malian children were now able to attend primary school – at both state schools and new private secular and Islamic schools – than ever before. While the gains in enrolment were most dramatic in the 1990s, a lack of consistent data makes it difficult to assess growth by school type in that period. However, Figure 1 shows continued enrolment by school type from

2002–2009. It reveals increased enrolment in all schooling types: public, private Francophone schools,[16] madrasas and NGO-run community schools.[17]

Following the 1992 transition to democracy, President Alpha Omar Konaré invited Islamic schooling communities to join the National Education Conference. For the first time, supporters of Islamic education were allowed to provide input into government education policy. Members of diverse groups of newly flourishing Muslim voluntary associations, including the Muslim Cultural Union and Shubban al-muslimin, were staunch advocates of the modernisation of Islamic schooling (Brenner 2007: 201). These proponents of Islamic education were very vocal and demanded more schools and government resources (Brenner 2001: 281). Unlike forced integration of the Traoré era, this conference represented a victory for Islamic interest-groups. In the late 1990s, the Malian government officially accredited madrasas. Currently, there are more students enrolled in madrasas than in secular, Francophone private schools. In 2007, the Malian government began to offer the baccalaureate exam in Arabic. It is important to note that enrolment in madrasas continues to grow, despite unprecedented French-language schooling options. Parents pay more for madrasa education than public schools, despite the fact that the primary language of instruction, Arabic, is different from that of the bureaucratic state.[18]

State accreditation should not be read as the state's systematic control over curriculum or state subsidies to these schools. Parents who enrol their children in private schools, secular and Islamic, pay more than ten times what public school parents pay for their children's education. Government monitoring, especially of madrasas, is limited by budgetary constraints.[19]

In the current educational landscape, Quranic schools and madrasas serve very different constituencies. While some Sufi brotherhoods are explicitly tied to forms of Quranic schooling, and many associate more reformist communities with madrasa schooling, there are also Sufi madrasas and a broader constituency of parents who send their children to Quranic schools to supplement their secular education. These two forms of Islamic schooling are better distinguished by their scope and cost. Quranic schools are less expensive than other school types since the children generate the fees by begging. Many of the parents who send their children to Quranic schools are from rural areas that do not have access to other types of educational infrastructure and/or the means to pursue other types of education. Madrasa tuition is comparable to low-end Francophone private schools, with fees ranging from $3–5 a month.[20] Parents who enrol their children in madrasas come from a wider socioeconomic spectrum. They cite quality or religious reasons, rather than pragmatic reasons such as cost or proximity, for enrolling their children in madrasas. Madrasas use Arabic as the primary language of pedagogy.

Historically, Malian society has critiqued madrasas for limiting the employment opportunities of their graduates, but they do offer access to social mobility that Quranic schools do not (Sanankoua & Brenner 1991: 8). The state's recognition of madrasas, as well as the rising popularity of Arabic as a language of cosmopolitan trade, increased trade with the non-Western world, and the spread of Islam, has helped to placate fears that graduates of madrasas have few job opportunities.[21] Arabic teachers in Bamako explained that there has been a substantial increase in demand for their services in recent years. Many of them teach part-time at Francophone private schools, which increasingly offer Arabic classes, in addition to their full-time work at madrasas.[22]

BUILDING HYPOTHESES: SCHOOLING AS A POLITICAL CLEAVAGE?

Islamic associations were less successful at inserting themselves into the democratic political system.[23] During the National Conference held immediately before the transition to democracy, Islamic groups expressed a desire for the creation of an Islamic state and to allow the formation of Islamic political parties, but both attempts failed (Brenner 2001: 294; Soares 2006: 282; Künkler & Leininger 2009: 1073). A 2002 attempt by the Collective of Islamic Associations of Mali to identify and back a presidential candidate also failed.[24]

However, Islamic groups have been immensely active in politics outside of the formal electoral arena. Religious leaders have chosen to advise or critique secular authorities through a range of 'contentious politics', including protests, rallies and sensitisation campaigns. In 2009, the High Islamic Council made international headlines when it organised protests, which ultimately blocked the Family Code reform efforts. Religious organisations have showed their capacity for mobilisation by filling the national soccer stadium with supporters during the Family Code protests, or more recently, in rallies leading up to the defunct 2012 Malian elections.[25] While religious leaders and associations have been very vocal in political debates, they have been unwilling to develop parties or to field their own candidates.

Given the history of tension described above, Islamic-schooling consumers might be less willing to interact with the state because they view these institutions as less legitimate than other types of authority and/or because they are not the recipients of its welfare services. We could imagine a similar scenario where Islamic schools pull constituents into contentious politics rather than electoral participation. It is also possible that by attending a madrasa a student or parent could become integrated into an alternative community that values concentration on one's personal moral improvement and relationship with God. Religious leaders might discourage direct participation in 'dirty politics' unless it is mediated by their mosque or religious leaders. It is also possible that those citizens who are ideologically motivated and choose to enrol their children in madrasas are also less likely to participate in formal secular politics. *For these reasons, I hypothesise that parents who send their children to madrasas will be less likely to participate in politics than other citizens.*

