

The Impact of Globalization on Access for Individuals with Disabilities

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Abstract

This comparative ethnomethodology study is focused on the global context elements that help explain public policies and its consequences on types of access available to individuals with disabilities in the United States Midwest and West Africa. The goal of this study is to identify the role of individuals with disabilities in a global society by answering two research questions. First, what are the public policies in place for physical, social, and educational access in the United States Midwest and West Africa? Second, how is physical, social, and educational access being provided in the United States Midwest and West Africa? The comparative analysis of the United States Midwest and West Africa was constructed using archival research, ethnographic interviews, and observations in a variety of settings. The study concludes with exploration of the impact processes of globalization have on public policies in place, funding of those policies, and the consequent roles of individuals with disabilities in society.

Key Words: globalization, disability, access, Senegal, United States Midwest, West Africa

1. Introduction

The Impact of Globalization on Access for Individuals with Disabilities

Over a billion people, about 15% of the world's population, have some form of a disability and this rate is steadily increasing (World Health Organization, 2014). The vast majority of people with disabilities, about 80%, live in developing countries, are poor, and lack community resources and education that could significantly help them change their situation (Community Toolbox, 2014). This research is focused on the global context elements that help explain public policies and their consequences on accessibility for individuals with disabilities in the United States Midwest and West Africa. An ethno methodological approach was chosen in order to study the methods through which people make sense of and account for the daily activities that construct their world and consequently create a social order (Castree, Kitchin & Rogers, 2015; Garfinkel, 1967). This study provides insight into how global economy impacts the lives of individuals with disabilities in different parts of the world.

1.1 Key Definitions

The study began by defining a list of key terms involved in the study using archival resources. The definitions follow the research framework of ethnomethodology and were chosen accordingly. The terms are as follows: globalization, disability, access, and education.

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Table 1: Key Words Defined

Key Term	Definition	Source
Globalization	The uneven process of expansion and intensification of social relations and consciousness across world-time and world-space, thus transforming social structures and cultural zones	Steger, 2013
Disability	An umbrella term for impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. Disability is the interaction between individuals with a health condition (e.g. cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, and depression) and personal and environmental factors (e.g. negative attitudes, inaccessible transportation and public buildings, and limited social supports).	World Health Organization, 2014
Access	<p>Educational: The ways in which educational institutions and policies ensure—or at least strive to ensure—that students have equal and equitable opportunities to take full advantage of their education.</p> <p>Physical: The ability of a person to move about his or her built environment, including the availability of public transportation.</p> <p>Social: Creating an environment that can be used by all people. This includes changing attitudes towards disabilities and the forms of communication used in a community.</p>	<p>The Glossary of Education Reform, 2014</p> <p>United States Access Board, 2010</p> <p>Community Toolbox, 2015</p>
Education	Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.	Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 2015

2. Methodology

The theoretical framework of ethnomethodology was used to guide the research methods of this study. These methods can be broken down into six steps as outlined by Sangasubana (2011). First, two research questions were developed to become the basis of the study. Second, a literature review of public policy and current research relating to access for individuals with disabilities was conducted. Third, ethnographic interview questions were constructed from literature review findings. Fourth, ethnographic interviews and observations were completed in West Africa (Senegal) and the United States Midwest. Fifth, information from these interviews and observations was verified. Sixth, the verified information was analyzed and used to draw conclusions.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Ethnomethodology provided the framework of research in this study. Based on Harold Garfinkel's (1967) work, ethnomethodology seeks to understand the self-generating order in concrete activities of everyday life that produce social order (Castree et. al., 2015). It provides the benefit of conducting research within shorter periods of participant observation in a particular sub-cultural context rather than conducting a longitudinal study (Hogan, John, Dolan, Paddy, Donnelly & Paul, 2011). According to the social theory, raw experience of members of society is open to scientific analysis. General features of ethnographic studies are as follows: behavior studied in a normal environment rather than under experimental conditions, data collected from different sources with observation and relatively informal conversation, focus on a single setting or group, and analysis involving interpretation of meaning (Hammersley, 1992, as cited in Hogan et. al., 2011). Following this framework, the methods of research used included a literature review through archival research, ethnographic interviews, and participant observations.

