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A Qualitative Comparison Study Examining How the Educational Needs of Students with Disabilities are
Met in West Africa vs. the United States

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A Thesis Presented for Western Michigan University
Lee Honors College

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Abstract

The focus of this qualitative study was to examine the differences in services for students with disabilities in United States vs. Dakar, Senegal. The strengths, weaknesses, and presenting needs of each system were addressed. The research questions addressed were: How is a disability defined?, (2) What support services are available for children with disabilities?, (3) What is the level of family support for children with disabilities?, and (4) How are teachers prepared to work with children with disabilities? The qualitative methodology used to examine the research questions include: personal interviews with school personnel in a self-contained school for children with disabilities in Dakar, Senegal, personal interviews with school personnel in a private PreK -12 school in Pikine, Senegal, observations from both schools, and a brief educational policy analysis.

A Qualitative Comparison Study Examining How the Educational Needs of Students with Disabilities Are Met in West Africa vs. the United States

Approximately six million American schoolchildren, ages 6 to 21, receive special education services (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Services, 2012). Special Education services have been mandated by Federal law since 1975 (P.L 94-142, 1975; P.L. 104-886, 2004). The Federal law, currently named the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA, 2004) allows for students with disabilities to receive a specifically designed instruction to meet their individual needs determining where a student receives their services is determined by a multidisciplinary team. While these services are mandated in the United States there is no comparable law in Dakar, Senegal.

The focus of this qualitative study was to examine the differences in policies and services for students with disabilities in United States vs. Dakar, Senegal. The strengths, weaknesses, and presenting needs of each system were addressed. Moreover, the research questions addressed were: How is a disability defined in both countries, (2) What support services are available for children with disabilities in both countries? (3) What is the level of family support for children with disabilities in both countries? and (4) How are teachers prepared to work with children with disabilities in both countries? The qualitative methodology used to examine the research questions include: (a) personal interviews with school personnel in a self-contained school for children with disabilities in Dakar, Senegal, (b) personal interviews with school personnel in a private preK-12 school in Pikine, Senegal, (c) observations from both schools, (d) information obtained through lectures at the University of Cheikh Anta Diop, UCAD,

and (e) a brief educational policy analysis. Information regarding services for students with disabilities in the United States was obtained through my undergraduate program at Western Michigan University.

Study Context

A study-abroad experience to Dakar, Senegal in June 2012 served as the environment in which this research was proposed/conducted. Dakar is the capital of Senegal; the country at the most western point of the African continent. With over two million people living there, the city is over-crowded, resources are scarce, poverty is high, shopping is primarily conducted on streets, sanitation is minimal, and yet, the indigenous people are friendly and welcoming. While initially the city was intimidating, within a few days it became welcoming and familiar. Dakar is diverse in that it has become home to many from other African countries. In order to best understand Dakar, there are many contextual factors that need to be considered as part of this study. They include: globalization, language, poverty, policies, and my in-country fieldwork. It is these contextual factors that influenced my thoughts and perceptions within the study and that have also influenced me as an educator.

Bower, Tate, Mehta, and Sature (2013) state that teachers need to have a high level of critical consciousness. Freire (2000) definition of critical consciousness is the ability of individuals to assess their own identities related to the sociopolitical realities that surround them and critically examine how those identities have been informed by and support privilege and oppression. Further, that people's ways of thinking are significantly influenced by race, gender, and language, and the hierarchical social systems in which they are located. Cochran-Smith and Zeichner (2005) found that "beliefs and attitudes are lenses through which teachers

enact and interpret their daily work” (p. 52). The Longworth Foundation (2008) states that in order for students to be globally competent, teachers must have the: “knowledge of international dimensions of their subject matter and a range of global issues; pedagogical skills to teach their students to analyze primary sources from around the world, appreciate multiple points of view, and recognizing stereotyping; a commitment to assisting students to become responsible citizen both of the world and of their own communities” p.7. By examining the following contextual factor within Senegal and comparing them to educational practices has assisted in the development of my own critical consciousness and will influence the global competence of the students I teach.

Globalization.