Public schools may serve as a vehicle for parents to overcome widespread scepticism regarding the Malian state and to become engaged with electoral politics. Those citizens who secured a Western education reaped political dividends in the colonial and post-independence era.[26] While the utility of a state education is less apparent than during earlier regimes (Ba 2009) and many parents are sceptical about the quality of public schools (Diakité 2000; Bleck & Guindo 2013), public school consumption could still benefit parents through a 'policy feedback effect' (Pierson 1993; Mettler 2005; MacLean 2011). Parents who send their children to public schools benefit from increased interactions with the state, which may lead them to assess the government as more credible, to raise their level of internal efficacy, and promote greater political participation. The American politics literature demonstrates that experience with certain social services can induce citizens' participation in politics (Landy 1993; Gordon 1994; Soss 2002; Campbell 2003; Mettler and Stonecash 2008). Lauren MacLean's (2011) analysis of Afrobarometer data demonstrates that citizens who have contact with either public schools or public health clinics are more likely to vote, contact political leaders, attend community meetings, join with others to make their voices heard, and protest than citizens who did not have such contact. Those citizens who had no experience with public schools or clinics used non-state channels of representation more frequently (2011: 25). However, MacLean's measure of 'non-users' remains unclear, as it could include private service users, citizens who use religious or NGO services, as well as the most marginalised citizens who have access to no services.[27] This study builds on her work by disaggregating the reference categories to generate more specific comparisons.

On a practical level, parents who send their children to public schools benefit from French language instruction as well as increased contact with a state institution. During the elections, public schools literally transform into voting booths. In addition, since less than 30% of the adult population is literate in French, the language of bureaucracy, parents who educate their children in French-language schools can also leverage their child's linguistic skills to facilitate interaction with government bureaucracy.[28] Alternatively, parents who seek enrolment in public schools might also be civically minded and participate more often, despite widespread pessimism concerning politics. *For these reasons, I hypothesise that parents who send their children to public school will participate more than other citizens.*

THE POLITICAL PERCEPTIONS AND BEHAVIOUR OF ISLAMIC SCHOOLING COMMUNITIES

I draw on an original survey of 1,000 individuals to evaluate the behaviour of different schooling consumers. This survey used a stratified, area probability sampling[29] within ten school districts in five regions in Mali: Bamako, Kayes, Sikasso, Mopti and Timbuktu. Because I wanted to compare the experience of citizens sending their children to different schools, I selected districts using Ministry of Education data on education provision to maximise potential variation on my independent variable: type of school.[30] For instance in Bamako to maximise the likelihood of interviewing parents with children at different school types: Bamako Coura was selected due to high public school enrolments, Banconi had high madrasa enrolments, and Faladie because of high private, secular enrolments. Since there are few schooling options in rural areas, I purposefully targeted zones with different types of schools; and as a result, my sample has a strong urban/peri-urban bias: only 20% of respondents live in rural zones. Therefore, the percentage of respondents enrolling their children in community schools and of parents not enrolling a child in any school is below the national average.[31] Once school districts were selected, I used an online randomiser to select specific zones or villages where we would conduct the survey. We used Afrobarometer protocol at the household level to select respondents from each household who were permanent residents 18 years of age or older.[32]

I conducted the survey with four Malian research assistants and personally coded 190 of the surveys during a year of fieldwork in 2009. Two-person teams administered the survey, so that one person would pose questions while the coder captured responses as well as qualitative justifications for the responses. All respondents were asked if they had children who were at least 7 years of age.[33] If respondents had children, they were asked if their children had ever been enrolled in school, and if so, what type (s) of school. Each respondent was asked their reason(s) for enrolling their child(ren) in each relevant school, evaluations of schools, and their general attitudes toward the Malian education system.

I disaggregate citizens' responses along my primary variable of interest: where they send/sent their children to school. I create dummy variables for people with children at public schools, private schools, community schools, Christian schools, madrasas, Quranic schools, as well as parents and other citizens without children enrolled at any school. More than half of parents who enrol their children in Islamic schools also enrol their children in a secular, state school. Since I theoretically expect those school types to have opposite effects on political behaviour, I create two additional dummies for those parents who send their children to both public schools and madrasas and public schools and Quranic schools.

In the sample, 694 respondents reported having at least one child 7 years of age or older.[34] Of parents with children who attend/attended school:[35] 362 respondents had children who attend/attended public school, 169 had children who attend/attended private, secular school, 38 had children who attend/attended exclusively madrasa, 51 had children at community schools, 31 parents had children at Quranic school,[36] 7 parents had children at Quranic and public schools, and 46 had children at madrasas and public schools. The sample includes those parents who benefit from a state service, but also those parents who previously benefited from state services.[37] These data enable me to compare the behaviour of parents who send their children to madrasas and those who send their children to public schools with other Malian citizens.

I include control variables for factors that might obscure or inflate the relationship between social service consumption and participation: gender, age, rural/urban, school district and poverty. In Mali, men typically determine the educational trajectory of their children and report being more active in politics, thus it is important to separate gender effects out from education.[38] Afrobarometer data also reveal that older citizens are more likely to vote and less likely to identify with a party.[39] In Mali, primary school enrolment has increased dramatically in the last 20 years; therefore older respondents will have been less likely to have their children enrolled in any school and less likely to be exposed to schools which blossomed post-liberalisation: private schools, madrasas or community schools. In addition, due to the perceived decline in schooling quality over time, it is important to isolate the period of time when respondents' children attended school.

