

## **Kinetic Dialogues: The Choreomusicological Coexistence of Dance and Music in African Performance Traditions**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study examines the interconnectedness of choreomusicology in dance and music movements as equally coexistent kinetico-aesthetic phenomena. Applying qualitative interpretive approaches such as textual analysis, performance analysis, and ethnomusicological research, the thesis examines the interdependence of rhythm, embodiment, kinesics, and spatial movement in African and Western contexts, as well as in liturgical practice and modern choreography. Dance and music are two of the earliest and most interconnected art forms in human history; however, the choreomusical relationship between them has been under-theorised in the study of African and world performance. Evidence supports the thesis that dance and music originated within communal ritual performance before separating into individual art forms, and the most holistic approach to the choreomusicological has been retained in the Nigerian dance traditions of the Yoruba, Igbo, and Ebira, which maintain spiritually derived, rhythmically driven communal performance practices. Furthermore, music's kinesthetic manifestation is evident in the rhythm, pace and flow of sound and dance. In contrast, the kinesthetic quality of sound becomes evident in the visualisation of sound through bodily movement and choreographed motion. There is also the coexistence of both phenomena in the contexts of therapy, education, and the digital domain. This study provides a choreomusicological interdependence model to explain the shared performance environments of both forms and how this concept should influence performance pedagogy, curricular design, and the study of African performance.*

**Keywords:** *choreomusicology; embodiment; African aesthetics; dance-music interdependence; Yoruba performance; kinetic expression*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Dance and music are two of the oldest art forms known to humanity. Throughout cultures and time, dance and music have been utilised to communicate, worship, narrate stories, heal, and foster group identity. Though typically studied separately in academia, dance and music are inherently related forms of art based on movement and rhythm. Mason (2012) suggests that Euro-American performance tradition is a global anomaly due to its categorisation of music and dance as separate disciplines. For most performative traditions worldwide, particularly those in Africa, music and dance are organic parts of a unified whole.

Choreomusicology is the theoretical basis for this study, defined by Mason (2012) as the study of the interrelationship between sound and movement within any form of performance. It is more than just a description of music and dance occurring in the same performance; Choreomusicology explores the mutual structuration of each art form on the other. Dance translates musical impulses into visible movement, and music translates bodily impulses into audible rhythm and pattern. Neither exists as a mere accompanying or illustration of the other.

In many African cultures, the relationship between dance and music is not theoretical, but performative. In a study of the Ebira-Mattaga folk play tradition in central Nigeria, Bello (2020) showed that music and dance are not discrete elements of performance, but two modalities of a single communicative event. In the same research study, Bello found that in central Uganda, dance teachers commonly use music as their primary pedagogical tool, employing rhythms, songs, mnemonics, and drum patterns to transmit embodied kinesthetic knowledge. In these studies and many others in the fields of ethnomusicology and anthropology, music and dance are central, not marginal, to African performance education and practice.

This paper reworks and significantly expands on dance-music relations. By employing a systematic scholarly investigation, a rigorous qualitative research methodology, new theoretical contributions, and proposing an analytical model, this paper provides a framework for conceptualising dance and music. The modified title, *Kinetic Dialogues*, communicates this central argument: that dance and music do not merely coexist but actively converse with one another, continually instigating, structuring, and being structured by each other. This paper focuses on four key research objectives: (1) theorise the choreomusicological relationship between dance and music using existing literature. (2) utilise African performance traditions as focal sites for dance-music integration. (3) examine music as visualising movement and dance as sounding motion in multiple performance contexts. (4) present the Choreomusicological Interdependence Model as a framework for analysing dance-music relations in performance.

## **Theoretical and Conceptual Framework**

### ***Dance as Embodied Movement***

Dance is the purposeful and rhythmic movement of the body toward artistic expression. As one of the founders of kinesiology, Rudolf Laban claimed that movement is the foundation for dance and the most immediate means through which human beings communicate their emotional, spiritual, and other messages to one another (Laban, 1960). Laban detailed four spatial and dynamic qualities of movement: body (what is moving), effort (how the body moves), space (where it moves), and shape (the configuration of the movement). The interaction of these four movement qualities constitutes the composite text of movement that the audience perceives in dance.

