



The Educational Value of Emotional Intelligence for Choreographic Education

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The **objectives** of this research are to highlight the role of emotional intelligence in the training and development of choreography students and to demonstrate its relevance in choreographic education, as reflected in the university curriculum in choreographic art, which emphasizes the development of students' emotional skills. The study further examines how these skills influence artistic performance, stage communication, and the psycho-emotional balance of dancers. **Previous studies** examine the interdependence between emotional intelligence and educational processes in the arts, with particular attention to emotional self-regulation, emotion management, empathy, and motivation, which are fundamental concepts in choreographic education. These studies provide support for the integration of emotional skills into the arts education curriculum. **Approach:** The study is grounded in the scientific substantiation of research findings, outlining key approaches to emotional intelligence in choreographic education through qualitative methods, including observation and case studies within choreographic education contexts. **Research results:** The study identifies psychobehavioral traits that influence the development of reflexive and expressive skills in the arts. The cultivation of emotional intelligence supports students' adaptation during stage performances and enhances interpersonal relationships within the artistic ensemble. **Implications:** This study offers strategic guidance for teachers, researchers, and educational decision-makers to optimize artistic training programs. It emphasizes the development of emotional intelligence in choreographic education and provides recommendations for fostering these skills, which are relevant to dance teachers and the success of dance teacher training in higher education. The study also examines how arts programs contribute to the development of emotional intelligence by promoting self-awareness, empathy, and interpersonal skills. Furthermore,

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choreographic education strategies are explored as methods that support the development of emotional intelligence through dance. **The value** of this research lies in its innovative approach to integrating emotional intelligence into choreographic education, providing an interdisciplinary perspective that highlights the development of emotional competencies essential for the personal and professional success of dancers.

Keywords: emotional intelligence; emotional competencies; choreographic education; artistic training

1. Introduction

In contemporary arts education, the focus extends beyond the development of technical skills to the holistic formation of the individual, encompassing cognitive, emotional, and social dimensions. Within this framework, emotional intelligence has emerged as a central element of the educational process, particularly in disciplines such as dance and choreography, where expressiveness, empathy, and non-verbal communication are essential.

As a discipline that unites body, emotion, and expressive movement, choreographic education derives profound value from the purposeful integration of emotional intelligence. This study explores the formative role of emotional intelligence within choreographic education by examining the dynamic interplay between these constructs and their impact on the personal and professional development of students and prospective dance instructors.

Problem Statement

Within the framework of dancers' artistic formation, the role of emotional competencies in optimizing stage performance, enhancing artistic communication, and maintaining psycho-emotional balance amid high-intensity performance demands remains underexplored. This study aims to delineate the functional interplay between emotional intelligence and artistic achievement in dance, with particular emphasis on expressivity, resilience, and the dynamics of onstage relational engagement.

Emotional intelligence and emotional culture are prominent aspects of professional training, offering innovative perspectives on the *dance instructor* profession. Their integration into choreographic education positions them as an integral element of dance teacher education, fostering the development of competencies essential for effective teaching.

Popularized by Daniel Goleman (1995), emotional intelligence encompasses the ability to accurately recognize, comprehend, express, and regulate one's own

emotions, as well as to perceive and respond appropriately to the emotions of others. Its components include emotional self-awareness, self-regulation, intrinsic motivation, empathy, and social skills. These dimensions not only facilitate harmonious adaptation to diverse social and professional environments but also directly shape an individual's capacity to communicate, create, and collaborate.

Currently, an increasing number of researchers, such as Borozan (2012), Goleman (2008), Pânișoară (2015), and Andreeva (2006), emphasize the role of emotional intelligence and emotional culture in fostering the personal and professional development of educators. These dimensions have become important criteria for evaluating both the effectiveness and quality of the educational process within its socio-affective domain. Consequently, emotional intelligence and emotional culture are recognized as integral components of teachers' professional culture, **rooted in both psychopedagogical and sociopedagogical paradigms.**

Elaborating substantively on the construct of emotional culture, M. Cojocaru-Borozan advances the view that teachers' emotional culture constitutes a dynamic manifestation of personality, emerging through the synergistic interplay of intrapersonal and communicative-relational dimensions (Cojocaru-Borozan, 2010). Within this interpretive framework, the intrapersonal dimension comprises several structural components:

- *Self-image*, encompassing self-perception, perception of others, and assertiveness;
- *Normative motivation*, including guiding principles, regulatory frameworks, and the functions of emotional expression;
- *Cognition*, involving emotional knowledge and personal experiences;
- *Connotativity*, referring to the meanings or interpretations that observers attribute to emotional behaviors beyond their explicit expression.

