
Inclusive Music and the Capabilities Framework: contextualising the experiences of inclusive music in the lives of children and young people with disabilities

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Abstract

This study is situated within the field of inclusive arts and disability. Findings will be presented on a project that explored the impact on the lives of children and young people with disabilities of participating in inclusive music classes in a community arts organisation in Glasgow, Scotland. Qualitative data were collected for the study through the observation of classes and performances, talking to the participants, a parent questionnaire and focus group with the music tutors. The findings are interpreted through the capabilities approach of Sen (2001) and Nussbaum (2006), and personalisation. The study highlights that involvement in inclusive music classes impacts on the confidence, sense of achievement and overall wellbeing of the participants. The development of transferable life skills appears to be contesting and layering the identities of the children and young people, helping them to see themselves as musicians and motivating them to achieve in other areas of their lives. The inclusive music classes are creating safe and supportive spaces and opportunities for the young participants to lead a life of their own choosing. This study contributes to the empirical work on the ‘transformative potential’ (Atkinson and Robson, 2012) of participation in the creative arts, specifically highlighting how this can be achieved when the concept of personalisation is applied in practice from a social justice perspective.

Atkinson, S. and Robson, M. (2012) ‘Arts and health as a practice of liminality: managing the spaces of transformation for social and emotional wellbeing with primary school children’, *Health and Place*, 18, 1348-1355.

Nussbaum, M. (2006) *Frontiers of Justice: Disability, Nationality and Species Membership*, London, Harvard University Press.

Sen, A. (2001) *Development as Freedom*, Oxford, Oxford University Press. ractice from a social justice perspective.

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