2.2 Research Questions

The research examines the impact of globalization on access for individuals with disabilities in the West Africa and the United States Midwest. The goal of the study is to identify the role of individuals with disabilities in a global society by using the explained methodology to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the public policies in place for physical, social, and educational access in the United States Midwest and West Africa?
2. How is physical, social, and educational access being provided in the United States Midwest and West Africa?

2.3 Literature Review

The current literature combining research of access, disability, and globalization is limited. Warren and Manderson (2013) state “a small but growing number of volumes, written primarily by anthropologists, describe the international conceptualization and experience of disability using the construction of quality of life as an organizing thread” (p. v). Their book *Reframing Disability and Quality of Life* combines ethnographic literature from thirteen studies on the global perspective of disability to create a mass of evidence supporting the idea that structural change on a population level is necessary to make a true impact on disability social justice. A common theme from the available literature is the complexity of disabilities and their impact on multiple domains of life (World Health Organization, 2015; Warren & Manderson, 2013). Fleischer, Doris, Zames and Frieda (2011) summarize another common theme that the ultimate drive of change toward full access for individuals with disabilities is not civil rights, but economics. Organizations such as UNESCO and the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) call for funding of public policies and movements around the world (“Funding,” 2015; “Full Funding for IDEA,” 2008). This study seeks to connect and explain these two common themes by analyzing the impact of globalization on access for individuals with disabilities.

2.4 Ethnographic Interviews and Observations

In contrast to traditional interviews where the interviewer sets the agenda, ethnographic interviews allow the interviewee to select the important information to share in order to provide a vivid description of their life experiences (Westby, 2003). These interviews can be thought of as a “series of friendly conversations in which the [interviewer] slowly introduces open-ended questions to assist the client or family member in sharing their experiences” (para 3). The interviewer will listen for repeated words or common themes in the interviewee’s answers. These issues are focused on throughout the interview to let the interviewee dictate what is important. These descriptions give insight to how the individual sees their own world.

Ethnographic interviews and observations were conducted in a variety of settings in order to justify the claims made from the literature review. Participants in both countries include a special education teacher at a public school for students with disabilities, a parent of a child with a disability, an administrator of a public school, and a representative of a non-profit community organization (See *Table 2 Interview Context, Location, and Questions* for a summary of participants and questions asked). In Senegal, interviews were completed with the assistance of a translator to eliminate any complications resulting from a language barrier. Interviews were completed in person whenever possible with written versions of questions for clarification when necessary. Email correspondence was used for one United States Midwest interview. Similar data was collected in both West Africa and the United States Midwest to complete a comprehensive comparative analysis. Observations took place in the school and home settings accordingly.

Table 2: Interview Context, Location, and Questions

Context	Senegal	United States Midwest	Interview Questions
Special education teacher (public school for students with disabilities)	<i>Developmental School in Senegal</i>	<i>Developmental School, U.S. Midwest</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What curriculum do you use in your classroom? 2. What schooling or certification did you receive before working with students with disabilities and what further education are you participating in now? 3. How do you prepare your students to be successful in the community? 4. What do you see as your students' biggest challenge? 5. Where does the funding for your classroom come from?
Parent of a child with a disability	<i>Daughter with hydrocephalus</i>	<i>Daughter with Rhett Syndrome</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell me about a typical day with your child. 2. What do you believe is your child's biggest barrier or challenge? 3. What were the options for educating your child? 4. Tell me about the challenges your child faces in the community. 5. Do you receive any aid from the government to support the needs of your child? 6. What will your child do after they are done with school?
Administrator (public school for students with disabilities)	<i>Developmental School in Senegal</i>	<i>Developmental School, U.S. Midwest</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell me about your school. 2. What do you feel is your students' biggest barrier? 3. What options are available for students after they leave your school? 4. How is your school funded? 5. What skills or characteristics do you look for in employees for your school? 6. What curriculum are students taught here and how does it compare to general education schools?
Representative of a non-profit community organization	<i>Community Organization in Senegal</i>	<i>Community Organization in U.S. Midwest</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What programs are you working on that relate to individuals with disabilities? 2. What supports are available in the community that supports individuals with disabilities?

