



Media Use in Bamako, Mali 2013

Key Takeaways

- Bamako adults are avid news users; 92.5% say they receive news from television, radio, the Internet or newspapers at least once a week; 78.4% report they receive news from these sources at least once a day.
- Mobile phone, radio, and television ownership is widespread in Bamako. Nine in 10 Bamako adults say they have a mobile phone in their household, 86.6% report owning a radio, and 83.8% say they have a working television.
- Bamako adults are most interested in the topics of religion (93.1%), health and healthcare (89.8%), and education (89.0%).
- Bambara is the preferred radio broadcast language. It is also the most commonly understood language (99.3%), and the language the majority of those adults (99.4%) report they would understand in a newscast.

Methodology

This study contains results from a representative, face-to-face survey of 1,000 Bamako adults aged 15 and older. Interviewing was conducted from Dec. 7-16, 2012. The survey covers 100% of the Bamako, Mali, population residing permanently in the country and is representative of 1,116,996 adults aged 15 and older in Bamako (based on estimates from INSTAT MALI RGPB-2009).

Because this study was conducted in Mali's capital city, Bamako, the study's findings cannot be projected to the greater Malian population. The findings presented in this report are only representative of the Bamako population, which is approximately 10% of the entire Mali population.

General Media Environment

Bamako adults are regular news consumers; 92.5% access news from any type of media source (television, the Internet, radio, newspapers) at least once a week, and 78.4% access news from any media at least once a day. They are most likely to get this news from television and radio. Nearly nine in 10 Bamako adults report using television or the radio to receive news and information either daily or at least once a week. But word-of-mouth

is also a popular method to receive news; 57.4% of Bamako adults say they receive news from friends or family members daily or most days per week.

SMS text messaging, social networking sites, the Internet, newspapers and magazines, and mobile applications are the least popular methods to receive news.

Although mobile phone ownership is nearly ubiquitous in Bamako, just three in 10 Bamako adults (30.4%) use SMS text messaging via a mobile device daily or on most days to receive news. Mobile applications are far less popular, with only 4.9% of adults reporting they use mobile applications to receive news daily or on most days. In addition, 6.9% of adults say they use the Internet to access news daily or on most days.

Just 5.3% of Bamako adults report using newspapers and magazines to receive news either daily or on most days. Such low reliance on print publications is likely attributable to the relatively low literacy rates and the cost of buying such publications.

Although French is Mali's official language, Bambara is more commonly understood in Bamako; 99.3% of Bamako adults say they understand at least some Bambara and 62.4% report they understand at least some French. English is not commonly understood as 14.5% say they understand the language. Fula, Songhai, Dogon, and Senoufo are also less understood in Bamako.

Radio Use Is Common in Bamako

Most Bamako adults (86.6%) say their household has a working radio and a similar proportion (87.4%) say they listened to the radio in past week; 85.9% of Bamako adults report tuning in to the radio via the FM waveband while 2.0% say they used the medium wave/AM band.

Along with conventional receivers, mobile phones are extensively used for listening to the radio. About half of Bamako adults (52.7%) report listening to the radio via a mobile device, reflecting the widespread availability of mobile with embedded FM chips. The Internet is the least commonly reported method for accessing the radio — 1.3% of Bamako adults report they listen to the radio via the Internet.

The vast majority of Bamako adults (84.8%) say they listen to the radio in Bambara; less than half (45.4%) say they listen in French. Soninke, Fula, and English are the least commonly listened to languages with 4.7%, 4.4%, and 3.9%, respectively. In addition, 7.1% say they listened to the radio in another language, with Arabic and Songhai being the most frequently mentioned other languages.

Terrestrial Antenna Is the Most Common Method to Receive a Television Signal

More than eight in 10 (83.8%) of Bamako adults say their household has a working television. More than six in 10 Bamako adults say they watched television yesterday and 88.3% report they have watched television in the past week.

The majority (74.2%) of Bamako adults say they receive their television signal via an antenna while 19.0% say they use a network neighborhood subscription; 18.4% report receiving the signal via a satellite dish. Only 8.1% say they receive their signal via cable television.

Mobile Phone Ownership Is Widespread in Bamako

Nine in 10 (90.3%) Bamako adults say their household has a mobile phone, but a smaller percentage (79.5%) say they personally own a mobile phone. This number is higher among men (88.6%) compared with women (70.7%). Marked differences also exist among education levels; those with some secondary or postsecondary educations are more likely to own a mobile phone than those with primary or less education (91.6% vs. 74.3%, respectively).

Although mobile phone users report their devices have a wide range of functions, few cell phone users employ these devices for something other than making calls, sending or receiving SMS text messages, or listening to the radio. Nearly sixty-nine percent (68.8%) of mobile phone users report sending or receiving SMS text messages, and about half (56.7%) of cell phone owners report listening to the radio on a mobile phone in the past week.

Internet Penetration in Bamako Is Low

Historically, Internet penetration in Mali has been one of the lowest in all of West Africa. Internet penetration remains relatively low even in the urban setting of Bamako, with 9.5% of adults saying they have Internet access at home.

Although costs for Internet are steadily decreasing in Bamako, the relatively high cost of Internet and low level of infrastructure prevent widespread Internet access. Despite these limitations, 56.6% of weekly Internet users report

accessing the Internet at home (which can include Internet access via mobile at home). Nearly six in 10 (58.1%) weekly Internet users say they access the Internet at an Internet café.

Weekly Internet users typically use the Internet to receive news. Nearly all past-week Internet users (84.0%) report accessing the Internet to find out the latest news, which suggests the Internet is a major news source for those with access to it.

Religion, Health, and Education Most Interesting Topics

Religion, health, and education are the three most interesting topics to Bamako adults. More than nine in 10 say they are somewhat or very interested in the topic of religion (93.1%); nearly nine in 10 say they are somewhat or very interested in health (89.8%) and education (89.0%). Also interesting to Bamako adults are the topics of the arts and culture (77.9%) and environmental issues (74.7%).

Men are more likely than women to be interested in a variety of topics, most notably sports (84.5% vs. 52.7%), political news (70.0% vs. 52.6%), science, technology and IT (62.3% vs. 44.1%), and human rights (78.5% vs. 68.8%).

Contact

For any questions or further information on this data, please contact the Broadcasting Board of Governors at pubaff@bbg.gov or 202-203-4400. You can follow the BBG on twitter @BBGgov