One of the main foci of the trip was to understand the impact of globalization on systems such as health services, schooling, foreign policy, food, transportation, housing, and to analyze how that impact translates into public policies. While in Dakar we attended a local university (University of Cheikh Anta Diop, UCAD) and heard lectures from professors specializing in these topics. Globalization is defined as a dynamic and multidimensional set of economic and cultural processes that produce and promote intense international, intercultural and interlinguistic interdependencies (Alidou, 2003, 2004; Brecher & Costello, 1994; Ellwood, 2004; Hyter, 2007; Mazrui, 2000; Steger, 2003). There are many consequences of globalization and by traveling to Senegal this became more apparent as I began to explore the perceptions the people of Senegal had of the United States as well as the misconceptions I had of the cultural components of Senegal. Specifically, the education of people with disabilities in an underdeveloped country. In a system that is full of many inadequacies, access to basic human

rights becomes even more compromised. These consequences are currently not in the academic curricula within the United States.

In-Country Fieldwork.

The most important part of the research was the work done through my field work at Talibo Dabo. Talibo Dabo is a school in Dakar for PreK-12 students with severe cognitive and physical disabilities. The school is the only school in the country that accepts students with such challenges, and works to educate and facilitate academic learning. Field work at Talibo Dabo took place two days a week for the three week stay in Dakar. I was placed in a classroom with Madame Dieye who was the teacher for young children within the developmental school. Much of my qualitative research was completed through my work done at Talibo Dabo. Where I was a participant observer within the study. The school provides services for just under one hundred students. However, we did not interact with a majority of the students due to student transportation issues to the school; the school has four buses for transportation, but two of the buses were broken and had been for months so those students simply did not go to school). Fieldwork was also completed by attending a private PreK-12 school in Pikine, a suburb of Dakar that is considered to have the highest rate of poverty in the area. At this school, we completed a service-learning project and we able to informally interact with both the students and teachers.

Policy Review.

Prior to my in-country-travel I studied and researched different policies about the education system in the United States and in Dakar. The policies that I reviewed were The Dakar Framework for Action, also known as Education For All (EFA) (World Education Forum,

2000), The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and other articles from United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2013). While reading through the policies I was able to pre-determine my research questions to base them around what was appropriate for each scholar that was interviewed. I also compared these UNESCO (Education for All Goals) policies to the framework of mandated special education services in the United States, IDEIA (2004).

Educational Policy in Senegal.

The main focus for the Education for All (EFA) is to focus on the education for women and young ladies. Education for All (World Education Forum, 2000) is a framework that is funded by each individual nation and states that by 2015 all will be educated. In April of 2000 participants of the World Education Forum met in Dakar to ensure the framework would be outlined that would ensure that governments would implement the six goals from the original Education for All Framework in 1990. A committee met in Dakar, Senegal in April of 2000 to revisit the previous vision of the document formulated while meeting in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990. While in Jomtien, the conference supported the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of a Child. This means that all children young and adults have the human right to benefit from an education that will meet their basic learning needs (World Education Forum, 2000). Under this declaration education will consist of learning to know, to do, to live together and to be, ultimately tapping into each individual's talents and potential. Under the six sections of EFA there is a twelve step process in which the goals can be achieved. The framework consists of six internationally agreed education goals that aim to meet learning needs of all children by the year 2015 (World Education Forum, 2000). The main areas of focus

outlined by EFA are in the areas of literacy, numeracy, and essential life skills. The six goals are featured later in Table 2. Under this policy stakeholders and strong national leaders are supposed to acquire “new financial resources, preferably in the form of grants and concessional assistances,” which include monetary support from the World Bank and regional development banks, as well as private sectors (World Education Forum, 2000). The foundation of Education for All is in a collective commitment to action. Governments and individual nations have the obligation to uphold the EFA goals and targets, ensuring that they are reached and sustained.

Poverty.

Poverty is one of those influences that is seen in all systems of the city of Dakar. Due to the large amount of individuals living under “in” poverty one can see how easily it affects all aspects of life in Dakar. From the moment of flying into Dakar one can see mounds of burning garbage, small communities of shanty homes, and the smell of burning garbage on the sides of the major highways. There was also a lack of sewage storage; small puddles would line the sides of roads, with the odor and residue of backed-up sewers to the point of one day even shutting down a roadway. Food sanitation is also another area of concern that is visible in the streets of Dakar. Meat hangs outside and was swarmed in bugs, animals are tucked on top of buses and in tight areas with little to no vegetation. This was very prevalent while traveling to Pikine to work at the Angela Davis School. The problem of poverty was a concern prior to departure and was further explored through literature and statistics.