2.5 Data Analysis

This ethnographic study sought to describe and explain the current situation for individuals with disabilities in the United States and West Africa. The data from each location was combined and interpreted in order to complete a comparative analysis of the comprehensive environments of focus. Once information was collected, comparisons and common themes were drawn out for interpretation.

Analysis of the information began by coding for descriptive labels (Sangasubana, 2011). First level coding broke down information from interviews and observations into physical access, educational access, and social access in order to reduce the data to manageable size. Next, common themes were pulled from the remaining categories such as transportation and society's perspectives. This process also identified outliers in the data, two of which are addressed in the questions for future study section in the conclusion of this research. The common themes were then related to public policies that impact those areas of access and finally interpreted on a global scale.

2.6 Verification of Findings

The information gathered in the ethnographic interviews and observations was verified through a triangulation of sources with peer researchers and a mentor professor (Sangasubana, 2011). All three researchers attended the interviews and/or recorded data from similar sources for comparison. Email correspondence with interviewees was utilized to confirm accurate interpretation of responses. The findings were reviewed alongside original archival research to assess justification and validity.

3. Results

Using the methodology outlined above, the data were organized and interpreted to yield the following results. The data are organized by country and area of access addressed, followed by the global context of each region and a comprehensive comparison of West Africa and the United States Midwest. See *Table 3: Senegal Summary* and *Table 4: U.S. Midwest Summary*.

Table 3: Senegal Summary

Physical Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no current policy in place. • Physical structures such as ramps were observed at the University of Cheikh Anta Diop, Goree Island Port, and the West African Research Center. • The study found no currently available accommodations for public transportation. • A major issue for the developmental school in Senegal is transportation of students to the school (Senegal parent, personal communication, May 27, 2015; Senegal administrator, personal communication, June 3, 2015).
Educational Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNESCO's (2000) Dakar Framework for Action reaffirmed the Education for All Movement (1990) by stating "education is a basic right and basic need for all African children...including those with disabilities" (p. 26). • There is currently only one public school available for students with developmental disabilities in Dakar (Senegal administrator, personal communication, June 3, 2015). • The information for public schools for students with mental disabilities is limited. • Students are taught the same curriculum as general education students with little to no accommodations. • Secondary school options are few in number.
Social Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senegal ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, an international treaty to address disability rights (United Nations, 2006). • There are stigmas about having a disability, people believe children are possessed by the devil or not worth educating (Senegal parent, personal communication, May 27, 2015; Fontaine, 2010). • Adult populations often live in "wheelchair villages." • Some organizations are working to change this. APECSY recently requested funding from the British government to improve lives of people with disabilities (Senegal non-profit representative, personal communication, May 29, 2015).

3.1 Gaps in Senegal Research

As disabilities are controversial in the population, it was difficult to receive clear, direct answers to interview questions. There were several mentions of CEFDI and other institutions for children with mental disabilities, but the location in Dakar and the professionals working at the facilities remain unknown except for what was found in newspaper articles and CEFDI webpage (Ndecky, 2014; Fontaine, 2010). The process of identifying a child as having a disability by the medical professional on staff was not made clear. Most disabilities were physically obvious, such as clubfoot or cerebral palsy, but the methods for identifying mental disabilities were not mentioned in any of the interviews. Exact figures for financial aspects of school funding, staff pay, and transportation were not available to the researchers. Similarly, organizations such as UNESCO and the WHO reported difficulty in gaining complete data for the area. These issues are addressed in the suggestions for future study.

3.2 Summary of Access in Senegal

1. What are the public policies in place for physical, social, and educational access in the United States Midwest and West Africa?

Based on the information from interviews, observations and archival research in the study, there are no public policies currently in place for physical access in the country of Senegal. Senegal is 1 of 164 governments that have agreed to the Dakar Framework for Action (2000), a collective commitment to ensure Education for All (EFA). This states, "Education is a basic right and basic need for all African children...including those with disabilities" (p. 26). There are outlined actions to achieve this goal, but lack of funding has impeded the movement's success. Senegal also ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), an international treaty to address disability rights (United Nations, 2006). The United Nations Voluntary Fund provides small grants to support the ideals of CRPD.