MacLean found poverty to be correlated with higher rates of reporting contact with a politician (2011: 1251); and, household wealth constrains educational choices, so I include a proxy for poverty to try to separate these effects. I code all respondents as urban or rural, since I anticipate distinct patterns of mobilisation and participation in those zones and since there is greater availability of schooling options in urban zones.[40] I include level of education, as it is likely to influence a parent's decision to enrol his or her child as well as the parent's participation (MacLean 2011). I include controls for membership in a secular organisation and membership in a religious organisation, since scholars of West Africa have found that as 'agencies of mobilisation', societal organisations play an important role in mobilising turnout. They could also affect school choice.[41]

I assess formal participation through a series of measures, including whether the respondent identifies with a party, reports campaigning or voting during the 2007 presidential elections, has a voting card, and contacted a government official. Each variable is coded dichotomously and evaluated independently. I include a wide range of participation variables, knowing that different forms of participation are classified differently. As explained earlier, those activities associated with voting and campaigning during *kalata wati*, or the campaign period, are most likely to be associated with the idea of *politiki man ɲi* meaning politics is bad.

In my first analysis, I use logistic regression analysis to compare the formal participation of parents who send their children to different school types to citizens who do/did not have a child enrolled in school.[42] This strategy allows me to compare different types of schooling consumers with a neutral category of non-consumers, in order to simultaneously compare the different types of schooling on parents' participation.[43] I regress each variable measuring political participation (party identification, campaigning, voting, having a voting card, willingness to run for office, and contacting a government official)

TABLE 1

Schooling consumers' participation as compared with citizens without children enrolled (*p<0·05, **p<0·01, ***p<0·001).

Where child enrolled	Vote in 2007?	Campaigned in 2007?	Voter Id Card?
Public	0·55** (0·18)	0·52** (0·19)	0·86*** (0·18)
Madrasa	−1·03** (0·39)	−0·29 (0·38)	−0·57 (0·37)
Private	0·29 (0·21)	0·17 (0·20)	0·10 (0·20)
Community school	0·60 (0·41)	0·88** (0·34)	0·49 (0·37)
Quranic school	0·16 (0·44)	0·36 (0·45)	0·35 (0·38)
Christian	−0·04 (0·08)	0·68 (0·50)	0·13 (0·56)
Public and Madrasa	0·22 (0·36)	−0·24 (0·46)	0·94* (0·38)
Public and Koranic	−0·02 (0·90)	−0·56 (1·13)	Perfect Failure
Controls			
Education	0. 06 (0·05)	0·15** (0·05)	0·07 (0·05)
Woman	−0·32 (0·17)	−0·70** (0·17)	−0·51** (0·16)
Urban	−0·32 (0·21)	−0·20 (0·21)	−0·53* (0·21)
Poverty	0·04 (0·07)	−0·01 (0·07)	−0·15* (0·17)
Age	0·25** (0·06)	−0·19** (0·06)	0·18** (0·06)
Associational membership	0·24** (0·08)	0·32*** (0·07)	0·24** (0·08)
Religious association member	0·04 (0·10)	0·11 (0·09)	−0·07 (0·10)
Constant	1		
	−0·15 (0·34)	−10·17 (0·34)	0·59 (0·34)
McFadden's^{+}/Pseudo R-squared	0·08	0·08	0·09
Log likelihood	−523·43	−519·22	−545·93
Observations	889	936	931

on each schooling dummy variable and the socioeconomic controls: age, educational level, gender, urban/rural, school district, associational membership(s) and poverty.[44] This strategy allows me to compare the relationship between schooling providers and each type of participation independently, while also making sure that other characteristics of the respondents, such as their age or gender, are not driving the results.

The results largely confirm the hypotheses as related to voting. As demonstrated in Table 1, having a child attend a madrasa is correlated with a lower predicted likelihood (p <0·01) that a citizen reports voting as compared with other respondents, while having a child enrolled in public school creates a higher predicted likelihood (p<0·01) that the respondent will report voting.[45] According to the data, having a child in public school increases your predicted probability of voting by 12%, while having a child in a madrasa decreases the probability of voting by 25%.[46] No other category, including the mixed schooling or Quranic education, has a significant effect on voting compared with the population with no exposure to schooling for their children. Two controls, age ($p<0{\cdot}001$) and associational memberships ($p<0{\cdot}01$), are positively correlated with voting.

In addition, enrolling your child in public school or community school ($p<0{\cdot}05$) increases the likelihood of a respondent stating that she or he campaigned in the 2007 presidential elections, as compared with respondents without children enrolled in school.[47] Having at least one child enrolled in public school increases the likelihood of stating that you campaigned by 10%, while having a child in a community school increases the probability of proclaimed campaigning by 20%. It is important to remember that community schools are found predominantly in rural zones and, thus, the dynamics of campaigning and mobilisation are likely to differ from urban zones. At a minimum, attending an NGO-run community school does not dissuade people from campaigning. Education ($p<0{\cdot}01$) and associational membership ($p<0{\cdot}001$) are positively associated with campaigning, while age and being a woman are negatively associated with voting ($p<0{\cdot}01$).

Parents who enrol their children in public schools ($p<0{\cdot}001$) as well as parents who enrol their children in both madrasas and public schools ($p<0{\cdot}05$) were more likely than people in the reference category to report having a voting card. Enrolling your child in a public school increases the predicted probability of having a voting card by 17%, while having a child enrolled in public school as well as a madrasa increases the probability by 15%.[48] This suggests that proximity and access to public school facilitates the process of procuring or being targeted to receive a voter identification card.

We see a strong correlation between sending your child to public school and electoral participation in terms of voting, campaigning and having a voter identification card. These results largely confirm the hypothesised relationship between public schooling consumption and political participation in the electoral realm. There is also evidence that parents who have children in madrasas are less likely to report voting. However, there are no comparable findings for Quranic education, which raises interesting questions about the specific relationship between constituencies that use madrasas and broader populations who enrol their children in Islamic schools.

