



The Drum Set and Cerebral Palsy, Motor and Affective Psychological Development

Kaleb A. Santana Ramos¹
Dr. Emma Rodríguez Suárez¹

¹Conservatory of Music, Puerto Rico

ABSTRACT

Cerebral palsy is a condition caused by a hemorrhage in the brain that can occur before childbirth until the age of three while the brain is developing. This condition is defined according to the motor skills impairment which affects muscular tone and creates limitations in movement. Moreover, this condition could cause different brain and cognitive disorders such as learning disabilities, attention deficit, emotional impairments, behavioral problems, hydrocephaly, epilepsy, and visual impairments, among others. It is very difficult for a person with cerebral palsy to learn to play an instrument such as the drum set because of the motor impairment and brain deficiencies that can limit the acquisition of the proper skills to be able to play such an instrument. The lack of data about the changes in motor skills and psychological affect using this instrument was the central purpose of this investigation. A qualitative, longitudinal case study approach was used to study the changes in fine and gross motor development as well as the changes in psychological affect in a student diagnosed with cerebral palsy who was musically educated on the drum set during a two and a half years period. Three instruments were used to obtain data: 1) observations extracted from a pedagogical diary, 2) digital video recordings, and 3) interviews to the student and the student's mother. At the end of the analysis changes were observed in both aspects studied; a significant increase in the speed on his general performance from 118 to 162 quarter note and, an increase in endurance from four minutes and 13 seconds to 45 minutes of continued performance (motor), as well as significant changes in relation to the music, music education and the student's future in the field of music (affective psychological). [The author can be reached at singingcanaries@gmail.com or KalebSantana@gmail.com]