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EDUCATIONAL REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS AND THE INTEGRATION OF EMOTIONAL CULTURE IN DANCE TEACHER EDUCATION ACROSS DIVERSE GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXTS

Svetlana TALPĂ,

”Ion Creangă” State Pedagogical University of Chișinău

Contemporary society requires dance teachers to demonstrate continuous adaptability, calling for the development of professional autonomy and responsibility. In dance education, teachers’ emotional culture plays an essential role, encompassing the regulation of their own emotions as well as those of their students in order to create a harmonious and effective learning environment. Emotional culture is structured around intrapersonal and relational dimensions that shape pedagogical communication and professional performance. Attributes such as empathy, self-regulation, and pedagogical optimism support instructional effectiveness and professional success. Consequently, the training of dance teachers must incorporate socio-emotional competences and strategies for emotion regulation that are responsive to the challenges of contemporary education. Emotional culture thus emerges as a foundational element of professional performance and harmonious relationships within the educational community, proving essential for the development of an effective and inclusive educational system.

Keywords: *emotional culture, dance teachers, socio-emotional competences, emotion regulation, professional performance, dance education, pedagogical communication, professional adaptability.*

REGLEMENTĂRI EDUCAȚIONALE ȘI VALORIFICARE A CULTURII EMOȚIONALE ÎN FORMAREA CADRELOR DIDACTICE DE DÂNS DIN DIVERSE CONTEXTE GEOGRAFICE

Societatea contemporană impune profesorilor de dans o adaptabilitate continuă, necesitând dezvoltarea autonomiei și responsabilității profesionale. În educația dansului, cultura emoțională a profesorilor joacă un rol esențial, incluzând gestionarea propriilor emoții și ale elevilor pentru a crea un mediu armonios și eficient. Aceasta se structurează în componente intrapersonale și relaționale, care influențează comunicarea pedagogică și performanța profesională. Trăsături precum empatia, autocontrolul și optimismul pedagogic susțin succesul didactic. Formarea profesorilor de dans trebuie să includă competențe socio-emoționale și strategii pentru gestionarea emoțiilor, adaptate provocărilor educației moderne. Astfel, cultura emoțională devine fundamentul performanței profesionale și al relațiilor armonioase în comunitatea educațională, fiind vitală pentru dezvoltarea unui sistem educațional eficient și tolerant.

Cuvinte-cheie: *cultură emoțională, profesori de dans, competențe socio-emoționale, gestionarea emoțiilor, performanță profesională, educație coregrafică, comunicare pedagogică, adaptabilitate profesională.*

Introduction

Rapid changes in education, driven by the spread of technology and recent global disruptions, have fundamentally changed what effective teaching requires. Teachers now work under ongoing professional pressure, which demands flexibility and the ability to adjust to new teaching demands as they arise. Hence, educational institutions should update their teaching frameworks, and this transformation carries a heavy responsibility for teachers to continue to develop their professional skills. According to the European Commission (2017, 2020), modern teachers must master a multidimensional set of professional competences. These include reflective practice, professional initiative, and cultural literacy, integrated with digital proficiency and interdisciplinary collaboration. Central to this framework is the teacher’s capacity for systematic self-reflection and a sustained commitment to continuous professional development.

In dance pedagogy in particular, the emotional culture of the teacher is understood as a combination of psychological and emotional qualities that influence teaching effectiveness and relationships with students.

This construct consists of two interdependent abilities: the teacher's awareness and management of their own emotions, and attentiveness to students' emotional states. According to Borozan (2021), emotional culture is built from a combination of intrapersonal elements (self-concept, motivational orientation, and the capacity for emotional interpretation) and relational and communicative dimensions (communication strategies and managing relationships). This integration supports teaching communication that is meaningful, context-aware, and professionally focused.

Though the basic models of emotional intelligence were initially developed in general psychological contexts, their principles remain highly relevant to the specific demands of dance teaching. Drawing on the ability model (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004), which originates from the foundational framework of Salovey and Mayer (1990), dance teachers need to develop the ability to recognize and manage emotional changes in themselves and their students. This requires anticipating emotional situations and adjusting their responses to the shifting demands typical of the dance studio. Furthermore, the four-branch model of emotional intelligence suggests that using emotion to support thinking helps teachers stay clear-headed in difficult moments [9], making it a tool for building a stable emotional environment where professional judgment and calm relationships are preserved even during the most tense teaching situations.