The negative, significant correlation between parents who send their children to madrasas and voting did not hold for other types of political participation, including party identification, willingness to run for office, or contacting a government official. In addition, the control variable, religious membership, had no significant relationship to participation.

These findings suggest that the negative relationship between enrolling a child in a madrasa and participation is restricted to the narrow electoral realm, rather than being representative of a broader, more diffuse disengagement with the state.

LEVERAGING ADDITIONAL DATA: FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS AND EXIT POLLING

Since all participation data from surveys are self-reported, we have no way of knowing whether correlations with participation represent actual behaviour or merely how respondents wish to represent themselves. If public school parents know that 'good citizens vote', then they might want to over-represent that behaviour. Similarly, if there is a stigma against voting for members of certain religious communities, they might want to downplay their electoral participation. In order to generate more data to evaluate the proposition that parents have different types of political behaviours – and the mechanisms behind these behaviours – I introduce two additional types of data: exit polling conducted during the community elections of 2009 and a focus group I conducted with current university students in spring 2011.

Observations from the municipal election polls 2009

I collected exit poll data on the school enrolment choices of voters during the 2009 municipal elections in three Bamako school districts. All school districts were located in zones near where we conducted our surveys to capture potential variation on schooling experiences. I organised three teams to stand outside a large polling station (usually a public school) in each of the districts. Each team was composed of three members, primarily university students and recent graduates, who were tasked with interviewing every third person who exited from the polls to see if they had children and to determine what school, if any, those children were enrolled in. The teams all conducted their polling from the time when polls opened at 8 am until they had collected 150 total responses.[49] Of those 457 voters responding, 261, or 57%, claimed to have school-aged children, and 92% of those parents enrolled their children in school.

These data were taken during the municipal elections, while the survey references the presidential elections of 2007. Municipal elections, often described as 'elections of proximity', might offer greater incentives for madrasa consumers to be involved in that a family

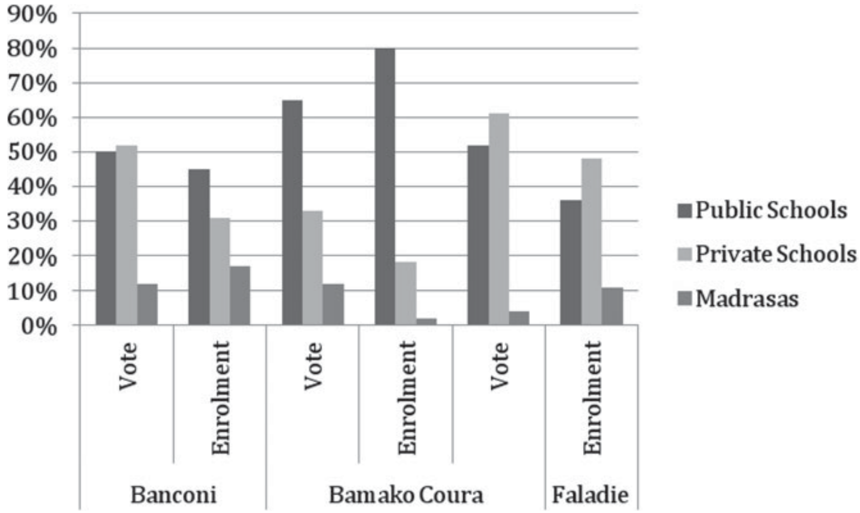

FIGURE 2

Percentage of voters in with children in each school type as compared with percentage enrolment in district.

member or neighbour, rather than an elite politician, might be running and encourage him or her to come out to the poll. In presidential elections, where contenders are generally secular, Western-educated elites, madrasa consumers would have a lower likelihood of an allegiance that would overcome societal stigma about voting. In this sense, municipal elections are a harder test of non-turnout since they may be less stigmatised.

I restrict the data to those parents who enrol their children in different primary school types to examine their voter turnout relative to the percentage of children who are enrolled in that particular school type.[50] To do so, I draw on the 2009–2010 Ministry of Education Annual Report, which I secured from the Ministry. If the survey data are correct, we should see a large number of public school parents at the polls as compared with a much smaller percentage of parents who enrol their children in madrasas. We should see public school parents over-participating relative to district enrolment and, similarly, we should see madrasa parents under-participating. Figure 2 shows the percentage of voters who claimed to enrol their children in each of three main primary school types: public, private and madrasas.

As predicted, we see the largest turnout from those who have children in public and private school. Many fewer voters reported sending their children to madrasas. Between 29% and 65% of voters at the polling stations reported that they had children at public schools, compared with only 4–12% who had children enrolled in madrasas. When we look at turnout by school type, as compared with general enrolment in each district, parents of private school students comprise a higher percentage of voters than they do for total district enrolment; public school parents 'over-perform' in two of three districts, Banconi and Faldie, while parents who send their children to madrasas 'underperform' in all cases except Bamako Coura.[51] These findings mirror the results from the regression analysis of survey results, except that private school parents vote at higher rates than expected. The exit poll data suggest at a minimum that in Bamako, private school parents are still engaging with the electoral process.

It is also important to remember that Bamako, the national capital, might not be representative of larger national trends. For instance, while age is generally positively correlated with people stating that they have voted, the large number of respondents from the exit polls claiming that they do not have children suggests that many young people came out to vote. It may be that mobilisation in Bamako targets youth at a higher rate than in other regions.

