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# TEACHING BEYOND TECHNIQUE: THE EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS OF BRAZILIAN JIU-JITSU IN BUILDING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS

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## Abstract

The article examines the role of Brazilian jiu-jitsu in the development of emotional intelligence and leadership qualities. The impact of regular training on self-awareness, emotion management, and interpersonal skills is assessed. The main purpose of the work is to study the contribution of Brazilian jiu-jitsu to the formation of leadership qualities such as responsibility, confidence, and the ability to make decisions in stressful situations.

The methodology of the work is based on qualitative approaches: observations, interviews with practicing athletes, and analysis of theoretical models of emotional intelligence. These methods allow us to establish the influence of martial arts on personal development. Scientific articles published by the author in the public domain, as well as materials that are on the Internet, were used as sources, which made it possible to comprehensively consider the topic.

The results confirm that Brazilian jiu-jitsu classes contribute to strengthening emotional stability, developing communication skills, and developing decision-making strategies in conditions of uncertainty. Training has an impact on controlling reactions in difficult situations, which affects the ability to interact in a team and solve problems.

The article will be useful for teachers, coaches, psychologists, and researchers studying the impact of sports on the development of emotional and social skills. The conclusion emphasizes the role of Brazilian jiu-jitsu as a tool for the formation of leadership qualities and the development of emotional intelligence.

The contribution to science is to highlight in the work the features inherent in jiu-jitsu in the field of intelligence and leadership development. The reviewed scientific papers confirm that regular practice helps to understand your feelings, manage emotional states, and analyze the experiences of other people. Participants learn to keep cool in stressful situations, cope with internal feelings, and build trusting relationships.

The training process develops leadership qualities. Working with mentors strengthens confidence, builds responsibility, and improves decision-making skills. Team training creates the conditions for practicing interaction skills, which are important for the successful completion of collective tasks.

**KEYWORDS:** Brazilian jiu-jitsu, emotional intelligence, leadership qualities, sports, personal development, social skills.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu (BJJ) is perceived as an art that emphasizes physical conditioning and the mastery of self-defense techniques. In recent decades, its educational value, extending beyond the purely technical aspects, has gained recognition. Training in BJJ involves a focus on physical exercises and the development of psycho-emotional skills such as self-awareness, resilience, and leadership abilities. These competencies contribute to athletic progress, social adaptation, and career development.

The relevance of this article lies in the insufficient exploration of BJJ's role as a tool for developing emotional intelligence (EI) and leadership qualities, despite the growing interest in these topics within both scientific and practical domains. Emotional intelligence, encompassing self-regulation, empathy, and interpersonal interaction, represents a crucial factor in personal and professional growth. There is a pressing need to analyze how BJJ training facilitates the cultivation of these skills.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of BJJ on the development of emotional intelligence, and leadership qualities, and the educational benefits provided by this discipline beyond its technical training.

## **METHODS**

Scientific studies on BJJ highlight several directions, each addressing specific aspects of how this sport influences personal development. The primary objective of most articles is to analyze the impact of training on emotional regulation, communication, self-discipline, and leadership qualities.

The work by Sugden J. T. [1] focuses on how BJJ training strengthens emotional well-being and fosters social connections. Rinderer M. [7] explores the application of this sport in the therapy of law enforcement officers dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder. The study by Bueno J. C. B. et al. [4] examines child-focused programs aimed at stress reduction, improved discipline, and better

behavior in educational settings.

Research by Andreato L. V. et al. [2] and Branco B. H. M. et al. [3] describes changes in hormonal profiles, perceptions of fatigue, and assessments of physical activity. These findings provide deeper insight into the mechanisms of the training process. The study by Del Vecchio F. B., Gondim D. F., and Arruda A. C. P. [6] analyzes athletes' movements, highlighting differences caused by individual experience and fighting style.

The work of Andrade A. et al. [5] investigates the effects of training on mood stabilization, anxiety reduction, and improved concentration, which are essential for maintaining a steady state in competitive environments. Research by Luiz Henrique da Silva et al. [8] emphasizes training methodologies, focusing on strategic and individualized approaches that help develop skills and achieve athletic goals.

Despite the breadth of research, several areas require further exploration. The question of key factors shaping positive outcomes remains unresolved. There is insufficient information about the effects of training on individuals from different age categories and social groups. Topics related to professional growth are scarcely addressed. Moreover, the analysis of gender and cultural differences in the perception and application of acquired skills is lacking. A deeper exploration of these areas could broaden the understanding of the role of this martial art in shaping a well-rounded personality.

The methodology employed in this study involved analyzing scientific publications available on the Internet.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu integrates physical activity with psychological aspects, emphasizing tactics over physical strength. Unlike other martial arts that focus on the application of force, BJJ fosters the ability to control the body under uncertain conditions by employing a strategic approach. This requires the development of cognitive skills such as

planning, forecasting, and adaptation [1]. Table 1 outlines the features of BJJ in developing emotional intelligence and leadership qualities.