H. Andreeva argues that emotional intelligence and emotional culture constitute an emotion-based education that promotes affective development, openness, and responsibility toward oneself and others, thereby facilitating socio-affective adaptation and reinforcing a humanistic orientation.

Research in the field of artistic pedagogy (Andreeva, 2017; Schechner, 2013) demonstrates that the integration of emotional intelligence into choreographic training fosters enhanced interpersonal dynamics within the troupe, facilitates the

overcoming of expressive blockages, and amplifies the emotional resonance of artistic performance. Exercises such as *authentic movement*, *empathic improvisation*, *personal gestural heritage*, and *emotionally attuned feedback following performance* are pedagogical methods through which educators can simultaneously cultivate artistic expressiveness and emotional competencies.

Emotions play an essential role in the development of self-identity. Bîrzea (1995, p. 62) asserts that emotions, particularly positive ones, stimulate motivation, engagement, and commitment within the learning and creative processes. The work emphasizes that emotions can be harnessed and nurtured through specific pedagogical methods, contributing to the development of a well-balanced artistic and pedagogical identity.

Teaching involves emotions that cannot be recorded or summoned on demand, as well as human values that considerably transcend the limits of scientific knowledge (Bîrzea, 1995, p. 65). The interplay between pedagogy and the social and humanistic disciplines such as law and the creative and performing arts including literature, theater, cinema, dance, and music, is shaped by the broader historical and social conditions in which education occurs. This perspective underscores the significance of social and psychosocial factors that influence every educational phenomenon and activity, affecting society at large as well as specific spheres and domains within it. Simultaneously, it highlights the reciprocal impact of education on social structures and their underlying systems. In this context, education cultivates the individual's emotional, moral, legal, and aesthetic awareness.

The development of emotional intelligence within choreographic education contributes to the holistic development of the individual. *At a personal level*, dance students develop enhanced self-awareness and self-regulation skills that are essential for emotional management during performance or high-pressure situations. Simultaneously, through empathy and emotional openness, dancers strengthen their relationships with peers, fostering group cohesion and collaborative synergy.

From an artistic standpoint, emotional intelligence amplifies both the expressiveness and authenticity of performance. Dance thus transcends a sequence of mechanically precise movements to become a communal emotional journey communicated to the audience. A dancer with well-developed emotional intelligence can calibrate their performance to the context, establish resonant connections with stage partners, and convey an emotionally resonant narrative through non-verbal language.

As an art form, *choreography* recognizes not only the inherent expressive value of dance itself but also conceptualizes and organizes the internal relationships between movement, music, rhythm, and characters. Choreographic education is widely understood as the artistic, physical, and expressive development of an individual through dance and stage movement, encompassing not only technical and aesthetic dimensions but also emotional communication and creativity. This process involves the complex training of the body to convey ideas and emotions through movement. Lexicographically, *choreography* is defined as “the art of composing dances and ballet performances” and “the set of steps and figures that comprise a dance or ballet” (DEX).

Regarding dance technology, choreographers are expected to possess a command of foundational dance techniques, a nuanced understanding of the practical applications of diverse choreographic competencies, an ability for creative inquiry, a sustained sensitivity to rhythm and contemporary trends, and the ability to cultivate an innovative artistic vision. For dance instructors, a solid grasp of contemporary requirements and pedagogical strategies enhances their ability to mentor students effectively, optimize the instructional process, and foster a learning environment conducive to both artistic inspiration and excellence.

Dance, as a form of performative art, is inherently tied to emotion. Each gesture, rhythm, or choreographic sequence has the potential to convey a state of mind, a narrative, or a message, elements that can be fully accessed only through genuine emotional engagement. Consequently, emotional intelligence becomes an indispensable resource for the dancer, enabling not only the comprehension of artistic intent but also its effective communication to the audience.