Earlier, I noted that 33% of all parents in our sample had children enrolled in Francophone secondary school. Given that net attendance in secondary schools in Bamako is only 31%, this number seems extremely high, considering that the denominator – 'parents' – includes anyone who has a school-aged child, not necessarily a child who is old enough to attend secondary school. The data suggest that those parents with children enrolled in tertiary education are overrepresented at the polls. This finding lends support to the two mechanisms linking public education to higher turnout, which will be discussed later: linguistic brokers and the possibly of a policy feedback effect.

Linguistic brokerage: focus group with university students

As mentioned earlier, Francophone education, in a public or private school, could endow a family with a child who is a qualified linguistic broker to engage with formal government including political parties and campaigns. A child who has received secondary or university education could help his or her family – especially those families who are illiterate and living in rural zones away from the capital – to interpret and understand parties' electoral promises. In order to probe the linguistic mechanism directly,[52] I conducted a small focus group in Bamako during the spring of 2011 with a group of university students from regions outside the capital to determine how their grandmothers, uncles, parents and neighbours in their villages access political information and/or become involved in politics.[53] Student responses were nearly unanimous: they (the educated children) tell their parents and grandparents how to vote. More concretely, students and former-students in Bamako participate in campaigns as brokers for political parties. They act as guides – introducing candidates and party representatives to the traditional leadership in the village. The students stressed their French-language skills as legitimising their role as party-brokers. They had connections to the community and could therefore be trusted to apply their education to decipher the intricacies of party politics and to lobby for the local community. Even when students were not actively involved in travelling to villages to campaign for parties, they noted that their relatives often called their cell phones to get their opinions on who they should vote for.

These findings suggest that, at least in rural areas, educated children play a role in bringing their parents into the political arena through linguistic brokerage. However, this mechanism would benefit not only public school parents, but any parent whose child receives a French language education. My experience of trying to recruit university students as research assistants for exit polling during community elections also confirms active student participation on election day. In trying to recruit six extra pollsters to complement my team of three research assistants, I had to pay more than the political parties were offering students to mobilise voters to go to the polls. This wage, higher than what I would typically pay a temporary research assistant for a half-day's work, was generated by the demand for young students to mobilise communities to vote.

CAUSATION: SOCIAL SERVICE EFFECT OR IDEOLOGICAL POLARISATION?

As outlined earlier, there are multiple causal paths that might lead to the correlation between different schooling consumers' increased or decreased political behaviour. First, parents' political attitudes could determine both enrolment and political behaviour. Secondly, the schooling experience itself might drive participation/non-participation through a policy feedback mechanism, as MacLean (2011) has suggested, or through the acquisition of linguistic skills for the entire family, in the case of Francophone schools. I first review factors driving the correlation between public schooling consumption and reported rates of voting and campaigning. Then, I turn to the negative relationship between sending a child to a madrasa and voting.

There is little evidence that parents who are more civic minded purposefully enrol their children in public schools and are simultaneously more active in politics. Few parents interviewed claimed to enrol children in public school because it was their first preference. The majority of parents enrolled their children in public schools due to reasons of practicality: 63% claimed to have enrolled their child in a public school due to proximity and 14% due to affordability.[54] The qualitative data on citizens' justifications for decisions demonstrated that many parents enrol their children in public schools for non-ideological or non-strategic reasons such as cost, friend's recommendation or proximity. These justifications are coupled with the fact that many Malians expressed a desire to enrol their children in private school if they had the means to do so. The majority of choices appear to be driven by external constraints rather than a desire for state education, suggesting little evidence that parents' preferences drive both school choice and participation.[55] It is possible that parents who are interested in government affairs and democratic institutions would be more invested in ensuring that their children learn French and, consequently, in enrolling their children in a public or private Francophone school. If this were the case, we would find private enrolment to be correlated with higher reported rates of voting; yet the regression analysis demonstrated that private Francophone schooling is not significantly associated with reported voter turnout.

Turning to the schooling experience itself, evidence suggests that causation could work through a policy feedback mechanism and/or through educated children as political brokers. In either case, having a child enrolled in school longer is more likely to have an effect on citizen participation than if having a child who attends school for only a few years. Greater exposure would mean greater policy feedback, as having a child enrolled in higher grades increases their likelihood of French acquisition and their probability of working as an electoral broker.[56] As mentioned above, a high percentage (almost 20%) of respondents in the exit poll sample had children enrolled in secondary school. Given that only 31% of children attend secondary school and the fact that the sample included non-parents as well as parents without secondary school-aged children, the turnout of secondary school parents seems particularly high. Additionally, the qualitative data from the focus group provide evidence of the schooling experience mechanism, as the students themselves dictate relatives' political action, not vice versa.

I ran an additional test to see whether parents' positive evaluation[57] of their children's experience is correlated with higher reported turnout at the polls. I restricted the analysis to parents with children who attend/have attended public school. During the survey, parents were asked to evaluate each child's experience in each relevant school type on a scale of 0 (no quality) to 5 (very good). Surprisingly, despite the criticism of declining public school quality,[58] the modal respondent rated her [or his] public school experience as a 4, indicating 'very good'. I include a public school rating variable in the logistic regression with the expectation that people who give public schools the highest rating will be particularly likely to vote. However, a high rating of a child's educational experience is not significantly correlated with a higher predicted likelihood of voting.