Poverty Comparison.

One area to focus on in both the Midwest and in Senegal is the poverty rate. According to the World Bank as of 2005 the poverty rate in Senegal was 50.8% and in Michigan those

living below the poverty level from 2006 until 2010 was 14.8% (Central Intelligence Agency, 2013). Currently, in the United States the poverty rate overall has increased from 12.2 percent in 2000, to 15.9 percent in 2012. The number of people in poverty from 2000 to 2012 has also increased from 33.3 million to 48.8 million people (Bishaw, 2013). Although the percentages are not extremely close together, when we look at the percentages in relation to the total population of Senegal, more specifically Dakar and Michigan, it is easier to see how close the numbers match up. The population in Dakar is 2,476,400 as of 2010 and the population in Michigan as of 2011 is 9,876,187. These numbers, when calculated with the percentages of poverty in both regions, show that the numbers come out in both areas to be relatively close to each other.

Language.

One aspect of Dakar that was initially intimidating was the language. There are multiple languages spoken in Dakar. The national languages are Wolof, Seereer, Mandinke, Soinike, Diola, Jola, Fula, and Pulaar. However, the language of the government and schools is French. While in-country we took several Wolof lessons and learned enough to greet locals, purchase goods, and bargain for taxi cabs.

Language plays a role in education in both developed and underdeveloped nations. In Senegal the national languages are French, which is considered their official language, Wolof, Pulaar, Jola, and Mandinka (Central Intelligence Agency, 2013). While French is considered their official language, a majority of students within the schools speak Wolof. Wolof makes up 43.3% of their ethnic groups followed by Pular at 23.8%, Seereer at 14.7%, Jola at 3.7%, and Mandinka at 3%. Culture is a valued asset in the Senegalese culture, and language defines who a person is.

While French may be considered the official language, and is shown throughout a French based curriculum, this causes conflict for students who are living in households that are speaking their ethnic groups language. Language in Talibo Dabo was very interesting as many of the students in the classroom I was in were being taught in French yet they used a local language at home and with peers, and that was only if they could verbally express themselves. A language disorder within a French curriculum and an additional language spoken at home was confusing for all.

In the United States the predominate language is English at 82.1%, followed by Spanish (10.7%), other Indo- European (3.8%), Asian and Pacific island (2.7%), and other at 0.7% (Central Intelligence Agency, 2013). While the United States does not have an official language, English has been accepted by twenty eight of the fifty states, whereas Hawaiian is the official language of Hawaii. Approximately 1 million students who speak English as a second language (ESL), also exhibit serious learning problems that may contribute to them becoming qualified for special education services. Both in Senegal and America language barriers play a role in how students are participating and understanding what is going on in the classroom. Along with language, poverty also plays a role in how students are learning and what resources they are exposed to.

The contextual factors just reviewed all influenced me as a researcher. Throughout this study I was a participant-observer (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992) and I will clarify this aspect more in my methodology section.

Methodology

The researcher proposed to conduct research through using a qualitative approach. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) define qualitative research as making sense through personal stories

and how those stories relate to each other. As part of my research and the qualitative approach that was taken in order to collect the data I was a participant-observer. The role that I involved myself in was working as a facilitator who worked collaboratively with research participants (Glense & Peshkin, 1992). When the researcher, myself, is included on the research priorities, data collection and interpreting the data collected, that defines their research and grounds their methodology as a participant observer (1992). All the individuals that were interviewed or observed were aware of the research that was being conducted and pre-approval was needed. Specifically, for this research the interactions between children with disabilities and the environment in which they learn in were observed. Moreover, I was a participant observer while in the classroom and was able to explore the following research questions:

R₁ How are disabilities defined in Dakar?

R₂ What support services are available for children with disabilities in Dakar?

R₃ What is the level of support of family for children with disabilities In Dakar?

R₄ How are teachers prepared to work with children with disabilities in Dakar?