Hanna (1987) extended this analysis by theorising that dance is a primary mode of nonverbal communication, operating on several layers of meaning simultaneously (somatic, social and symbolic). The body is not simply a mechanism for performing choreographic instructions; it is a semiotic device that produces meaning through its physical position and configuration in space, its timing and tempo, and its connection to music. This theory aligns with an examination of African performance traditions, in which meaning and signification are embedded within a culture's specific understandings of embodied movement.

The notion of style as a key element of dance analysis, first presented by Kaeppler (1978), is useful for understanding dance's role as a mode of cultural signification. Style in dance can convey social relations, cultural meanings, and community values beyond mere aesthetic appreciation. The social and political dimensions of style are highly relevant to understanding African dance traditions, where movement style often conveys social hierarchy, religious ideology, and membership in specific ethnic or kin groups.

### **Music as Kinetically Organised Sound**

Music is humanly organised sound (Blacking, 1973). This definition emphasises music's social and cultural embeddedness. It is more than simply the acoustic properties of sounds organised together. Rather, it is inextricably a part of the experience and culture of the societies that create and consume it.

According to Merriam (1964), the author of the seminal work in the anthropology of music, music is inextricably linked with the other social activities and behaviours within which it is embedded. He discusses the multifaceted functions of music: emotion, enjoyment, entertainment, communication, symbolization, physical response, pressure to conform to norms, affirmation of social institutions, affirmation of religious beliefs, and a contributor to cultural continuity and social integration. Merriam's latter three points of social integration, continuity of culture, and

affirmation of social structures are central to this discussion on African dance and music traditions.

The kinetic organisation of music is analysed in terms of rhythmic pattern, with Agawu (2006) demonstrating how African music patterns and rhythms stimulate specific kinetic responses. Agawu's analysis of the standard pattern in West African rhythm demonstrates how the bell pattern provides not only a sonic but also a kinetic reference for all performing musicians and dancers. The rhythmic soundfield of African music creates a virtual space of organised movement, which performers can interpret physically, with dancers responding and contributing to the kinetically active sonority.

### **Choreo-musicology as Analytical Lens**

#### *Understanding Sound and Movement in Dance*

Mason (2012) coined the term choreomusicology and established it as a discipline for the study of the relationship between sound and movement across all performance genres. The study of choreomusicology begins with the idea that most performance traditions worldwide cannot be fully understood through analysis of music or dance in their own realms. It was this need to overcome this lacuna that led to the creation of a choreomusicological discourse in the scholarly sphere. In order for us to be able to study the music in its relationship with dance and comprehend its structural composition and its contribution to the dance, and simultaneously study the dance in relation with the music, and apprehend its structural relation to the music, we need two critical challenges addressed at same time as proposed by Jordan (2011), who notes the dual nature of any scholarly analysis of the sound and movement relationship in dance. This double challenge necessitated the emergence of an interdisciplinary discipline that incorporates training in musicology, danceology, and ethnomusicology to effectively account for the dance-music relationship as it is realised in the performance context. African dance pedagogy has also experienced a choreomusicological approach. Mabingo (2020) applies a choreomusicological lens to study how traditional teachers in Uganda utilise various musical elements, including songs, mnemonics, and instrumental sounds, as teaching devices. This, it was found, serves to scaffold the learner towards an embodied knowledge through sound. It is, therefore, evident that sound and movement relationship in the African context exists as both a pedagogic and a performative practice, reinforcing Blacking's (1973) argument about their interconnectedness.

### ***Embodiment Theory and Kinesics***

The understanding of how sound and movement interact, and the analysis of their implications, are underpinned by two theoretical paradigms that address two critical components of dance-music relations. These two paradigms, namely Embodiment Theory and Kinesics, are intertwined and mutually beneficial in the analysis of any dance-music relation, particularly those in the African performance context. Embodiment theory which discusses sound and movement relation in terms of the direct influence of sound on movement, or in terms of body-mediated perception of sound in music-dance relation, asserts that not only can music be perceived by means of physical movement and kinetic experience, but that the very nature of the perception and response of the body to music, even without apparent intentional motion, shapes the musical experience. Studies by Burger & Toiviainen (2018) on the relationship between electronic dance music features and involuntary body motion in listeners provided evidence for this claim by showing the systematic impact of factors such as rhythmicity, spectral flux, and pulse clarity on embodied movements. This thus affirms that the relationship is based on more than cultural convention and is a matter of perceptual and motor processes.