Mali has rapidly expanded access to basic education – in part through the construction of new schools. There is the possibility that parents view the act of school construction or their child's educational success, rather than the quality of academic content, a primary proxy for quality education. In this sense, if the state builds schools and children pass on the next grade, the government is perceived as a capable actor doing its best, regardless of the skills children acquire at school. In most instances, parents would justify their evaluation based on their child's relative rank in the classroom and/or if he or she was able to pass to the next level. Parents may be less aware of the actual content of what is being taught at school and, therefore, more likely to use visible infrastructure criteria than the content of curriculum or quality of teacher performance. This is consistent with the emphasis on visibility in the literature on policy feedback (Pierson 1993; Soss & Schram 2007; Harding & Stasavage 2013).

Puzzle of Islamic schooling

It is harder to disentangle the reasons for weaker participation among Islamic schooling consumers. Fifty-four per cent of parents report enrolling their children in madrasas for religious reasons. This suggests that madrasa parents are more likely to have ideological beliefs that dictate schooling and participation. We do not know if patterns of participation are an actual result of the receipt of schooling or an underlying characteristic that determines parents' school preference and their non-participation. The statistical evidence presented earlier suggests that Islamic schooling communities might be drawn into the electoral process after they enrol their children in public schools, as they were significantly more likely to have a voter identification card. However, some might argue that these parents are less ideologically committed to religious education and thus, that their willingness to diversify their education portfolio is simply an expression of underlying ideology.

In order to assess the impact of ideology, I create dummy variables for the two types of justifications that parents gave for enrolling their children in madrasas: practical or religious. I run a regression with a population of madrasa consumers – those parents with children exclusively at madrasas and those with children who are also at public school. If religious reasons drive schooling and behaviour simultaneously, then those respondents with religious reasons for enrolment should be less likely to participate than peers with more pragmatic justifications. However, interviews with parents indicated that, at least in certain cases, economic circumstances drove parents to forsake madrasas for cheaper public education.[59] I regress the variables on voting in the population of madrasa consumers using different justifications for enrolment, but I do not find those with 'religious' justifications to be significantly less likely to report voting than their peers who gave pragmatic justifications.

Sex of the respondent might also be used as a tool to leverage clues about causality. Conversations with survey respondents revealed that men typically make schooling choices for the household. If ideological predispositions determine both schooling choices and political behaviour, we would expect the correlation between male respondents' stated behaviour and Islamic schooling preference to be more exaggerated than it is for the regular population. Therefore, within the subpopulation, women should be more likely to vote.

I do find women to be significantly more likely to say they voted: being a woman resulted in a 43% higher predicted probability of reporting voting. However, these results should be interpreted with caution, as women's responses may be subject to higher levels of social desirability bias. In conducting surveys myself, I noted that many of the least educated and shyest female respondents would overstate their participation in hopes of pleasing the enumerator. In sum, I find mixed evidence for ideology as a determinant of enrolment and behaviour. Further research will have to be done to assess the exact reasons why Islamic schooling consumers are less likely to vote.

DISCUSSION

I find evidence that public service provision represents one way to induce citizens to participate in electoral channels through two different mechanisms: a policy feedback mechanism (as suggested by MacLean 2011), and also through linguistic brokerage provided by educated students. Public education and other social services provide the state with a tool to connect with their citizenry and to encourage participation in electoral institutions. Furthermore, by increasing the number of children who make it into secondary or university schooling, policy changes endow families with linguistic brokers: family members who can speak the bureaucratic language.

Future research should further explore the linkages between public provision and democratic participation, paying particular attention to the policy feedback mechanism. Stasavage (2005) and Harding & Stasavage (2013) have already demonstrated ways in which the state responds to electoral constituencies' demands. This study suggests that public social service expansion might create a feedback loop, strengthening participation and accountability between the state and constituencies. Alternatively, the linguistic broker mechanism highlights French fluency as better linking citizens to the state; students' fluency becomes a club good for the entire family or village, rather than simply a private skill for the educated student. In this scenario, any schooling that contributes to French fluency increases a family's potential participation.

The other major contribution that this article makes is demonstrating that Islamic-schooling consumers are less likely to vote, but not much different than other Malian citizens in terms of their broader relationship with the state. These results suggest that there is not a divisive counter-culture emerging that might prove sympathetic to the radical goals of the Islamist rebels who overran the north of the country in 2012, but rather that the receipt of social service has a particular correlation with electoral participation.

The evidence presented here cannot determine whether the schooling experience itself, or self-selection by parents into madrasas, reduces the likelihood of voting. However, the descriptive finding that sending a child to a madrasa is negatively correlated with voting is an important contribution on its own. Whether the choice to abstain from voting reflects prior values or values cultivated within the schooling community, it is revealing that these constituencies choose to forgo electoral participation. Until now, Western-educated elites have held a monopoly over national-level politics. Parents sending their children to Islamic schools might be willing to participate in elections if the electoral landscape included some of 'their candidates', who reflect their values and backgrounds.

The Malian state's accreditation of madrasas creates the possibility of the emergence of 'Islamic' candidates with state diplomas. Elsewhere I have argued (Bleck 2013) that those students who attend madrasas or Quranic schools know just as much about secular politics as their peers in state-sponsored schools who have comparable levels of education and that they are just as likely to participate in politics.[60] A growing number of students in state-accredited madrasas could potentially run as candidates, which raises the possibility that constituencies who send their children to madrasas might get involved in electoral politics if there were a candidate aligned with their values. The 2012 rebellion and subsequent application of sharia in Northern Mali has reduced the probability of the emergence of a conservative candidate in the near future, but the hypothetical scenario raises interesting questions about political representation in Mali. Other states, such as Gambia, Senegal and Niger have adopted similar policies to integrate madrasas into national education system as an effort to expand enrolment. By expanding the range of citizens who exercise their 'political voice', this policy change has the potential to increase the representativeness of African democracies; but it also could also change the elite, secular values currently associated with West African politics.