2. How is physical, social, and educational access being provided in the United States Midwest and West Africa?

The country of Senegal contains minimal physical supports to aid the movement of individuals with disabilities in the built environment. Through observations, this study found there to be three locations in Dakar where ramps were available: the University of Cheikh Anta Diop, Goree Island port, and the West African Research Center. Physical barriers such as curbs and stairs were much more common. Public transportation is often overcrowded and has no available accommodations for individuals with disabilities. The developmental school in Senegal, a school for children with physical disabilities, reported that transportation of students is a major issue (Senegal parent, personal communication, May 27, 2015; Senegal administrator, personal communication, June 3, 2015). The school has limited access to wheelchairs and braces, and the number of buses available does not meet the need of the school. Cost of transportation is often too much for families, preventing them from sending their students to the school (Senegal parent, personal communication, May 27, 2015).

There are limited options for children with disabilities to attend school. There is one known school for students with physical disabilities and one known school for students with cognitive disabilities, CEFDI. Teachers at these institutions are given minimal pay and are trained by professionals in exterior countries to work with this population of students (Senegal administrator, personal communication, June 3, 2015). The students are taught the same curriculum as general education students, but with little to no accommodations or supports. Options for secondary education are even fewer in number. The majority of funding for these schools is allocated through private donors rather than the government.

There are social stigmas of disabilities that stem from traditional views that a person with a disability was "cursed" or "possessed by the devil" (Senegal parent, personal communication, May 27, 2015; Fontaine, 2010). Parents will hide their children with disabilities away from the community or have them stay home from school to collect money by begging on the streets. People in the community believe that people with disabilities are not worth educating because of their often-short lifetimes. Consequently, many adults with disabilities are forced to live on the streets in "wheelchair villages." Parents and organizations like APECSY are seeking to change this perspective and improve the lives of individuals with disabilities by spreading awareness and applying for grants (Senegal parent, personal communication, May 27, 2015; Senegal non-profit representative, personal communication, May 29, 2015.)

Table 4: U.S. Midwest Summary

Physical Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Architectural Barriers Act (ABA), Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) establish design requirements for the construction and alteration of facilities including places of public accommodation, commercial facilities, and state and local government facilities (Smith & Tyler, 2013; United States Access Board, 2013; PL 93-112; PL 94-541; PL 101-336). • The establishment of these laws and public policies has minimized issues of physical access for individuals with disabilities (U.S. administrator, personal communication, August 26, 2015; U.S. parent, personal communication, October 5, 2015; U.S. non-profit representative, personal communication, October 5, 2015; U.S. special education teacher, personal communication, November 12, 2015)
Educational Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is the first and main legislation outlining the available services provided for students with documented disabilities that adversely impact a child's education (PL 108-446). • Organizations like the Council for Exceptional Children are pushing for full funding of IDEA (Council for Exceptional Children, 2008). • Schools benefit largely from private donors to provide additional supports and services (U.S. administrator, personal communication, August 26, 2015; U.S. non-profit representative, personal communication, October 5, 2015). • There is a lack of post-secondary options for individuals with disabilities, especially for students with the most severe impairments (U.S. special education teacher, personal communication, November 12, 2015). • Parents often feel that the services outlined in legislation are not always adequately available to meet the needs of their children with disabilities (U.S. parent, personal communication, October 5, 2015).
Social Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ADA and Rehabilitation Act prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability in programs conducted by federal agencies and in employment practices (United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, 2015; PL 93-112; PL 101-336). • Lack of awareness is a major barrier for individuals with disabilities in the United States (U.S. administrator, personal communication, August 26, 2015; U.S. parent, personal communication, October 5, 2015). • Families of individuals with disabilities "wish society and the world were more accepting" (U.S. parent, personal communication, October 5, 2015).