All of these questions were asked and answered by interviewing the following people: Madame Dieye, teacher at Talibo Dabo, the headmaster of Talibo Dabo, Dr. Diop who is part of teacher preparation at UCAD, Jeannette Litha Gomis Ko our translator who was also a Master Level student at UCAD and a Principal at a private early elementary school, and Dr. Adama Coly a professor of English at UCAD. Observations took place at Talibo Dabo, Angela B. Davis in Pikine, and on the street of Dakar.

Data

In order to answer the research questions posed I needed to examine educational policies, the interviewee's professional roles, and my observations which I noted in a specific notebook throughout my time in Senegal. My data for this study was obtained through this process.

For (R₁) how are disabilities defined in Dakar; I examined the IDEIA (2004) here in the United States and the Education for All framework (2000) in Dakar and I interviewed Dr. Diop, a teacher educator in Dakar.

The United States framework for defining a disability is clearly defined in IDEIA (2004). Disability is defined within the mandate as well as major components as to how services are to be provided. It also includes a partial Federal monetary component and States are mandate to provide the balance. In Dakar, the framework is identified through a policy known as Education for All (EFA). While initially the two policies appear comparable, funding is a major issue as EFA is an unfunded mandate. Table one outlines the two policies. The IDEIA 2004 shows how it protects students who are receiving special education services. The EFA (2000) has six goals for international education and how they will all be met by 2015.

Insert Table 1 here

Disability Perceptions

While interviewing individuals who work in education in Senegal the following quotes were collected. During one of the interviews with Dr. Diop, teacher educator, I asked the question how individuals with disabilities viewed by the community.

In the seventies people with disabilities were seen as part of the devil, afraid of by the community, all interviewees say that “stereotype has disappeared, and that children and people are accepted”. There is a small population of students with disabilities, “one of ten students.” At Talibo Dabo students are accepted by falling into the following three areas: able to learn just have a physical impairment, just fall in the middle, can learn but slower, or really have physical and mental problems. The objective of the third criteria is to “not teach normal, but to gain physical abilities.” All students are given the same school system as any school in Dakar.

Disability Support

In order to answer R₂ What support services are available for children with disabilities in Dakar, I continued to review educational policies but I also interviewed Dr. Diop-Teacher Educator, observed at Talibo Dabo, and interviewed the teacher I worked with at Talibo Dabo, Madame Dieye.

When meeting with Dr. Diop the question of how many students at UCAD have disabilities and what is done to help support those students was posed. Dr. Diop stated that *“the small population at the university that have disabilities have means to aid with things like reading machines, cameras, and the library is used to support those students. The Office of Student Life is supposed to help students that have low areas into the university”, but Diop (2012) went on to say that “There is no criteria for how to help those students.”* During the May 31, 2012 lecture, it was discussed that students with intellectual disabilities receive full attention in institutions such as Theis -- a school for the blind and Talibo Dabo. In Madame Dieye’s classroom, students

were being taught the vowels and consonants in French, and are taught counting and measurement also in French. Madame Dieye stated that *“not all students have books because all cannot do education.”*

After the first interview with the head master of Talibo Dabo the expectation of what was happening within the classroom was explained by the Master of the school. I began to notice a contradiction from what was being said by administrators and teachers and what was happening in the classroom. For example, after being in the classroom for less than one hour I was left alone with the translator. The teacher took a break and did not return. On the second day, the teacher did not show up yet all the students were in the classroom. There appeared to be little concern by the headmaster or other teachers. Another observation was if children were not engaged in some sort of activity, children would be left in their classroom with no supervision.

The classroom had nineteen children with disabilities ranging from physical disabilities, Hydrocephalus, paralysis of the lower extremities, mild forms of cerebral palsy, one boy who suffered from severe acidic burns resulting in his hands being fused to his forearm, to seven out of nineteen children needing wheelchair assistance, but there were only four chairs so the students took turns helping each other. The wheelchairs that students were escorted to their classes with were needed for other students within the school who needed wheelchairs; six wheelchairs sat in the dirt outside of the school building and were broken to the point of no use. The chairs that were accessible were missing the rubber tubing on the outer part of the tire.