The process of choreographic learning further entails managing intense emotional experiences: *confronting personal limitations, accepting critique, collaborating with others, navigating competition, and coping with performance-related stress*. Without adequate development of emotional intelligence, such experiences can trigger *mental blocks, anxiety, or diminished motivation*. Dance, as a non-verbal medium, requires the translation of emotion into movement, and in the absence of well-developed emotional intelligence, artistic interpretation risks remaining superficial or rigid.

Within the choreographic learning process, two key dimensions emerge: first, *the response to feedback*, including the management of frustration and the demands of teamwork, which rely on emotional intelligence, and second, *the understanding and*

conveyance of the choreographic message, which presupposes empathy and the capacity for emotional communication.

The formative value of emotional intelligence (EI) within the choreographic context is reflected in the following dimensions:

a. *Personal development of the student:* the development of empathy through group dance; the expression of emotions within a controlled environment; and increased self-confidence and self-esteem.

b. *Enhancement of artistic performance:* the ability to authentically convey the emotions of the choreographic character; adaptability in interpretation and improvisation; and deepened connection with both the audience and fellow performers.

c. *Establishment of a healthy teacher-student relationship:* a teacher with a high level of emotional intelligence can identify students' anxieties and provide emotional support, contributing to a more harmonious and holistic educational experience.

In this context, educational and pedagogical implications include:

- Integrating emotional intelligence into dance and choreography curricula through reflective exercises, guided dialogue, and emotional coaching;
- Training choreographers and educators in socio-emotional competencies to foster emotionally aware teaching practices;
- Designing workshops that develop emotional intelligence in tandem with technical and artistic skills.

A dancer's stage performance relies not only on physical and technical training but also on achieving a psycho-emotional balance that underpins expressiveness, stage presence, and the capacity to form authentic connections with both the audience and fellow performers. Consequently, emotional competencies serve as a foundational pillar for developing the holistic dancer.

In the art of dance, emotional competencies play an important role in stage performance. Dancers with high emotional awareness can translate their feelings into movement, authentically conveying inner experiences and enhancing the artistic impact on the audience (Hanna, 1987). Emotional self-regulation enables dancers to

manage intense emotions such as fear, uncertainty, or pre-performance stress while maintaining mental clarity and coordination (Nordin-Bates, 2020). Additionally, intrinsic motivation, fueled by emotional intelligence, encourages sustained engagement in both creative practice and technical training, even amid setbacks or fatigue. Empathy and social skills facilitate cooperative interactions within artistic ensembles, which are necessary for group performance, improvisation, and collaborative projects (Andreeva, 2017). Emotional competencies further contribute to the enhancement of stage communication through the following mechanisms:

- Facilitating a more accurate interpretation of choreographic intentions;
- Enhancing responsiveness to stage partners;
- Promoting authenticity in artistic expression;
- Cultivating a stage presence that seamlessly integrates expressive movement with affective communication.

To promote the development of these competencies, it is necessary *to integrate the emotional dimension into (a) choreographic training curricula* through practices such as emotional improvisation exercises, reflective journaling, and artistic coaching, *(b) performance evaluation* that considers not only technical criteria but also expressive qualities, and *(c) psycho-pedagogical support strategies* in arts schools and specialized dance high schools.

It is well established that the level of emotional culture among dance educators is determined by their ability to understand and manage emotions. Emotional intelligence reflects the degree of emotional maturity, contributing to personal development, interpersonal relationships, and professional success. Ultimately, it also supports an overall improvement in quality of life.

The contemporary educational system inevitably demands a high level of performance from dance teachers across professional, cultural, psycho-behavioral, moral, and relational domains. To meet these expectations, dance educators should embrace a set of quality standards, committing to the continuous development of both emotional intelligence and emotional culture. This involves understanding and expressing social and emotional behaviors, integrated into both professional and emotional competencies.

Performative art is fundamentally rooted in the present moment, demanding continual renewal with each performance. Consequently, the performer must respond swiftly and appropriately to the immediate circumstances of the live setting.