3.3 Summary of Access in the United States Midwest

1. What are the public policies in place for physical, social, and educational access in the United States Midwest and West Africa?

Public policies pertaining to physical access for individuals with disabilities in the United States are the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA), Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). They establish design requirements for the construction and alteration of facilities including places of public accommodation, commercial facilities, and state and local government facilities (Smith & Tyler, 2014; United States Access Board, 2013; PL 93-112; PL 94-541; PL 101-336). The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is the first and main legislation outlining the available services provided for students with documented disabilities that adversely impact a child's education (PL 108-446). The ADA and Rehabilitation Act prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability in programs conducted by federal agencies and in employment practices (United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, 2015; PL 101-336; PL 93-112).

2. How is physical, social, and educational access being provided in the United States Midwest and West Africa?

Physical supports are provided according to ADA through ideas of universal design that mandate features including accessible bathrooms, parking spaces, elevators and ramps. ADA regulations adopted revised, enforceable accessibility standards for places of public accommodation, commercial facilities, and state and local government facilities called the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design. The standards are enforced by the Department of Justice and Department of Transportation (United States Access Board, 2010). Physical barriers are not a significant issue in most cases of individuals with disabilities (U.S. administrator, personal communication, August 26, 2015; U.S. parent, personal communication, October 5, 2015; U.S. non-profit representative, personal communication, October 5, 2015; U.S. special education teacher, personal communication, November 12, 2015).

Under IDEA, all students are guaranteed the right to free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) as well as accommodations and educational services to meet the needs of each student at no additional cost to parents (Smith & Tyler, 2014). Unfortunately, that is not always the case and parents are forced to battle with school decisions in order for their students' needs to be met (U.S. parent, personal communication, October 5, 2015). Schools that are able to provide additional services often are only able to do so with funding from private donors (U.S. administrator, personal communication, August 26, 2015). A factor of these occurrences is that IDEA is not fully funded contrary to the federal government's promises. Organizations such as the Council for Exceptional Children are campaigning for full funding of the law (Council for Exceptional Children, 2008).

While discrimination on the basis of a disability is prohibited under ADA and the Rehabilitation Act, there are not always available employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities transitioning from schools (U.S. special education teacher, personal communication, November 12, 2015). Despite efforts by professionals in special education and families of children with disabilities, lack of knowledge and awareness of disabilities is a major barrier for individuals with disabilities becoming productive members of their communities (U.S. administrator, personal communication, August 26, 2015; U.S. parent, personal communication, October 5, 2015). Families of individuals with disabilities "wish society and the world were more accepting."

3.4 Global Context

Steger states "globalization is an uneven process, meaning that people living in various parts of the world are affected very differently by this gigantic transformation of social structures and cultural zones" (2013, p. 11). It is clear that globalization has impacted West Africa and the United States Midwest in very different ways. One commonality between the two is the Global Financial Crisis (GFC), a negative consequence of deregulation of global financial infrastructure due to processes of globalization. Beginning in the 1990s, banks began placing risky investments in stock markets and mortgage brokers that quickly led to a failing financial system and froze global credit. The GFC wiped out 14.3 trillion dollars, 33 percent of the value of the world's companies, by 2009. By 2010, financial losses of 700 billion dollars hit the developing world even harder. The Group of Twenty proposed solutions to this crisis, but economic growth remained at a standstill and unemployment rates continued to be high from 2011 to 2013. The period of deficit for nation-states gave rise to the influence of transnational corporations (TNCs). TNCs "control much of the world's investment capital, technology, and access to international markets" (Steger, 2013, p. 53). A study in 2011 found that 147 super-connected corporations controlled 40 percent of the total wealth in the world's blue chip and manufacturing firms.