Dance teachers are driven by various professional and personal motivations, including seeking recognition from their institution, avoiding professional failure, and a desire for personal growth. These factors shape the development of the teacher's emotional culture and determine the quality of their instructional practice. The ability to manage emotions and stay emotionally stable has become increasingly important under the demands of modern education, as it supports both career success and personal well-being. Structured emotional training contributes to the development of socio-emotional skills and encourages open and respectful professional dialogue within the broader educational community.

A teacher's emotional culture represents one of the main factor shaping professional success and teaching effectiveness. According to Borozan (2021), developing autonomy and responsibility in continuous professional learning is a core priority for institutions facing today's unstable educational landscape. This focus on the emotional dimension of teaching is supported by the growing attention given to socio-emotional competences in current policy frameworks and educational research. In dance education specifically, the emotional culture of the teacher shapes teaching effectiveness and helps create a classroom atmosphere built on empathy and mutual support.

Theoretical perspectives and empirical evidence indicate that the level of emotional culture significantly affects teaching effectiveness, particularly when emotional values are deliberately included in both initial and ongoing professional development. Emotional culture is expressed through internal aspects, such as self-image, motivation, and professional knowledge, as well as through outward dimensions like emotion regulation and social awareness [2].

In today's educational environments, open communication, empathy, and emotional balance are now widely seen as essential to a healthy and effective teaching culture. This means teachers need to accurately read and express emotions in themselves and in others, and to manage those emotions in ways that support both emotional and intellectual growth [9]. In practice, this involves staying attuned to their own and their students' feelings in order to guide both their thinking and their interactions in the classroom.

In this context, Borozan (2021) emphasizes that continuous professional development depends on building and sustaining a solid foundation of emotional culture, as this supports high-quality teaching and strengthens relationships within the school community. In line with the above, the present article examines how emotional culture is integrated into educational regulatory frameworks governing dance teacher education across different geographical contexts.

Research methodology

This article applies an interdisciplinary qualitative methodology, combining regulatory document analysis, literature review, and cross-cultural comparison to investigate how emotional culture is operationalized within dance teacher education systems across diverse geographical settings.

Study Findings and Scientific Debates

The idea of emotional culture refers to the emotional climate that characterizes a given community and reflects how social life is emotionally structured in a given cultural setting. Participation in a culture therefore means experiencing shared emotions in a manner that is determined by socially established norms and expectations.

Émile Durkheim (1995, original work 1912) argues that the basic categories of human thought emerge from collective emotional experiences produced in ritual contexts, and that individuals' moral attachment to society is reinforced through participation in shared experiences of joy and suffering. Gregory Bateson (1972) develops the related concepts of *ethos*, understood as the emotional and affective tone of a culture, and *eidos*, referring to the cognitive or structural organization of cultural ideas. In this framework, *ethos* regulates emotions and instincts according to culturally specific patterns and can be compared to Pierre Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*, which describes a system of internalized dispositions shaping perception and action [3].

Rosenwein (2002) emphasizes that each community develops its own “emotional system,” which defines norms regarding which emotions are accepted, tolerated, or discouraged. These systems reflect broader social mechanisms that help regulate and shape emotional behavior within a given group. Valsiner (1998) introduces the concept of the “affect field” to explain how immediate personal emotions interact with culturally mediated emotional meanings, highlighting the fluid and context-dependent nature of emotional experience in social life. From this perspective, emotions are not only biological responses but also socially shaped processes. Through repeated and interpreted emotional experiences, individuals develop emotional schemas that structure how emotions are understood, experienced, and expressed over time.

Przybylska (2021) notes that emotional vocabulary is dynamic and sensitive to particular emotions, modes of feeling, patterns of behavior, and situational evaluations. Expressions such as “anger detracts from one's beauty,” “men should be tough,” “guys don't cry,” “good girls don't behave like that,” or “I am full of pride” illustrate how language conveys both emotional states and social norms. These examples reflect emotional vocabulary and emotional beliefs, indicating which emotions and behaviors are socially approved and how they are expected to be expressed [14].

Hochschild (1983) argues that what distinguishes culture from biology is the way emotions are drawn into social life and governed by cultural norms and unspoken ‘feeling rules.’ These rules, often invisible, shape which emotional responses are considered appropriate and how intense they should be in a given context. As a result, emotions play an important role in education: they help reinforce professional identity and build cohesion among teachers and students through shared emotional norms.

Emotional culture provides the foundational environment in which emotional competencies develop, shaped by both socialization and formal education. Within this process, emotional learning involves internalizing the emotional meanings, expressions, and vocabularies specific to a given culture. Families, schools, and broader social structures all offer models and expectations that guide how emotional competence is formed.