The playful impulses of childhood and the art of disguise constitute essential elements of the interaction between performer and audience. The artistic and aesthetic value of performative art resides in the performer's effort to inhabit a character that functions as both a spiritual and physical double, a figure the performer deliberately embraces to transcend personal limitations (Artaud, 1997).

The artist can be examined from *two complementary perspectives*. *The first* concerns the essential nature of the artist as an individual. In the case of dancers, this refers to their human composition, including both specific typologies and general characteristics shared by all individuals. *The second* perspective focuses on the dynamics of the artist's particular activity, encompassing the creative process through which the self is expressed or projected into the artwork. This process embodies a discursive dimension of artistic achievement, reflecting the actions undertaken by the artist during creation. As Ralea observed, the artistic process is fundamentally the manifestation of the artist's creative praxis in a state of emergence (Ralea, 1972).

Emotional culture encompasses a comprehensive body of knowledge that stems from the development of emotional intelligence. It includes a set of beliefs and attitudes regarding the importance of regulating emotional behavior, as well as the integration of various forms of knowledge related to affective experiences. Emotional culture reflects the full range of competencies that support the effective management of emotional energy, successful adaptation within the educational environment, and the development of a successful professional career.

The emotional culture for dance educators focuses on emotional *self-regulation, emotion management, empathy, and motivation*. Similarly, the emotional culture of teaching professionals encompasses *affective engagement, emotional regulation, the cultivation of a positive emotional climate, empathy, emotional advocacy, authentic emotional expression, stress resilience, emotional attunement, emotional adaptability, and emotional creativity* (Cojocaru-Borozan, 2012, p. 5).

Emotional intelligence forms the foundation of emotional culture among dance educators, as it enables the effective management of emotions, feelings, and emotional states, while also supporting the ability to select appropriate forms of expression in specific contexts, a capacity that holds particular relevance for teaching. Emotional intelligence thus stands as a core component of emotional culture (Rusu, 2015, p. 37).

The analysis of contemporary global challenges, evolving trends in educational systems, and the potential to transform learning theories and practices within postmodern pedagogy is of considerable interest to researchers in the artistic domain, including those in the Republic of Moldova. In artistic education, where creative expression is closely linked to affective and emotional states, emotional intelligence serves a dual function: it enables the authentic expression of emotions through artistic forms and strengthens interpersonal relationships within the educational process, particularly in teacher-student interactions and collaborative group activities.

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and express one's own emotions as well as those of others. Daniel Goleman (1995), a leading proponent of the concept, identified five core components: *self-awareness (recognizing one's own emotions)*, *self-regulation*, *intrinsic motivation*, *empathy*, and *social skills*.

Currently, social events unfold at such a rapid pace that certain concepts of traditional pedagogy require adaptation to new conditions. Today, pedagogy can no longer be confined solely to guiding, forming, and personality development; it now also encompasses factors of change, adaptation, and modeling. Even in Aristotle's philosophy, we find several notions related to the educational nature of art, understood as one of the human capacities to perceive, comprehend, and empathize with the emotions and mental states experienced by characters in artistic works (Aristotle, 1998).

2. Emotional Competencies and Their Role in the Development of Artistic Communication

Emotional competencies encompass the set of skills that enable individuals to identify, understand, express, and regulate their own emotions as well as those of others (Goleman, 1995). In the realm of performing arts, particularly dance, these competencies are fundamental for artistic expression and the effective communication of non-verbal messages.

According to Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, dancers often demonstrate exceptional abilities in two forms of intelligence that are essential for artistic communication: *interpersonal intelligence* (the ability to

relate to others) and *intrapersonal intelligence* (the ability to understand one's own emotions). These intelligences intersect with the domain of emotional intelligence (Bar-On, 2006), which supports artistic performance through self-awareness, empathy, and emotional regulation.

3.1 Artistic Communication: Beyond Nonverbal Language

In dance, artistic communication occurs without words, relying instead on the body, gaze, gestures, and stage presence. For this form of communication to be both authentic and impactful, the dancer must be aware of their own emotional states, express emotions coherently and empathetically, interpret feedback from the audience or stage partners, and convey an artistic message with clarity and intensity. Without developing emotional competencies, these processes risk remaining superficial or purely technical, thereby diminishing expressive power. Consequently, emotional competencies encompass several dimensions that are especially relevant for artistic communication, as summarized in table 1.