The best depiction of West Africa and the United States Midwest falling onto opposite sides of globalization processes can be shown by analyzing the role of international economic institutions. In the context of economic globalization, three institutions remain at the forefront of power: the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization (WTO) (Steger, 2013). The institutions rely on significant power differentials between Global North and South to sustain their control over the global economy. The IMF and World Bank began their influence after the Cold War when providing loans for developing countries aligned with political goals of containing communism. Developing countries that borrowed funds from these institutions were forced to implement "structural adjustment programs" in order to reform their economies and thus be in better position to repay the debts. Steger (2013) and Global Exchange (2011) refer to this as a "new form of colonialism" (p. 57). Steger (2013) states the structural adjustments are as follows:

1. A guarantee of fiscal discipline, and a curb to budget deficits.
2. A reduction of public expenditure, particularly in the military and public administration.
3. Tax reform, aiming at the creation of a system with a broad base and with effective enforcement.
4. Financial liberalization, with interest rates determined by the market.
5. Competitive exchange rates, to assist export-led growth.
6. Trade liberalization, coupled with the abolition of import licensing and a reduction of tariffs.
7. Promotions of foreign direct investment.
8. Privatization of state enterprises, leading to efficient management and improved performance.
9. Deregulation of the economy.
10. Protection of property rights (p. 58).

The unfortunate truth is that because of mandated cuts in public spending, structural adjustment programs rarely result in ‘developing’ debtor societies (Steger, 2013; Kingston, Irikana, Dienne & Kingston, 2011). Instead they translate into “fewer social programs, reduced educational opportunities, more environmental pollution, and greater poverty for the vast majority of people” (Steger, 2013, p. 58). Most of the national budget is allocated for outstanding debts. While the United States is a dominant power profiting in the IMF and World Bank (Steger, 2013; Kingston et. al., 2011), Senegal is a developing country whose debt to these institutions multiplied by more than six times between 1980 and 2002 while paying an annual average of \$281.5 million (Kingston et. al., 2011). These global context elements play a key role in availability of access for individuals with disabilities in the United States Midwest and Senegal.

3.5 Comparison of Access in Senegal and the United States

Issues of physical access differ substantially between Senegal and the United States. In Senegal physical access is a considerable barrier for individuals with disabilities, whereas in the United States physical access has become almost irrelevant. This can be explained by the lack of public policies relating to physical access and funding for infrastructure in the country of Senegal compared to the multiple laws and accountability systems in place in the United States.

Issues of educational access have more commonalities. Although both countries follow public policies or frameworks for action, lack of funding and accountability causes significant challenges to students with disabilities and their families. In both cases, although to different extents, schools are reliant on private donors to meet the needs of their students (Senegal administrator, personal communication, June 3, 2015; U.S. administrator, personal communication, August 26, 2015). While both education systems use the same standards for students with and without disabilities, the methods used to teach students with disabilities varies between the countries. Senegal, along with most Sub-Saharan African countries has adopted a utilitarian perspective of education (Tabulawa, 2013). The United States has adopted individualized education plans (IEP) for each student with a disability along with systems such as response to intervention (RTI), multi-tiered systems of supports (MTSS), and positive behavioral intervention systems (PBIS) in order to differentiate the needs of each student (Smith & Tyler, 2014). Another commonality between the two countries is lack of secondary or post-secondary programs for students to transition into society (Senegal administrator, personal communication, June 3, 2015; U.S. administrator, personal communication, August 26, 2015; U.S. special education teacher, personal communication, November 12, 2015). While schools train students to become productive members of society, there are limited options in the community.

Issues of social access are arguably the most similar between the two countries. The study has found that lack of knowledge and awareness of disabilities is the main factor of individuals with disabilities facing exclusion from society (Senegal parent, personal communication, May 27, 2015; Senegal administrator, personal communication, June 3, 2015; U.S. administrator, personal communication, August 26, 2015; U.S. parent, personal communication, October 5, 2015; U.S. special education teacher, personal communication, November 12, 2015). In both countries, the people most often advocating for individuals with disabilities is professionals in fields relating to disabilities and the families of individuals with disabilities.

4. Conclusion and Future Study

In conclusion, all three areas of access – physical, educational, and social – are deeply interconnected with one another and are impacted in different ways in different areas of the world through processes of globalization. Education systems can improve, but if students do not have means of transportation that allow them to attend, it makes no significant impact. Similarly, a student with a disability can be educated, but if that student is not accepted in the community, it then becomes nearly impossible for him or her to contribute to the larger society.