Madame Dieye taught and I observed for one day of the time I spent at Talibo Dabo. That day, thirteen children arrived to school and when asked why there were not nineteen as indicated on the class lists, all lists in the school were handwritten as there was no technology) we were told there were less students because only two of the four buses were working and therefore students would be unable to attend school until the buses were fixed. During the lessons, students worked on mathematics, writing in cursive and printing, and letter recognition followed by words in French that began with the letter. Instruction was whole class, and there was a lack of encouragement for students to participate in class discussions. Madame Dieye handwrote everything using different colors of chalk on a very old blackboard. A bucket with dirty water and an old towel was used to clean the board. Student responses were choral responses upon teacher signal. The majority of students did not seem to know what was going on but appeared to be pleased to be in school. There was no running water in the school, many of the male students urinated into a cleaning supply bottle in the middle of the classroom, and the classroom itself had few supplies including books. The desks that were there were quite old and many were broken. Students appeared to be assigned to a specific desk or location, and despite a lack of spoken language were able to let us know where they needed to be.

The policy review to answer R₂ What support services are available for children with disabilities in Dakar, included reviewing the six goals from EFA (2000) and how they are intended to provide the policy to implement support services. Table 2 outlines the six goals for education. Again, this policy was first adopted in Jomtien, Thailand (World Conference on Education for All, 1990) while at the Education for All conference and reviewed with additional

support at a UNESCO conference in Dakar (World Education Forum, 2000). The six goals outline how to meet the basic learning needs of all students.

Insert Table 2 here

A newer approach to close the variability gap within the classroom is being used in the United States although it is not an educational policy as of yet. It addresses how the basic needs of all students can be met with fewer barriers. The concept is Universal Design for Learning (CAST, 2013). The framework of UDL includes a set of principles for curriculum development that provides all individuals equal opportunities to learn. Using this UDL approach helps guide instruction and lays out a map for creating goals, methods, materials, and assessments that can benefit all students (CAST, 2013). The UDL principles are still new in the field of education, but are being adapted around schools, and are addressing all students' basic needs.

For (R₃) What is the level of support of family for children with disabilities in Dakar, I primarily reviewed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Sections 1-3 (World Education Forum, 2000). This policy addresses the rights of each student and family. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was created by the United Nations. The declaration declared that all the countries within the United Nations would come together to form a unified system for schooling (United Nations General Assembly, 1948). This document called upon all the participating nations "to cause it to be disseminated, displayed, read and expounded principally

in schools and other educational institutions, without distinction based on the political status of countries or territories.” The first three sections of the declaration point out the rights of these nations for their citizens in terms of education. The first three sections are outlined in Table 3.

Insert Table 3 here

While interviewing the Headmaster at Talibo Dabo, we asked him about the family participation and the acceptance of children with disabilities. He explained that there is a bus that brings students to Talibo Dabo, however there is no wheelchair lift so if a family cannot assist the child in getting on the bus they do not go to school. Scholarships are given so that school is tuition free. We later learned that families and students were appreciative of these tuition scholarships. Another important family aspect of Talibo Dabo is the Director of the school is a medical doctor and he is the one who determines if the children are accepted in to Talibo Dabo. The Director is at the school so families must travel there in order for their children to be examined. The exam room, much like the rest of the school, is quite sparse. There is minimal equipment and it is shared. Every day we were at the school there were families waiting to see the doctor. They would often wait for hours.

While attending a lecture given by Dr. Coly, a professor at UCAD, he spoke of how families are *“shamed of their children with disabilities,”* speaking in particular about *“marrying a daughter off with a disability is challenging”*. Parents of students at Talibo Dabo, according to the headmaster, feel *“fifty- fifty, some are happy when their kids can gain physical skills, and others just want some kind of miracle.”*

For R₄ How are teachers prepared to work with children with disabilities in Dakar, I interviewed professors at the university and the teachers at Talibo Dabo and the private school in Pikine. At a lecture from a UCAD Professor of English he stated, *“The government decides who will teach what and where. Everyone is happy to have a job.”* Students who are working to become teachers are seen as “trainable,” some teachers are able to get training if they travel to France or go to America to get specialized training. Dr. Diop (2012) stated that “there is no training for teachers who work with students with disabilities, as well as that the government assigns teachers to their positions.” While talking with Madame Dieye about her teaching training, she said that “You can go to France to get trained, or America. I went away for a while, then return.” When asked if she got training to work with students with disabilities she stated “No, I did not want to teach here.”