Table 1. Dimensions of Emotional Competence Relevant to Artistic Communication

Emotional Competence	Relevance to Artistic Communication in Dance
Emotional self-awareness	Enables the dancer to convey inner experiences authentically.
Empathy	Connects the dancer with the audience and stage partners.
Emotional regulation	Ensures continuity of expression even under performance stress.
Emotional expression	Enriches the artistic vocabulary through affective diversity.
Intrinsic motivation	Fuels expressive energy and enhances the authenticity of performance.

In high-demand contexts, emotional competencies play an important role in maintaining the psycho-emotional balance of dancers. Professional dancers and students in choreographic programs are frequently exposed to intense physical and psychological challenges, including prolonged rehearsals, public evaluations such as performances and competitions, strict aesthetic standards, performance pressure, risk of injury, and social demands like adapting to the group/troupe. In these

circumstances, emotional competencies act as protective factors, supporting both internal balance and sustained performance.

Emotional competencies form a fundamental basis for artistic communication in dance. They transform movement into meaningful expressions, technique into emotion, and stage performance into a shared experience. Within contemporary choreographic pedagogy, the emotional development of dancers should be pursued alongside physical and technical training in a balanced and integrated manner.

A curricular analysis of dance and choreography disciplines in the Republic of Moldova, viewed through the lens of emotional intelligence (EI), involves assessing the degree to which EI-related components are integrated into the normative frameworks guiding artistic education. This includes, but is not limited to, the Framework Plan for Artistic Education which encompasses secondary, technical-professional, and extracurricular levels, as well as the curricula for disciplines such as Dance, Choreography, Artistic Culture, and Education through Arts. Additionally, it considers the professional competence standards for teaching staff in the arts domain, as outlined in Order No. 810 of May 30, 2025, which approves the Framework Plan for secondary vocational artistic education institutions.

3. The Influence of Students' Emotional Culture on Artistic Communication

Although emotional intelligence (EI) is not always explicitly stated in the curriculum, it is implicitly present in the following components:

a) **General objectives of choreographic education:** development of bodily expressivity and artistic sensitivity; cultivation of the ability to perceive, interpret, and communicate emotions through movement and gesture; formation of a reflective attitude toward one's own artistic practice and that of others.

Curricular example:

In the curriculum for the discipline *Classical Dance* within technical-professional arts education, students are expected to "express artistic and emotional intentions through accurate and conscious technical execution" (MECC, 2024).

b) **Specific competencies related to EI:** *artistic empathy* (the ability to understand the emotions conveyed by peers and teachers during performance); *emotional self-regulation* (the ability to manage emotions under stress during

exams, performances, demanding rehearsals); **emotional collaboration** (the ability to work effectively within choreographic groups, understand stage dynamics, and foster affective cohesion).

c) Content and teaching methods. The curriculum promotes active teaching methods such as *improvisation exercises, body role-playing games, emotional feedback*, which support the development of emotional intelligence, even when this objective is not explicitly labeled as such.

d) Pedagogical competencies with an emotional component (for dance teachers). According to professional standards approved by the Ministry of Education, dance teachers are expected to: *demonstrate pedagogical intuition and emotional intelligence in managing relationships with students* (MECC Order, 2023); *foster a safe, motivating educational environment that provides emotional support adapted to individual artistic needs; apply assessment methods that consider the student's affective state during performance*.

e) Reflection and emotional self-regulation. Initial and ongoing teacher training includes *workshops on managing emotional stress during performances, empathic communication and constructive feedback, and mediating artistic conflicts among students*.

As a result, a critical observation reveals the following shortcomings:

- The official curriculum lacks an explicit conceptualization of emotional intelligence (EI);
- EI is not systematically integrated into assessment standards or individual progress records;
- Teacher training in the psychology of emotions in dance is insufficient.

The influence of students' emotional culture on artistic communication is represented in a scientific model (Figure 1) illustrating how choreographic education impacts the dance teacher who becomes the primary vector in developing both choreographic culture and emotional culture. These dimensions contribute to the formation of values and emotional intelligence among student-dancers, shaping their expressivity, stage collaboration, and psycho-emotional balance.