Kinesics, which concerns itself with bodily movements as a communicational act, was developed by Birdwhistell (1970) and involves the description and analysis of the dynamics of body motion and gesture as they are used to communicate messages below the observer's consciousness in any dance tradition. A kinesic dimension of body-sound relationship in any performance context requires the precise and fluid synchronisation between movement qualities and sonic organisation on one hand, and symbolic articulation by the movement and sound qualities on the other hand, in order to constitute what Hanna (1987) terms a multilayered communicational system which integrates gesture, affect and meaning. Drewal (1991) further applied the notion of embodiment to an analysis of Yoruba dance-music relations and found that the body not only participates in communicating the meaning of an utterance but also constitutes the spiritual and social reality it represents. This conceptualisation has a direct bearing on the study of the coexistence of sound and movement in the African context as a unified spiritual and aesthetic act rather than disparate elements.

### **METHOD**

This study is an interpretivist qualitative research method comprising three complementary approaches. First is a systematic literature review of research and scholarship on the dance-music relationship across a multiplicity of disciplines, including musicology, ethnomusicology, danceology, anthropology, and performance studies. This has been achieved through searches of databases such as JSTOR, Google Scholar, RILM, and African Journals Online using keywords such as

choreomusicology, dance-music relation, African performance aesthetics, embodiment and music, and kinesics and dance. Priority has been given to peer-reviewed studies and seminal texts of scholarly works, particularly those that relate to the performances and traditions on the African continent, with emphasis on the Nigerian context. Secondly, performance analysis based on analytical frameworks of choreomusicology (Mason,2012), Laban Movement Analysis (Laban,1960), and the study of African performance (Agawu,2006; Nketia,1974) is employed to examine the structural, aesthetic, and cultural features of dance-music relationships as realised in the respective traditions. Lastly, document analysis (Bowen, 2009) focuses on ethnographic studies, performance documents, and secondary scholarly literature on dance-music relations across various contexts. By combining these three methods, the essay aims to provide an interpretive analysis of the coexistence of sound and movement, drawing on both theoretical and practical knowledge of the phenomenon. Trustworthiness has been ensured through theoretical saturation of the literature, coherence in analysis, and triangulation of evidence from sources. At the same time, a critical awareness of the subjectivity and potential bias in interpretive research, grounded in the scholars' lived experiences in the field, is recognised and acknowledged.

## **Results and Discussion**

### ***Theme 1: Historical Trajectories of Dance-Music Coexistence***

The systematic literature review is consistent in asserting that dance and music have historically been presented as simultaneous rather than as components of human performance. In their studies of the history of music and dance, both Sachs (1937) and subsequent theorists have concluded that dance and music originated in the communal ritual practices of prehistoric human communities, in which bodily movement and rhythmic sound are integral parts of the whole performance experience. There are no musicians and dancers, only performers engaged in a group event where sounds and motion are part of the same spiritual and communal affair.

Throughout the ancient Egyptian, Greek, and Roman cultures, dance and music have always been parts of celebrations, religious ceremonies, and theatrical performances. Greek theatrical tradition offers an interesting point of inquiry for our historical examination because it combines sung chorus, rhythmic movement, and dramatic speech within a single performance form, anticipating our modern genre forms such as opera, ballet, and musical theatre. Aristotle, in the *Poetics*, in his discussion about performance, regarded rhythm as a commonality linking the three artistic forms: music, poetry and dance, pointing out what we now call the choreomusicological framework common to these three art forms.

During the medieval and Renaissance periods, dance and music became central to court entertainment and liturgy, and were established as art requiring collaboration with music in formal dance traditions. Ballet de cour, part of Renaissance entertainment, brought together dance, music, and poetry in court spectacles that foreshadowed the development of formal ballet as an art form in which choreographic and musicological integrity cannot be separated. These observations confirm that the separate academic disciplines of dance and music are more of a recent, culturally particular development than the Norm, as observed by Mason (2012).