The education training is very different as compared to higher education in the United States where college students are allowed to choose if they want to be a general education teacher or a special education teacher and jobs are competitive. In the United States the government does not make placements, college graduates have options.

Interpretation

One conflict when trying to collect data of the international definition of a disability is whether or not the disability prevalence is based both in function of the incidence and survival (Kauffman & Hallahan, 2011). For instance, a low reported prevalence of disabilities may be a result of low mortality rate in that country or it may be that some people are being left out of the count, such as children. It is found that numbers are low based on children being institutionalized and or hidden by families in fear of what the community or life around them

will think. Culture also plays a large role in how a disability is perceived. Many cultures around the world see a disability as something that is a result of a mythic belief or something that should result in death. According to Kauffman and Hallahan (2011) the correct data collection of a disability worldwide can be influenced by the political movements as well as the view that third world countries do not merit global priority in the domain of disabilities.

There is a disconnect between the identification and definition of a disability around the world that causes the opportunity to link assessments and interventions together worldwide (UNICEF, 2013). Using assessments can allow for children with a disability to be linked with the resources they need in order to better treat and live with their disability. Often times though once identified with a disability there is not enough funds or a lack in follow up after initial diagnosis. In the UNICEF article (2013) the authors note, that with the collection of data on the type and severity of a child's disability as well as information on the barriers to functioning and participating in the child's community, and the socio-economic indicators can help map out useful and meaningful solutions to helping all individuals with disability the equal access to participate and live like any other citizen in their community. UNICEF continues to move forward and work towards worldwide inclusion on disabilities. With each new piece of data they will continue to work with and provide new resources that will assist the world with inclusion of disabilities. The only known definition of a disability in Dakar is what was told to us via word of mouth and it was not always the same.

According to a recent summary on the current state of how disabilities are seen around the world released by UNICEF, the definition of a disability is changing and evolving (UNICEF,

2013). While it is said that a disability should be inclusive of both medical and social factors, the focus is still mainly on physical and mental impairments. With this narrow approach, many children are left out of services or a diagnosis. This was observed multiple times by seeing how children in the class where I worked were left out of lessons because they did not have an outward disability, instead they had a cognitive impairment that was perceived as not capable of learning.

The International Classification of Functioning (ICF), Disability and Health (World Health Organization, 2001) have defined a disability as something that is found within two categories; one that affects the body's structure and functions, and in terms of the person's activity and participation. The ICF definition and the mainstreaming of people with disabilities showcase how a disability can only affect a person to some degree. Slowly the ICF definition is incorporating the social aspects of life into its working definition. It is incorporating its definition to include: body structure, body functions of the body systems, and restrictions on participation. However, while the definitions are continuing to change on paper it is important that the definitions and classifications fall into context within the environment of children and people living around the world.

In terms of research questions two and three there was nothing that I found within my policy review as to what was observed or noted while working at the field placements. The framework of EFA and even much of the Human Rights for All are disregarded in the schooling system, and by all administrators, parents, teachers, and government. They are all saying one thing but what is being practiced and implemented is another.

Regardless of any policy written on paper or any administrator or official who has ties to education can account for, what is actually going on within the education systems in Dakar's schools such as Talibo Dabo. All the links that were connected with each other, did not add up, so any real assumption is inconclusive.

Implications

Throughout my time spent in Dakar, and the observations and people I met, I learned a great deal about the education practices in Dakar versus the United States. I learned that regardless of how many ways one asks a question, the same answer will surface. It is as if educators and professionals from Dakar will give a text book answer on what is expected and acceptable. However, after three weeks of observations and countless meetings with personnel, the textbook answers did not coincide with the work being done in schools.

In order to answer R_1 in my own words, how is a disability defined in Dakar, many factors were considered. While a disability is defined clearly in the United States by policies and mandates that hold them into place, in Dakar the definition is different. While policies like Education for All indicate that there guidelines in order to implement what is to do be done when organizing the education in developing countries. However, from observation and interviews the definition of a disability is still in progress, and the field of education in Dakar is still forming to meet the criteria of the policies.