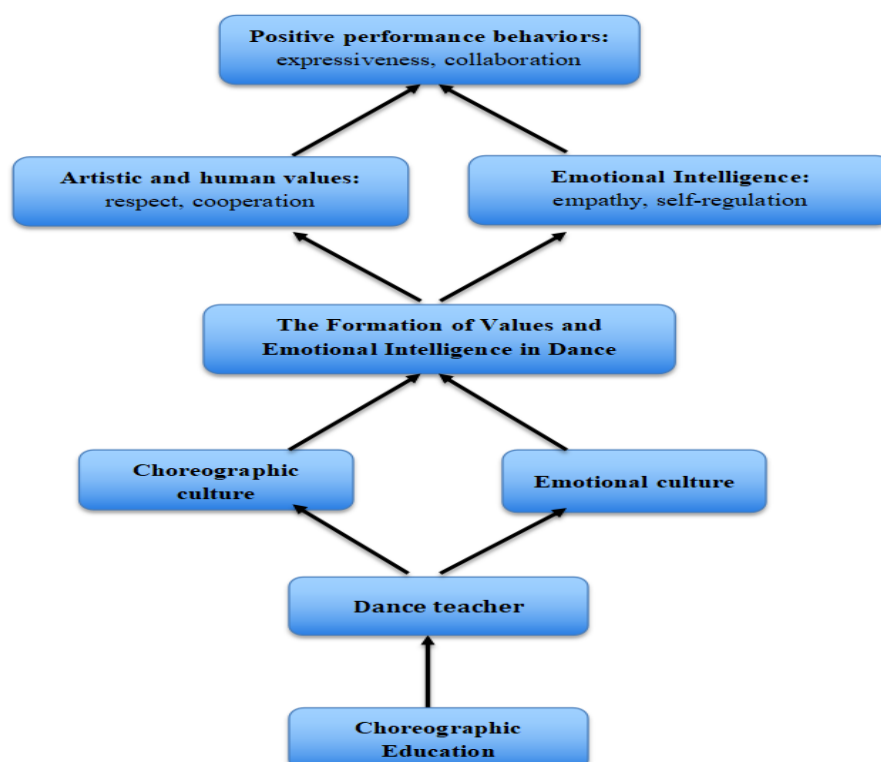


Figure 1. The Impact of the Dance Teacher's Emotional Culture on Choreographic Education

Figure 1 illustrates the formative process of emotional intelligence within choreographic education, in which the dance teacher acts as a mediator of both emotional culture and choreographic culture. The model is structured around four fundamental levels and two intermediate ones, where the impact of emotional culture and emotional intelligence is reinforced through the positive performance behaviors developed by the students.

Conclusions

Choreographic education extends far beyond the transmission of technical skills; it functions as a vehicle for shaping both the choreographic and emotional culture of the teacher. In turn, the teacher becomes a cultivator of values, attitudes, and

emotional intelligence in students. This influence, though often subtle, is essential for developing dancers capable of excelling artistically and socially.

The dance curriculum in the Republic of Moldova includes elements relevant to the development of emotional intelligence; however, these are presented implicitly and lack conceptual coherence. For a truly holistic approach to choreographic education, the emotional dimension must be explicitly and systematically integrated into both student education and teacher training. We recommend introducing training modules on emotional intelligence within initial and continuing professional development programs for dance teachers. We also suggest developing methodological guidelines for the integration of emotional intelligence into choreography lessons and adapting evaluation tools to include indicators of emotional growth and artistic collaboration.

A review of contemporary research indicates that emotional intelligence should be understood as an integrative phenomenon. When its structural components are connected across the following levels: (1) intelligence–personality traits, (2) intelligence–competence, and (3) instrumental intellect–reflective intellect, it becomes possible to conceptualize emotional intelligence as a cognitive–personal construct. In this expanded form, it encompasses emotional competencies and personal attributes that support a student’s ability to adapt effectively to performance contexts. The emotional intelligence of the student dancer can thus be regarded as a synthesis of emotional competencies developed through choreographic education and further refined in professional artistic practice.

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