These findings remind us about a central question of political representation and the importance of disaggregating the political behaviour of particular constituencies – especially those who have been historically marginalised by the state. We often view African politics through the lens of ethnic (Mozafar *et al.* 2003; Posner 2005), urban or rural constituencies (Bates 1981; Harding 2012), but few efforts have been made to understand distinct patterns of political participation among religious communities.[61] Afrobarometer data reveal that religious and traditional authorities continue to represent the most respected authorities in African states. Political science should have a better understanding of how they nurture, discourage or influence participation. In many countries where the government has not consolidated control as the exclusive authority, the existence of traditional or religious communities that do not engage with the state – or that do so in a distinct or limited capacity – raises important questions about the level and scope of representative and inclusive democratic participation.

NOTES

1. For a discussion of the interaction between democratisation and religious civil society in Muslim West Africa see Villalón (2010), Launay & Soares (1999), Kendhammer (2013) and Künkler & Leininger (2009); in Ethiopia see Abbink (2011).

2. Villalón (2010) describes the secular position of most West African politicians; Bleck & Patel (2013) note that there are far fewer Islamic parties in West Africa than other Muslim-majority countries in the world.

3. 2012 Pew data reveal that between 98% and 86% of respondents in sub-Saharan Muslim-majority countries rate religions as 'very important in their lives'. *The World's Muslims: Unity and Diversity*: http://www.pewforum.org/Muslim/the-worlds-muslims-unity-and-diversity-executive-summary.aspx.

4. Islamic schooling constitutes madrasas – modern comprehensive religious schools that use Arabic as the primary language of instruction – as well as Quranic schools, which focus exclusively on religious content until mastery of the Quran. The former category of school is recognised by the Malian state, but Quranic schools do not receive any state subsidies, training or recognition.

5. Calculated among students in the first cycle of primary school from the Ministry of Education Annual Report 2009–2010.

6. Names changed to protect the identity of respondents. Each respondent has a unique identification number referencing their geographic zone: BA (Banconi, Bamako); BBC (Bamako Coura, Bamako); F (Faladie, Bamako); K (Kayes N'Dyi); KV (Kayes city), M (Mopti); S (Sikasso city); SR (Sikasso Rural villages); SV (Sevare); T (Timbuktu).

7. On Family Code see Soares (2009), Bleck & van de Walle (2011).

8. Tilly and Tarrow define contentious politics as 'interactions in which actors make claims bearing on someone else's interests, leading to coordinated efforts on behalf of shared interests or programmes, in which governments are involved as targets, initiators of claims, or third parties (2006: 4).'

9. The French government associated madrasas with a reformist school of Islam they found threatening, despite the fact that some madrasas had a Sufi orientation (Brenner 2001: 91; Brenner 2007: 202; Launay & Soares 1999).

10. Mission civilisatrice refers to the French civilising mission that sought to turn educated Africans into French subjects through an assimilation process.

11. On average, Francophone countries trail their Anglophone counterparts in terms of literacy rates at independence and presently (Harsch 2000).

12. Lange and Diarra argue that between 1980–1985 parents chose not to enrol their children in school in protest of fewer opportunities for social mobility through schooling (1999: 166).

13. Interview with former Ministry of Education Official July 2007; Brenner (2001: 260); Brenner (2007: 215).

14. While madrasas received accreditation, Quranic schools continue to be unacknowledged by the Malian government, which makes many Quranic educators feel marginalised (Interview with Quranic Schooling Association of Kayes, August 2009).

15. Malian Ministry Annual Report 2007–2008.

16. Private secular schools and Christian schools are collapsed into the private schooling category by the state.

17. Community schools are typically those managed at a very decentralised level, which often generate funding from their own community in addition to some resources from NGOs and the state; these schools are typically built as cost-effective alternatives to public schools in locations that have no access to educational facilities.

18. Malian Ministry of Education Report 2007–2008; Interview with Arabic Language Advisor, Malian Ministry of Education (July 2007).

19. For instance, madrasas are supposed to offer French as a subject in addition to Arabic, but a 2007 study of madrasas in Mali found that on average schools offered less than 6 hours of French instruction a week (Moussa *et al.* 2007).

20. There is tremendous variation in the pricing of Francophone private schools ranging from $3–5 a month to thousands of dollars a year for the elite private schools in Bamako. For declining parental interest in state schooling and heightened demand for madrasa education see Gérard (1993, 1995).

21. Interview Madrasa Director July 2007; Interview Ministry of Education Liaison to Arabic language schools July 2007; Interview with Arabic teacher Sikasso October 2009.

22. Interview with focus group of four Arabic teachers at secondary madrasa in Faladie (March 2009).

23. This situation contrasts neighbouring Senegal, where the Mouride Brotherhood has worked with political parties to mobilise voters. See Villalón (1995) and Beck (2008).

24. Sears (2007) chronicles Ibrahim Boubacar Keita's (IBK's) failed attempt to run as an 'Islamic' candidate during the 2002 Presidential Race.

25. Interestingly, a High Islamic Council member was named the President of the Independent Electoral Commission leading up to the cancelled 2012 Malian elections.