These historical observations support the study's central thesis: the choreomusicological relationship is not a secondary nor derivative one; it is the primal state of both art forms. The segregation of dance and music into Euro-American academic spheres is institutionally and disciplinarily specific and not part of performative realities in many world traditions.

### ***Theme 2: African performance tradition as the seminal site of dance-music interplay***

The most sustained and organic manifestation of dance-music synchronicity is found in African performance tradition, and this is extensively documented. The fundamental principle of African music aesthetics is the integration of music with dance, drama, poetry, and visual arts within a complete performance situation (Nketia, 1974). African performance tradition is intrinsically multimodal; separating any of the art forms will create an incompleteness in the event.

Thompson (1974) examines the relationship between dance-music in West African art and performance and the aesthetic of cool: maintaining a spiritually and artistically cool state in a high-intensity performance that demands maximum concentration and skill in sonic and kinetic production. According to Thompson, the convergence of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic artistic expression is a key feature in the aesthetic realm of West African performance traditions.

Bello (2020) presents concrete ethnographical study of such relationship in Ebira-Mattaga folk play performed in central Nigeria, where music and dance do not merely have a role of secondary component of performance event, but are part and parcel of the same interactive communication event where music dictates the performance movement (both audience and performers movement) while performers movement is also used by musicians as cue and impetus for improvisational decisions in the dynamic nature of the whole performance, "without the continuous interplay, neither the music nor the dance can perform its communicative role" (Bello, 2020). Odusanya (2025) explores the implications of choreomusicological interplay in choral practice from indigenous Yorùbá dance-music idioms like Apala and Juju to formal choral conducting, where the indigenous use of gesture, bodily clues for polyrhythms,

and call and response are derived from their communicative efficacy due to the integral nature of the idiom. Similarly, Odusanya & Idolor (2023) document how these conventions transcend different performance contexts without compromising their communicative integrity.

The tradition of the Yoruba talking drum provides the most overt example of this choreomusicological synergy. The talking drum conveys the tonal and rhythmic patterns of the Yoruba language to the trained dancers, who interpret them not only as musical clues but also as spoken language embedded in musical idiom; hence, the dance of the talking drum performer is a kinetic equivalent of the musical language the performer uses. This dynamic relation between talking drum performance and dance not only signifies a choreomusicological relationship but also an actual manifestation of it (Agawu, 2006).

### ***Theme 3: Dance Movement in Music: When Sound Becomes Motion***

Analysis of music movement in dance discusses how music, in and of itself, inherently possesses and implies kinetic content. This does not refer to a purely perceptual phenomenon through which listeners imagine bodily movement while hearing music. Burger & Toiviainen (2018) found that certain musical parameters elicit systematic patterns of bodily movement in listeners without acculturation or prior instruction, thus confirming that the kinetic content inherent in music is not simply cultural but is also partly tied to the human perception-motor system.

The kinetic content of music in the Western art music tradition has been explicitly understood in compositional practice since at least the Baroque era, when dance forms such as the sarabande, gigue, allemande, and courante were adapted as models for instrumental music that retained the rhythmic profiles of their dance precursors, even in instrumental compositions without actual dancing. This practice reveals that music does not merely accompany dance but takes internalised dance kinetic structures into compositional building blocks, continuing in the classical suite and sonata traditions as a choreomusicological relationship operating entirely within the purely musical discourse.

In African traditions, the kinetic content of music is far more explicit and immediately functional. As Nketia (1974) documented, specific drum rhythms in various West African traditions may not simply provide a rhythmic backdrop for dancing; rather, they function as instructions for performing a specific movement. In such cases, the music-movement relationship provides an example of a sonic practice that itself acts as a kinetic text, because the specific drumming patterns specify a movement vocabulary rather than simply a tempo or mood, as they might in the West.

The kinetic nature of music is largely defined by tempo. As aforementioned, fast tempos evoke vigorous, explosive bodily actions; slow tempos, more sustained

and flowing motions; synecopation encourages more complex, asymmetrical movements. While these correlations are stable enough across cultures to suggest some basis in the human perception-motor system, the actual movement forms vary sufficiently among traditions to suggest that cultural conventions play an integral role in their particular realisation. A choreomusicological analysis of tempo must consider both the universal relationships among the brain, body, and music and culturally specific conventions of dance.