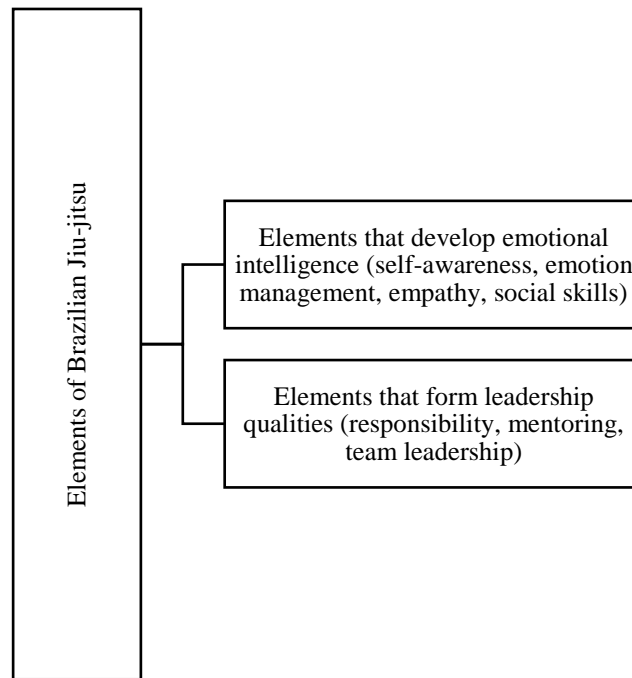
**Table 1**

**Features of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu in the Development of Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Qualities [1,5,8]**

Features	Development of Emotional Intelligence	Development of Leadership Qualities
Awareness of Emotions	Ability to control fear, anger, and frustration in stressful situations on the mat.	Capacity to remain calm and inspire others.
Empathy	Constant physical contact enhances understanding of partners and their intentions.	Improvement of interpersonal communication within a team.
Emotion Management	Development of self-control by overcoming challenging situations during training.	Ability to motivate oneself and the team under stress.
Social Skills	Team training fosters better interaction with diverse individuals.	Building trust and communication within the group.
Self-Motivation	Setting and achieving personal goals despite challenges.	Creating a vision and maintaining long-term motivation.
Conflict Resolution	Teaches how to handle aggression and balance competition with collaboration.	Decision-making in high-pressure situations.
Respect for Partners and Coaches	Respect is instilled through rituals, traditions, and rules.	A leader sets an ethical example for others.
Development of Patience	Continuous practice and gradual mastery of techniques promote long-term thinking.	Demonstration of perseverance and readiness to learn.

BJJ contributes to comprehensive personal development, fostering skills applicable in training, daily activities, and professional endeavors. This

marital art cultivates emotional maturity, leadership potential, and the ability to interact effectively with others [6]. The elements of BJJ are illustrated in Figure 1.



**Fig. 1. Elements of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu [6].**

Emotional intelligence develops through regular practice. Sparring, competition, and partner work teach individuals to recognize their emotions, understand their impact on behavior, and regulate their internal state. For instance, when an athlete encounters a challenging situation, they maintain composure, assess the environment, and make rational decisions. These skills are also valuable in daily life situations requiring calmness and self-control.

Training involves close contact with other participants, enhancing the ability to understand others' emotions and actions. Success on the mat depends on considering the partner's state. For example, experienced fighters teach beginners to adapt their actions and create a conducive environment for mastering techniques, fostering productive interaction.

Leadership qualities are strengthened through personal accountability for achievements. Training and competition teach individuals that results are a product of effort. Senior students often assist juniors, sharing knowledge and supporting their

learning process. This promotes mentorship, patience, and organizational skills.

Mistakes serve as tools for self-improvement, fostering resilience and encouraging continuous growth. Failures demonstrate that setbacks are part of the learning process, helping to advance and adjust strategies.

Discipline, focus, and planning become integral to training. Participants study techniques, learn new elements, and systematically achieve their goals. This instills the habit of structuring actions and completing tasks.

The philosophy of the sport emphasizes respect for others, regardless of their skill level or status. On the training mat, everyone is treated equally. This cultivates respect, fosters responsibility, and strengthens self-confidence.

During training, participants face various stressful situations that demand self-control and focus on problem-solving without succumbing to emotions. This experience builds resilience, which is essential for emotional development. BJJ creates opportunities to work through internal struggles,

fostering the development of all components of emotional intelligence.

BJJ enhances self-regulation skills, enabling effective emotional management in everyday life. The ability to maintain focus, and avoid panic or aggression under physical and emotional stress is crucial not only in competitive sports but also in resolving conflicts within social environments.

