Exploring the Collaborative Musical Experience of Swedish Bunne® Method in Japan:
A Case Study Towards the Development of Universal Design in Musical Experience

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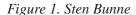
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Universal design has been a timely and important research topic of our time both in the realms of music therapy and education. Bunne Method, Swedish music method, was developed by Sten Bunne in 1980 to overcome physical and social difficulties and age gaps by sharing musical ensemble experience. This qualitative study explores the collaborative musical experience of elderly people and children in Japan by implementing Bunne Method. Bunne instruments are made in universal design with a four string swing bar guitar, one string mini bass, chime bar, monophonic flute for the use of anyone regardless of music experience, handicap, etc. In music activities with Bunne instruments, human physical, psychological, and social nature are activated in a synergistic manner so that it also helps to create positive feelings and confidence and livelihood through the pleasure of playing music.

BACKGROUND

Universal design and *kyosei* living have been timely and important research topic of our time both in the realm of music therapy and education. In 2012, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) in Japan set a new goal of constructing a *kyosei* society by implementing an inclusive education system in special education. The inclusive stance in education promotes learning together and building a community (Glass, Blair & Ganley, 2012) for students with a broad range of abilities, with and without disabilities.

Bunne Method, Swedish music therapy method which was imported to Japan, was developed by Sten Bunne in 1980 to overcome physical and social difficulties and age gaps by sharing musical ensemble experience. It is a method where music is used as a tool for people to interact, both under leadership and spontaneously. Partial musical aims are given for raising their motivation in a step-by-step, long term education process. Sten Bunne, the expert of music therapy in Sweden, holds the view that music is an excellent tool for human growth and development. This view comes from his 38 years of practice and lecturing.

The major characteristic of the Bunne Method, developed by Sten Bunne, is that a specially designed a family of easy-to-play musical instruments are used. They are called the Bunne Instruments, and make it easier for people with various difficulties to participate in playing music. The musical instruments are for accompaniment

Figure 1. Sten Bunne

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