The kinetic quality of music can also be associated with its affective content. Worship services may inspire rocking and raising, while martial anthems prompt parading. Celebration music typically calls for dance. These affectively charged motions illustrate that music does not merely comment upon or represent dance, from a vantage point of externality, but is itself an instigator of bodily movement, an impetus which the analysis terms kinetic energy.

#### ***Theme 4: Music Movement in Dance: When Motion Visualises Sound***

Choreomusicological analysis of music movement in dance takes on a new dimension: that of how a dance simultaneously represents the structure of the music in a visual, tangible form. When choreographers respond to the rhythmic and syntactic structures of music, they translate musical shapes into choreography. The phrase structure, rhythm, dynamics and melody of music take on visible, kinetic manifestation in the body as shape and motion; dance becomes visual music.

Choreomusicological analysis of the dance-music relationship faces what Jordan (2011) calls a double challenge: a successful interpretation of the music in the dance necessitates understanding both the music and the choreography fully, including how each parameter is used to realise specific qualities of the other. Analysis of choreomusicological conversations in ballet led Jordan to discover an ongoing interaction between composer and choreographer; the music and the choreography come into dialogue, and neither may be fully comprehended without reference to its interlocutor.

Oduşanya (2025) has analysed a case where the kinetic content of a Yoruba choral tradition is made tangible through gesture; by adapting indigenous Yoruba gestural communication, Conductors organise the choir as a visual, kinetically animated space that brings to light the spiritual dimension of choral music more effectively than Western gestural forms. Indigenous gestures not only embody the music's rhythm but also convey its cultural context, spiritual message, and the relationship between the musicians and the audience. This finding illustrates the importance of the kinetic manifestation of music in African traditions.

A useful way of testing the relationship between music and dance is through the analysis of Silent Dance. Silent dance does not rely on external music for its

rhythmic or phrasing organisation. It demonstrates that choreography can internalise a particular kind of music so deeply that it can be performed without music. Such a dance suggests a very intimate relationship between music and bodily practice; a choreography which is intrinsically imbued with a specific kind of musicality.

### ***Theme 5: Theatrical, Liturgical, and Contemporary Dimensions***

The most clearly institutionalised examples of coexistence between music and dance can be seen in the West's theatre tradition. Musical theatre and opera, on the one hand, incorporate both singing and dancing, as well as instrumental and vocal accompaniment. They employ each component in service of narrative and affective content. Transitioning between these forms serves a particular function within musical theatre. For example, a dramatic monologue might transition into a song in order to portray a profound moment of reflection or realisation, followed by a dance section that illustrates a specific feeling or action.

Ballet, on the other hand, can be seen as the most formally realised dance-music relationship in Western performance practices. Structure, dynamics, tempo and rhythm in the music of a ballet determine the specific form, quality, and temporal relationship of the choreography. Ballet music and choreography have evolved, inextricably, as a composite whole.

In liturgical performance, both within African and Western religious traditions, music and dance take on a spiritual dimension of interaction. The use of music and dance in African ritual, as analysed by Drewal (1991), is an important tool for mediating between the human and the supernatural realm. Possession rites, harvest festivals, and coronation ceremonies all use a specific combination of music and dance that corresponds to a specific spirit and function. Performing a rite without proper musical and choreographic elements may render it ineffective.

The influence of technology continues to push the limits of the dance-music relationship. Electronic music and digital choreography can mimic acoustic performances, produce sounds never before achievable through manual instruments, and create rhythms that could not be realised in live settings. This does not suggest that new technological capabilities are separating music and dance, but rather that the choreomusicological relationship is being transformed by technology.

### ***Theme 6: Therapeutic, Educational, and Philosophical Implications***

The choreomusicological relationship has been applied therapeutically, giving rise to distinct professions, Dance-Movement Therapy and Music Therapy, both of which utilise this relationship in their respective disciplines. The success of Dance-Movement Therapy in addressing psychological and physical issues hinges on the

embodied, rhythmically structured character of movement, which shares fundamental properties with music. When these two art forms are brought together for therapy, they create unique effects unattainable through either art form alone: increased emotional expression, enhanced bodily awareness, greater participation and engagement from participants, and increased accessibility to deeper psychological experiences through non-verbal channels.