The WHO states, “Overcoming the difficulties faced by people with disabilities requires interventions to remove environmental and social barriers” (“Disabilities”, 2015). The process of changing access for individuals with disabilities in any of the three areas is slow-moving and tedious at times. It has taken decades for the United States to arrive at the current state of providing services and even now, the systems involved are being criticized and challenged. Even more arduous is the task of changing society’s perception of disabilities from people who will not live long enough to make educating them worthwhile to people who are capable of holding roles as contributing members of a global society. This study has shown that federal laws or regulations may serve as a starting point but can only go so far to meaningfully impact the larger society. Spreading awareness of disabilities is key to accomplishing real growth. This study suggests that the most effective solution to increasing access for individuals with disabilities is one that utilizes a collective approach.

A common theme across all sources in this study proved to be lack of funding and accountability for the public policies in place. Globalization has caused areas such as education to be a lesser priority for different reasons in both the United States Midwest and West Africa. The United States belongs to the Global North but places a higher value on military spending, 54 percent of the United States discretionary budget, than education, which receives only 6 percent (National Priorities, 2015). This makes it impossible for federal laws such as IDEA to be fully funded. In contrast, Senegal and surrounding West Africa is forced to cut spending on education and health services due to structural adjustment policies enacted by the IMF and World Bank (Steger, 2013; Global Exchange, 2011). In both cases, individuals with disabilities rely on private donors rather than the promises of the government (Senegal parent, personal communication, May 27, 2015; Senegal administrator, personal communication, June 3, 2015; U.S. administrator, personal communication, August 26, 2015). Further, when there is no accountability for public policies in place, such as Education for All, there is minimal likelihood the policy will be implemented effectively. Increased funding and accountability for public policies must be enacted in order for their full intent to be achieved.

Globalization and its impact on access for individuals with disabilities and funding of public policies have been analyzed by this study. UNESCO (2000) states the following:

Globalization is both an opportunity and a challenge. It is a process that must be shaped and managed so as to ensure equity and sustainability. Globalization is generating new wealth and resulting in the greater interconnectedness and interdependence of economies and societies. Driven by the revolution in information technologies and the increased mobility of capital, it has the potential to help reduce poverty and inequality throughout the world, and to harness the new technologies for basic education. Yet globalization carries with it the danger of creating a market place in knowledge that excludes the poor and the disadvantaged. Countries and households denied access to opportunities for basic education in an increasingly knowledge-based global economy face the prospect of deepening marginalization within an increasingly prosperous international economy (p. 14).

These global processes have created significant differences as well as significant similarities among the data found through this study in Senegal and the United States. There are positive and negative consequences on access for individuals with disability through globalization. Research can now be conducted not just in particular regions or countries, but also on a global scale. Countries of the Global South are able to collaborate with countries of the Global North and seek funding for programs to benefit those with disabilities. This study constructs the idea that issues of access for individuals with disability can be found everywhere in the world. These connections can support global collaboration of efforts to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities and make significant changes to the perspective of disabilities around the world.

One of the gaps in this research is that it gives a current “snapshot” of a particular setting at one point in time and that power, distribution of resources in society, and historical shape of institutions are not a direct focus of ethno methodological framework (Zimmerman, 1978). Further study of these elements as they pertain to this project could help to build a stronger explanation of the results found.

Another challenge faced throughout the study particularly in Senegal was communication barriers and cultural differences led to contradicting information or lack of information for certain topics, especially financial aspects of the study, that were previously outlined. Sangasubana (2009) states that ethnography requires interpretation of data and observations in environments that are not controlled, both of which can generate bias if the researcher is not cautious. Further, ethnomethodology uses a small population to create a “snapshot” of a society whereas longitudinal studies of a larger population may detect differing patterns. These factors, along with questions developed throughout the research process, suggest further explanation of the following:

1. Who is and who will continue to advocate for individuals with disabilities around the world?
2. What changes will future amendments or reauthorizations to federal laws bring to the United States?
3. What can be done to redirect the actions of the IMF and World Bank to positively impact developing countries?

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