In terms of R_2 and my views on it, what supports are given to students with disabilities in Dakar looking at the six goals of EFA (2000) students basic needs are being met which is seen in the framework of EFA. While working at Talibo Dabo I was able to go into the clinic where physical therapy or what would translate to occupational therapy would take place. While IDEIA

(2004) mandates that ancillary services are provided to students with disabilities, the policies for developing countries such as Dakar have not yet been implemented. There was also no set schedule for the doctors to show up to the clinic at Talibo Dabo, and teachers do not necessarily know what things are being done for the students. There is not a multi-disciplinary team mentality at Talibo Dabo. The supports and services are still being developed both from what was observed and talked about with the faculty at Talibo Dabo.

When looking at R₃, which asked what supports for families were given to families of children with disabilities, school personnel were talked to as well as some policy review. In the United States parents and families are given support from birth when a child is identified as having a disability or other health impairment. There are mandates in order to give families support throughout their child's education. Families are also part of the IEP team and help with decision making for their child within the least restrictive environment. All of these guidelines fall under the IDEIA (2004) law and help keep schools nationwide on the same ideas for helping students with disabilities. However, in Dakar the policies such as EFA focus on building literacy in students and getting young girls and women educated. Under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights it states that families are eligible for free public education. From observation students can attend public schools, however for students with disabilities there are only a select amount of schools that will accommodate or accept students who have impairments. Using Talibo Dabo as a further example, there is a tuition attached to attending the school and this helps get the students services they need. However, if the buses break down and cannot get students to schools there can be a lapse of educational gains met. Furthermore students regardless of ability or disability are given the same state assessment at the end of fifth grade;

this test dictates whether or not a child can continue on in the education system in Dakar. Since the test has no accommodations or modifications for students attending Talibo Dabo, many students do not move pass the course work at Talibo Dabo therefore do not attend a university.

Finally for R₄ on how teachers are prepared to teach students with disabilities. In the United States several universities train teachers to work with students of all abilities, teachers also have ability to pick or have a say in what type of teaching job they would like. In Dakar there are teacher preparation courses that a potential teacher can take, however through interviews and lectures it was found that teachers get prepared using a basic program and then are placed by the government to teach the outlined curriculum that is based in French. While Madame Dieye did not want to be placed at Talibo Dabo working with the students who had disabilities, she did want to be a teacher. Therefore we traveled abroad to get trained, however to work with the students in her class she had not training on how to successfully teach them. This shows a disconnect between the teaching preparations in the United States and in Dakar. It would be interesting to see the university curriculum in Dakar and compare it to a university curriculum in the United States.

Through multiple interviews and observations among different schools in Dakar the conclusions have been made in regards to the education of students with disabilities. While the interviews and responses led the research in one direction what was observed and cross examined showed that the evidence proposed during the three week stay was inconclusive and more examination and research needs to be conducted in order to make the appropriate assumptions. However, the data collected is still crucial for future problem solving and advancement within the field of special education both in the Midwest and in Dakar.

There are many regulations and laws in place to help the education infrastructure within Dakar and countries that are in need of support, however there is no clear resolution or support to help these countries. While the research questions were grounded based on an initial policy review prior to traveling, there is not enough data to support and answer the questions of study at this point. Much more intensive research will need to be conducted on the medical, sanitary, and governmental support of children with disabilities in Dakar.

Conclusion

Working at Talibo Dabo allowed for several observations of how teachers teach students, and how the class uses the materials that are available in their classroom. The only time that all students were engaged in learning was when there was a transition activity of moving arms and face muscles to do stretching exercises to move into the next activity. While working in the classroom two pre-service special education teachers planned and structured lessons. The lessons were taught to the students to show the native teacher an example of alternative lessons. Both lessons showed a wide range of different fine and gross motor skills as well as differentiated instruction and presentation of material.

The first lesson consisted of using the book “The Very Hungry Caterpillar” to read and discuss the lifecycle of a butterfly and incorporate the different foods found within their community that were healthy choices to eat as familiar fruits that were familiar to the students. Following the story a craft project was taught that incorporated making a butterfly out of tissue paper and decorating it with markers and using a clothes pin to fasten the butterfly into its shape. This gave the students many different modes of instruction to complete a task and was

something students were able to bring home to show as what was accomplished during their school day.