The choreomusicological analysis of these phenomena informs educational applications. Since dance and music share structural similarities but have been historically segregated into separate areas of education, this segregation may leave students proficient in one art form but lacking a comprehensive understanding of the other's contribution to it. As previously noted in Mabingo's (2020) study of African dance pedagogy, the integration of music and dance is standard practice, with music serving as the primary pedagogical tool through which dance skills are transmitted. This pedagogical concept needs to be incorporated into formal education via a restructuring of the curriculum.

Oduşanya and Idolor's (2023) research has a similar implication: in Nigerian choral conducting, they found that conductors knowledgeable about choreomusicological conventions (the system of gestures and rhythmic pattern through which Yoruba performance traditions combine sound and movement) deliver stronger ensemble performances and more culturally relevant musical results. Their findings suggest that integrating knowledge of dance and music pedagogically will have positive effects, leading to better performances in the professional world, making curricular reform a viable goal.

On a philosophical level, the interplay between dance and music reflects a more general human tendency to have what we can call a holistic aesthetic experience—the experience of sound and movement as dimensions of one event, rather than two discrete sensory stimuli. This is cross-culturally relevant. All the performance traditions in this study exhibit a similar tendency. The natural audience tendency to move their bodies, tapping feet, swaying, etc. That Burger and Toiviainen (2018) observed is evidence of this deeply ingrained tendency toward integrating movement and sound, just as Drewal's (1991) research on Yoruba performance and Mabingo's (2020) work in Uganda illustrate. This universality leads us to believe the choreomusicological relationship holds some fundamental truth about human perception and performance.

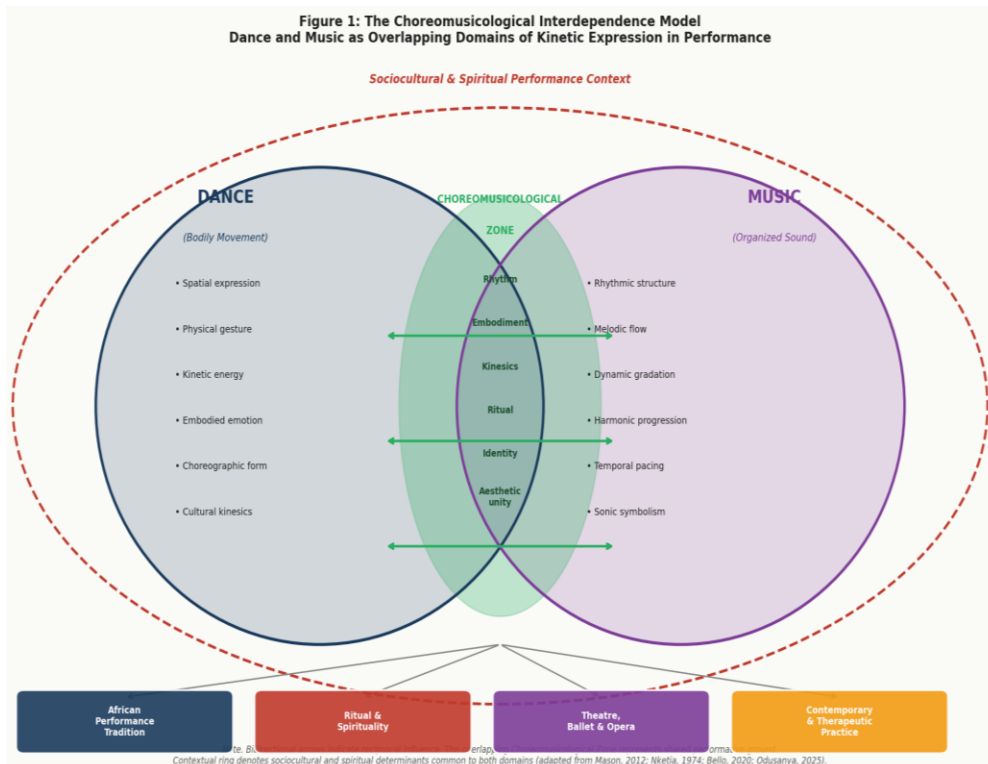
### **The Choreomusicological Interdependence Model**