Empathy in the context of BJJ is the ability to sense a partner's actions, anticipate their intentions, and perceive emotional reactions during training. These skills are essential not only for successful technique execution but also for safety. The ability to observe a partner, recognize their objectives, and sense the "boundary" of interaction enhances emotional receptivity, contributing to the development of social intelligence.

From a leadership perspective, BJJ fosters strategic thinking, responsibility, and initiative. Mental preparation involves solving technical problems and engaging in self-reflection, which supports the development of leadership qualities. Leaders, like BJJ practitioners, often face situations requiring consideration of multiple factors that influence the outcome [3,7].

Mentorship in BJJ plays a significant role in shaping leadership skills. Experienced athletes serve as mentors for beginners, promoting teamwork, knowledge transfer, and trust-building. This interaction encompasses both technical and psychological dimensions. A leader in such an environment is not someone who gives orders but one who supports, motivates, and guides others, creating conditions for their growth.

Techniques in BJJ rely on principles such as utilizing an opponent's energy, calculating force, and analyzing situations. Emphasis is placed on precise movements and the effective application of leverage, enabling goals to be achieved with minimal effort. For example, an athlete gains an advantage in a match through sequential actions and precise positional choices while avoiding unnecessary energy expenditure.

Each technique involves steps aimed at gaining a

controlling position. This approach requires analyzing and anticipating an opponent's actions and calculating the sequence of moves. The skills of planning actions and evaluating situations develop systematic thinking and the ability to concentrate on achieving results.

The practice also teaches resilience in high-pressure situations. Athletes focus on proper breathing and control of their emotional state, enabling them to make balanced decisions even under significant stress. These skills are applicable in everyday life, aiding in effective stress management.

A key element of training is studying an opponent's tactics. Observing movements and analyzing behavior develop situational assessment skills and improve the understanding of an opponent's intentions. These abilities lay the foundation for effective interaction in various areas of life.

Training includes mentorship, where experienced participants share knowledge to help newcomers adapt to the discipline. This format develops skills in conveying information, teaching how to explain complex concepts clearly, fostering leadership qualities, and strengthening team spirit.

Ethical principles play a significant role. Respect for partners, discipline, and the pursuit of improvement create a culture of interaction based on trust. The opponent is seen as a partner who contributes to growth.

The learning process emphasizes continuous development. Every stage of training becomes an opportunity for analysis and improvement, facilitating progress not only in sports but also in life.

The principles applied in training are reflected across various domains. The ability to manage emotions, plan actions effectively, analyze behavior, and foster collaboration forms a foundation for achieving goals [2,5].

Below, Table 2 outlines the advantages and disadvantages of BJJ in developing emotional intelligence and leadership qualities.

**Table 2**  
**Advantages and Disadvantages of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu in Developing Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Qualities (compiled by the author)**

Aspect	Advantages	Disadvantages
Emotional Intelligence		
Emotion Management	- Development of self-control in stressful situations.	- Constant pressure may lead to emotional burnout for some individuals.
Empathy	- Frequent sparring fosters understanding of emotions and partner intentions.	- Empathy remains limited to physical interactions and may not always translate outside the training environment.
Social Interaction	- Development of communication skills through interaction with various partners.	- Some individuals may focus excessively on competition, reducing attention to teamwork.
Self-Awareness	- Opportunity to recognize strengths and weaknesses in both physical and emotional dimensions.	- Significant time and effort are required for deep self-reflection.
Leadership Qualities		
Conflict Resolution	- Ability to make quick decisions in uncertain situations.	- May foster an aggressive leadership style.
Teamwork	- Encourages respect for others and collaboration in training or competitions.	- Competitive aspects may detract from teamwork efforts.
Mentorship	- Opportunity to teach beginners, fostering mentorship skills.	- Not everyone can successfully transition from the role of a student to a mentor.
Responsibility Development	- Necessity to take responsibility for one's actions.	- Mistakes during training may lead to demotivation.

Thus, the practice of Jiu-Jitsu transcends being merely a physical activity, becoming a pathway to self-awareness, character strengthening, and the development of effective communication skills. This process enhances self-understanding, enables well-reasoned decision-making, and fosters the building of trustful relationships.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that BJJ influences both physical development and psychological aspects of personality. BJJ practice fosters emotional intelligence by enhancing self-awareness, developing emotional regulation skills, and strengthening empathy. Participation in training sessions is associated with the development of leadership qualities, including



confidence, decision-making in stressful situations, and responsibility.

The analysis revealed that BJJ training promotes social maturity through its emphasis on interaction and collaboration. These processes enhance teamwork skills and consideration for others' feelings. Emotional resilience developed through practice aids in adapting to changes and overcoming personal and professional challenges.

In conclusion, this study confirms that BJJ extends beyond traditional martial arts, serving as an educational practice that impacts both physical and psycho-emotional development. This highlights the importance of incorporating sports practices into educational and psychological programs aimed at fostering social and emotional competencies.

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