26. For a discussion of education and social mobility in this period see Sabatier (1978) and Meillassoux (1970).

27. The behaviour of those citizens without access to any service might be very different from those with access to private services; similarly, different private service providers might trigger different patterns of political participation. In addition, MacLean cannot disaggregate between people who attended public schools themselves and those who sent their children to these schools.

28. This is not unlike the role of children as linguistic brokers in the context of immigrant communities in the USA (De Ment *et al.* 2005; Parke & Buriel 2006; Bloemrad & Trost 2007).

29. As recommended by Fowler (2009).

30. King *et al.* (1994) suggest maximising variation on either the independent or dependent variable.

31. For instance, only 20% of the survey respondents were located in rural zones compared to a 67% rural population in Mali.

32. See www.afrobarometer.org; however, we did not alternate by a respondent's gender or conduct call-backs if someone was not at home.

33. Most Malian children are enrolled in school by this age; this is also the age required to enter Malian public school.

34. The measurement of 'children' reflects shared child-rearing in Malian homes. In some instances respondents would reference extended family as their own: parents with grown children spoke regarding the experience of grandchildren or aunts and uncles would answer the questions for any school aged child living in the household even if s/he was a nephew rather than a son.

35. This number captures parents who had children who went through the educational system and those with children currently enrolled. Some of these parents are counted twice as they have children enrolled in multiple schools.

36. It is likely that enrolment in Quranic schools was under-reported in instances where parents enrolled their child in Quranic schools to supplement other forms of education.

37. The question tries to generate information about children in school as well as those who had already gone through school.

38. On lower women's participation in Africa: Logan (2010) and MacLean (2011: 1254).

39. Ishiyama & Fox (2006) and Kuenzi & Lambright (2005).

40. Logan (2010: 17) and Ishiyama & Fox (2006).

41. Koter (2013 for analysis of Benin and Senegal and Beck (2008) for analysis of Senegal.

42. This reference category includes non-parents, parents with no children enrolled in school, as well as those parents whose children are too young to attend school.

43. I also conducted the analysis comparing public school parents as a singular dummy vs. everyone and repeated the exercise with madrasa parents and found identical results.

44. I repeat the regression without controls and find that the schooling categories remain significant with signs in the same direction.

45. Both variables remain significant in the same direction in a regression without the controls.

46. Calculated using 'prchange' command in Stata.

47. Having a child enrolled in public school or community school drops to $p<0.1$ significance if we exclude age from the regression. Since younger people are more associated with campaigning, and many of the people in the 'no kids' category are young and do not yet have children, excluding the control inflates the likelihood that the reference category appears to be campaigning more than any other group.

48. In addition, being a woman, living in an urban zone, and being poor decreased the likelihood of someone having a card, while age and associational membership increased the likelihood.

49. Therefore there is a potential for bias towards a subpopulation of early voters as compared to voters who come later in the day, but I have no reason to believe that this is correlated with the school type where voters enrol their children.

50. I restrict the analysis to parents with a child enrolled in primary school so that I can compare these percentages to those offered in the Ministry of Education Private report (2000).

51. A word of caution on the Ministry of Education data for Bamako Coura: only 271 total students in the entire district are coded as attending a madrasa. I suspect that a higher number of students are actually enrolled in madrasas, which might not yet be in the Ministry of Education's records. If corrected, the results might actually look more like the other two districts where madrasa parents are under-represented at the polls.

52. Morgan (1996) identifies one use of focus groups as a way to gain further information about mechanisms driving correlations identified in statistical analysis. This targeted approach allowed me to quickly access information relevant to this specific mechanism.

53. I interviewed six university students who grew up in different regions of Mali: Segou, Koutiala, Sikasso, Mopti and Kayes. All had gone through the public schools system and were attending the public university in Bamako (March 2011).

54. These findings are consistent with MacLean (2007) and Boyle (1999) who find that finds that poorer citizens are 'forced' into public services by financial constraints, well wealthier citizens use private services.

55. I do not find evidence of a significant relationship between income and voting, which would rule out the possibility of poverty as a confounding variable for school enrolment and higher voting rate.

56. I assume that those parents who would benefit from children as linguistic brokers would have to have children old enough to have completed at least 6th grade. In most instances, electoral brokers are at a minimum in their 2nd cycle of primary school.

57. Conversely, we could imagine that a poor rating, or dissatisfaction with existing service, might also drive voters to vote.

58. For Mali: Diakité (2000), Bleck & Guindo (2013); For DRC, Kenya, Cameroon: Boyle (1999); and Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire: MacLean (2007).

59. For instance, in Sikasso, I met an Islamic religious leader, Salah, and his wife Haoua. They used to enrol all of their children in a madrasa, but due to economic constraints on the family, they were forced to transfer their youngest son into a less expensive public school. Salah was pleasantly surprised by his son, Mamadou's, performance. This year, Mamadou was first of the hundred students in his class. Salah is very satisfied with the public school performance and rated it 'very good', while only rating the madrasa his other two children attend as 'average' (S78).

60. I only make this comparison at the informal and primary levels of education.

61. Riedl's (2012) exploration of the interaction between religious groups and political parties and Dowd's (2013) exploration of religious diversity as driving variation the ways religious groups foster political participation offer exciting opportunities to understand the relationship between religion and participation in sub-Saharan Africa. Similarly, Grossman's (2013) work demonstrates the policy-making role of Renewalist Christianity in some African countries.

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