The Choreomusicological Interdependence Model (CIM; Figure 1) visually summarises this study's findings as an analytical tool that models the choreomusicological relationship. It represents dance and music as two co-dependent

fields of kinetic expression within the shared realm of sociocultural and spiritual performance contexts. Three points about the model must be articulated. First, the middle area, representing the Choreomusicological Zone, symbolises the shared space in which the two arts meet and interact. It is not just a physical space where the two occur at the same time, but rather the space in which their particular characteristics intertwine: rhythm-a shared formal element for both, embodiment-the physical experience of their unification, kinesics-the channel through which movement and sound together create meaning, ritual-the historically and spiritually rich environment in which these two art forms are integrated most fundamentally, identity-the social and cultural aspect being conveyed, and aesthetic unity-the final experiential result of their combination.

Second, the arrows connecting the dance and music domains represent how each art influences the other. Music affects movement style, overall feeling, rhythmic organisation, and structure, while dance affects timing, range of emotion, rhythmic improvisation, and formal development in music. These interactions, not only theoretical but also empirically observed in case studies such as those presented by Waterman (1990) in juju and Bello (2020) in Epira-Mattaga performance traditions, demonstrate the live, immediate nature of choreomusicological integration between performers rather than an art form planned from the start.

Third, the application domains below the model-African Performance Tradition, Ritual and Spirituality, Theatre, Ballet and Opera, and Contemporary and Therapeutic Practice-are the four cultural and institutional spheres in which the CIM may be utilised as an analytic tool. This is not an exhaustive list, but rather the four spheres most important to the topic of choreomusicology in this study.



**Figure 1:** The Choreomusicological Interdependence Model (CIM). Researchers' Creative Concept, 2026

Dance and Music are depicted as converging fields of kinetic practices united by a Choreomusicological Zone characterized by rhythm, embodiment, kinesics, ritual, identity, and aesthetic unification. Bidirectional arrows highlight how structure reciprocally influences both domains. The outer dashed circle denotes the shared sociocultural and sacred context in which performance occurs. The four application domains exemplify the main performance environments in which the model can be applied. Adapted from Mason (2012), Nketia (1974), Bello (2020) and Odusanya (2025). The CIM advances two major theoretical claims: The integration of dance and music in performance transcends mere juxtaposition, as the Choreomusicological Zone mutually structuralises them. Moreover, the exact manifestation of this integration varies across performance traditions, but, in essence, it is evident cross-culturally in all examined traditions. This claim corroborates Blacking's (1973) proposal that any organised human sound should be understood in relation to the material, social, and cultural conditions of its production, in which human bodies are both the subject and the object of sound in the course of its production and consumption.

## **CONCLUSION**

The main argument of this study is that dance and music are not just separate but structurally interdependent art forms. Through systematic literature review, performance analysis and document analysis, six broad themes were revealed: dance and music are part of an art tradition that originates in community performance contexts; their strongest integration can be found in African performance contexts; music can express movement; dance can visualize sound; there are differing choreomusicological interactions in theatrical, liturgical, contemporary and ritual settings; and their therapeutic, philosophical and educational implications are born out of this communal performance context. A Choreomusicological Interdependence Model (CIM) is presented to articulate these links. It proposes that the choreomusicological intersection lies in the Choreomusicological Zone, which encompasses rhythm, embodiment, kinesics, ritual, identity, and aesthetic unity. This study makes three scholarly contributions: first, to propose choreomusicology as a field in which African traditions can be analysed, not just through a Western perspective; second, to draw on evidence from Nigeria and the rest of Africa to support this theoretical argument; and third, to propose an analytical and visual model of choreomusicology. It concludes by arguing that choreomusicological interdependence should be understood through an ethnographic perspective within the framework of African performance practices. The CIM would therefore have strong applicability in empirical studies of African traditions such as Yoruba Bata, Igbo Egwu and Ebira-Mattaga theatre, as well as music and dance pedagogy in Nigeria's art education sector.

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