Strengthening emotional culture in education therefore requires integrating it deliberately into curricula, preparing teachers to recognize and respond to emotional dynamics in the classroom, and creating structured opportunities for students to practice emotional skills across different situations. According to Hochschild (1983), this need is particularly pressing in contemporary societies where social bonds are weakening and emotional expression is increasingly shaped by commercial forces.

Emotional culture can therefore be understood as a dynamic, socially constructed, and internalized system that shapes how emotions are experienced and expressed through norms, symbols, and educational practices. Developing emotional competencies in educational settings requires an interdisciplinary perspective that takes into account the cultural complexity of emotions [14].

The training of dance teachers is regulated at both national and international levels through standards and normative frameworks that define professional competencies, qualification requirements, and recognized pedagogical practices. In the Republic of Moldova, for example, these guidelines are set out in qualification standards and official documents approved by the Ministry of Education and Research, with an emphasis on competency-based training and alignment with the national regulatory framework.

As stipulated in Order 1124/2018, the Professional Competency Standards for Teachers in General Education define the set of professional competencies that a teacher is expected to possess and develop throughout their career. These standards address instructional design, learning environments, the educational process, professional development, and educational partnerships, and provide indicators and descriptors for both self-assessment and external evaluation. They serve as a reference point for both initial and continuing teacher education, including dance teacher preparation, informing curricula, professional development programs, and the assessment of teaching performance [12].

The analysis of the structural frameworks of dance pedagogy in the Republic of Moldova (Figure 1), reveals a primary orientation toward:

Figure 1. Dance Teacher Training in the Republic of Moldova

A review of national and international documents shows that while Moldova's standards provide a general framework for teacher training, international dance standards take a more specific approach, focusing on the nature of choreographic art, expressive competencies, and the emotional dimensions of the teaching profession. Incorporating these perspectives into the national system holds the potential to modernize dance teacher training and align it with the contemporary demands of arts education.

In the Republic of Moldova, dance is integrated either within the broader domain of arts education or through extracurricular systems such as arts schools encompassing music, theatre, visual arts, and dance. The main features of this model are its normative and institutional focus, a framework built around general teaching competencies, a strong emphasis on technical and methodological preparation, and little explicit attention to emotional, creative, or reflective dimensions in official documents. Dance teachers are positioned principally as specialist-instructors with responsibilities for teaching and assessment, while the role of artist-educator remains underdeveloped in explicit normative terms [11].

In Italy, dance teacher training operates through a dual system encompassing university-based and conservatory-based pathways (AFAM, Alta Formazione Artistica, Musicale e Coreutica), coordinated by the Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca. Dance is accorded the status of an autonomous artistic discipline, with clearly defined formation pathways for choreographers and dance educators. The Italian model is characterized by the integration of dance into higher artistic education through the Accademia Nazionale di Danza, a strong focus on the teacher's artistic and pedagogical identity, the connection of technical training with aesthetic practice and professional reflection, and the preparation of teachers as artists, educators, and researchers. The Italian system places particular weight on bodily culture, expressivity, the cultural and heritage dimensions of dance, and the development of creative and interpretive competencies. The dance teacher is regarded as a cultural mediator and artistic educator, beyond the function of technical instructor [10].

At the international level, professional organizations such as the National Dance Education Organization (NDEO) and educational authorities in the United States provide detailed standards for dance education and pedagogy. These standards address the professional, artistic, and pedagogical development of teachers, as well as the expressive and socio-emotional dimensions of choreographic education. Comparing these documents makes it possible to identify both common ground and key differences in how dance teacher preparation is approached, as well as emerging trends in the field.

In the United States, dance teacher preparation is among the most systematically regulated, structured through discipline-specific standards developed by the NDEO and integrated into state certification systems at the K-12 level. The defining characteristics of the American model include the existence of discipline-specific standards for dance education; an organizational focus on four artistic processes, Creating, Performing, Responding, and Connecting; the explicit integration of emotional, identity-related, and social development; and the use of professional portfolios and reflective practice. The dance teacher in the American context is conceptualized as an artist-educator and reflective practitioner who actively supports students' creative growth and socio-emotional development. The American system consistently prioritizes authentic assessment, the development of transferable skills, and differentiated instruction to meet the needs of diverse students in both school and community contexts [13].

The NDEO standards (Dance Education Standards and Professional Teaching Standards for Dance Arts) reflect a discipline-specific approach to dance education, as illustrated in Figure 2.