The second lesson taught dealt with using the iPad to showcase a digital story. The story we chose was the “The Red Hen” which was interactive and written in French, the language they were learning in school, French. The students were able to follow along and view the transitions with the touch on the screen. Technology was able to be utilized in the class, which many of the teachers showed interest in incorporating into Talibo Dabo. According to one of the school aides, any technology issues are seen as a challenge to repair because few are trained in assistive technology. After the story was complete students were to complete a tracing of a hen on construction paper and to decorate it.

Both lessons were successful in showing that students could complete different tasks using multi levels of instruction. As well as introducing new materials that could lead as a gateway into changing the way the curriculum is presented currently in Talibo Dabo. Aside from the interactions with the students and getting them to participate it was important that the classroom teacher was present in the room and witnessed our lesson to be able to provide a new insight to her teaching philosophy. She expressed how happy and pleased she was with the lesson we taught and wanted a copy of the translated lessons for her once we left.

These lessons and opportunities to bring some of the technology from the United States into other classrooms abroad, shows how, regardless of diagnosis, students can learn using different modalities. The lessons taught in Talibo Dabo showed how children are resilient and can adapt to new strategies, more specially adapting between Wolof, English, and French, even with new supplies and technology.

There is still much to be learned in regards to what is being done for special education and education in general abroad. There are gaps that must be filled, but not with the same policies and practices that have been used in the past. It is time to generate new innovative ideas that take the problems from yesterday and solve them with the advancements of today. One thing to learn from working with children at Talibo Dabo and from my stay in Senegal is that those children are resilient despite the corrupt ways in which they are educated. While a country may be poor financially, it is rich in a culture that America has long ago forgot, and if anything will work out for them it will be the foundation in which they create their lifestyles and values. Students in Senegal appreciate an education and fight for their rights to a quality education. This was particularly evident at the private school in Pikine. The students packed themselves into classrooms that were so small and hot yet they believed their way out of poverty was education and they were going to work very hard to get high test scores so they could be successful. There is still so much to be done there and questions still linger in my mind about the teacher training curriculum, how disabilities are diagnosed and what can be done in the culture to become more accepting of students with disabilities. It would also be interesting to explore low technology accommodations and the integration of such accommodations into Talibo Dabo that are easy for teachers and students to learn how to use.

Taking all those aspects into consideration the trip to Dakar, Senegal has changed my life forever. There are many things that I have taken away from Dakar and applied into my own teaching and life. Since my return from Dakar, I have a new found appreciation for the teacher preparation available to me. I have also been more aware of the laws and regulations in the field of special education. I will always carry with me the fact of how resilient children are,

regardless of their situation. I see that daily in my teaching environment and was able to work with hundreds of children in Dakar that despite their situations, love life, and education.

I take my experiences from Dakar and transform them into working with children of all different backgrounds, and with all types of parents and families. Working in a developing city like Dakar has been an eye-opening experience. I have realized that parents truly are giving their children the best that they can afford to do. I also value the standard of living I have been given, and do not take for granted all of that I have been given, specifically my education, health, clean water, a sanitation system, and food. I would travel back to Dakar in a heartbeat, and would love to continue to work with Talibo Dabo and the people of Dakar.

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Table 1. Comparison Education Policy Table

UNESCO Education for All (Senegal) - Six goals for international education to met by 2015:	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (IDEA '04)-Reauthorized by Congress every 5 years (United States)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improving early childhood care and education especially for vulnerable and disadvantaged children. 2. By 2015 all children especially girls have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education 3. All learning needs are met through appropriate and life skills programs 4. Achieving 50% improvement of adult literacy 5. Eliminating gender disparities 6. Improving all aspects of the quality of educating and creating measureable learning outcomes 7. No funding for Education for All 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Free Appropriate Pubic Education (FAPE) - Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) - Due Process Safeguards - Parent and student participation in decision making - Child find and identification from birth to 21 - Non discriminatory identification and evaluation - Individual Education Plan (IEP) - IDEA funded by Federal/ State/ Local Governments - FAPE

Table 2. Education for All (1990, 2000)

Goal One	Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
Goal Two	Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to, and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality.
Goal Three	Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programs
Goal Four	Achieving a 50 percent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
Goal Five	Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving

	gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.
Goal Six	Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all especially in literacy, numeracy, and essential life skills.

Table 3. Universal Declaration of Human Rights Sections 1-3

Section One	Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
Section Two	Education shall be directed to the full developments of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance, and friendship among all nations, racial, or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
Section Three	Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