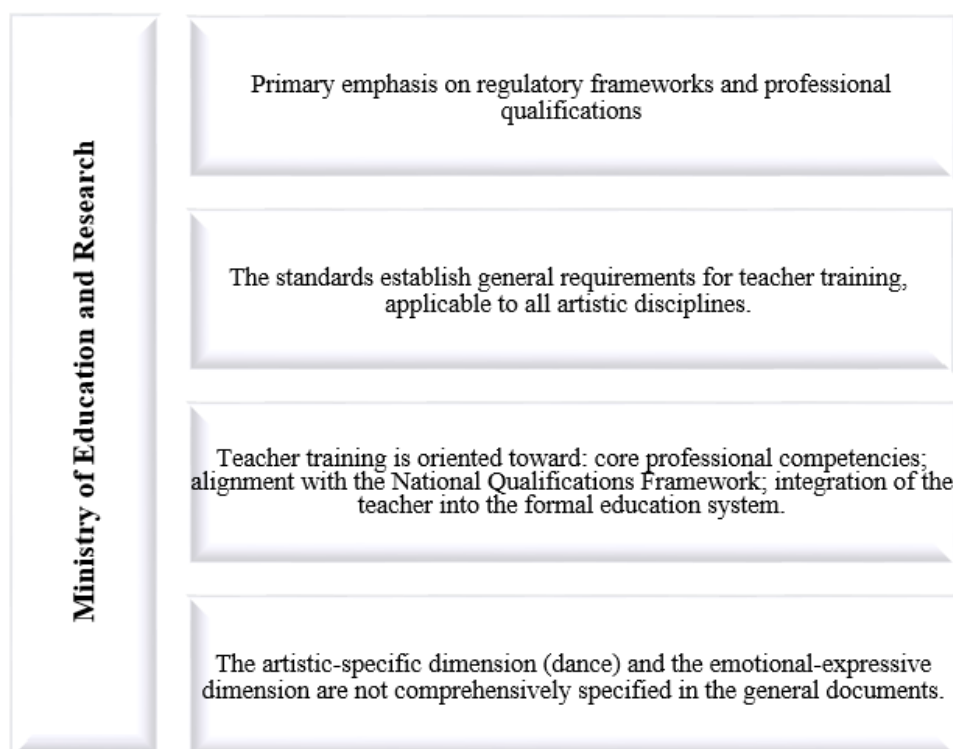


Figure 2. NDEO's Discipline-Specific Approach

The discipline-specific framework presented in Figure 2 illustrates a clear example of how professional standards can guide the development of artistic, pedagogical, and socio-emotional competencies in dance teachers, showing how clearly defined expectations and reflective practices help teachers integrate their artistic identity with pedagogical and emotional skills.

To contextualize these principles within a broader comparative perspective, Table 1 summarizes the main characteristics of dance teacher training in the Republic of Moldova, Italy, and the United States, highlighting differences in curricular status, training approaches, teacher roles, emotional integration, and assessment practices.

Table 1. Comparative Summary Analysis

Dimension	Republic of Moldova	Italy	USA
Status of Dance	Component of general arts curriculum	Independent artistic discipline (Higher Arts Education)	Discrete curricular discipline
Type of Training	Technical-prescriptive	Artistic-pedagogical	Reflective artistic-pedagogical
Main Focus	Technical and methodological proficiency	Artistic and pedagogical identity	Creativity, aesthetic expression, and socio-emotional development
Role of the Teacher	Technical instructor	Artist-pedagogue	Reflective artist-educator
Emotional Dimension	Implicit	Contextually integrated	Explicitly addressed
Assessment	Predominantly summative	Performance-based evaluation	Portfolio and authentic assessment

Conclusion

The comparison of dance teacher education models in Moldova, Italy, and the United States shows significant differences in teaching methods and artistic focus. In Moldova, teacher training mainly follows a standards-based approach based on qualification requirements and general skills. In Italy and the United States, the common view sees the dance teacher as an artist-educator. This perspective combines creative, reflective, and social-emotional aspects as main parts of professional training. Italy emphasizes dance as both cultural heritage and artistic expression. Meanwhile, the United States sees dance education as a holistic process that promotes students' personal, creative, and social-emotional growth.

Drawing on elements from both models could meaningfully help modernize dance teacher training in Moldova and bring it closer to the current needs of arts education. Dance teacher training in Moldova would therefore benefit from incorporating the development of emotional culture, the formal use of professional teaching portfolios, and the development of reflective practice to support the formation of a clear artistic identity, drawing on the pedagogical traditions of the Italian and American training models.

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Data about author:

Svetlana TALPĂ, PhD, Associate Professor, "Ion Creangă" State Pedagogical University of Chișinău.

ORCID: 0000-0001-5829-736X

E-mail: talpa.svetlana@upsc.md

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