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The Benefits of Psychodrama in Attachment Resilience in Emotionally Immature Adolescents

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Abstract

The article argues, theoretically and empirically, that psychodrama – used as an integrative method (role play, staging, symbolic expression) and centered on the relationship with parents, especially the father figure – promotes attachment resilience in adolescents. In a test-retest design with an experimental group and a control group (total N = 24, age 16–18 years), the psychodrama intervention produced: (a) significant increases in the secure attachment style (RSQ) and IPPA indicators for the relationship with parents; (b) robust improvements in emotional intelligence skills (INEM), especially self-regulation; (c) consistent reductions in maladaptive traits (PID-5) and clinical vulnerability (suicidality indicator, Friedmann); (d) reductions in self-deprecation (ASSI). The specific mechanisms of psychodrama (role reversal, "mirror", double, "surplus reality") are discussed, the ways in which they increase the flexibility of internal working models and the resilience of attachment, as well as the methodological limits of the study.

Keywords: Psychodrama, Attachment Resilience, Adolescence, Emotional Intelligence, Self-Regulation, Co-Regulation, Family, Integrative Method.

Introduction

Adolescence is a period of accelerated neuro-psychosocial reorganization, in which early attachment strategies are challenged by new developmental tasks (autonomy, peer relationships, identity). In this context, we define attachment resilience as the adolescent's ability to recalibrate, strengthen, or transform their internal working models of attachment when they benefit from secure relational contexts, with protective effects on emotional self-regulation and social functioning. The concepts of "resilience" as a common process ("ordinary magic") and "earned security" support the idea that attachment trajectories can be improved through corrective experiences, especially during periods of plasticity such as adolescence [1]. With adolescence, there is a remobilization of infantile conflicts (narcissistic and oedipal), which intensely demands the function of containing internal figures and the capacity for mentalization: from the management of affective arousal to the symbolic elaboration of experiences. Theoretically, the process of "second individuation" (Blos) describes major reorganizations of the self and object relations, and contemporary models of regulation–mentalization (Fonagy et al.) explain how secure attachment supports the internalization of a " containment" and regulatory flexibility [2, 3]. In this context, parental involvement remains a sustainable resource: attachment to parents is associated with self-esteem, self-efficacy, and personal value in adolescence; classical research and recent meta-analyses indicate robust relationships between parental support, attachment quality, and indicators of psychological well-being.

In this study, attachment to parents and friends was assessed dimensionally (trust, communication, alienation), precisely to capture the mechanisms of self-regulation and social support that fuel resilience in adolescence.

The issue addressed here is that, although there are theoretical convergences between attachment, emotional intelligence and action interventions, the specific link psychodrama → attachment resilience in adolescence remains insufficiently systemati-

cally mapped. Against this background, the aim of the article is twofold:

- to propose an integrative framework that explains through which mechanisms psychodrama can strengthen attachment resilience (mentalization, corrective role experiences, restructuring of internal models),
- to synthesize the existing evidence from adolescent studies, complemented by the applicative data of the integrative program described above.

The article provides: (a) an operational definition of attachment resilience in adolescence; (b) a map of the mechanisms through which psychodramatic techniques (role reversal, doubling, mirroring) can generate acquired security; (c) an integration of the study results and adjacent interventions focused on mentalization; (d) practical implications for clinicians and the educational environment.

Attachment and Resilience

Adolescence brings a reconfiguration of the attachment network and a redefinition of the "security base" the functions of proximity, refuge and security are gradually distributed between parents, close friends and first romantic relationships [4]. The literature shows that the partial transfer of attachment functions from parents to peers/partners occurs from late adolescence, without canceling the parental role, which remains significant for the secure base function [5]. This reconfiguration of attachment is accompanied by the ongoing negotiation of autonomy and relatedness in parent–adolescent dyads. Longitudinal observational studies show that interaction styles that simultaneously support autonomy and connectedness predict, over years, the organization of attachment representations and socio-emotional adjustment, emphasizing the developmental nature of attachment in adolescence [6]. From a functional perspective, many indications show that attachment in adolescence operates at the level of emotion regulation – narrative coherence and attachment representations anticipate socio-emotional competence rather through self-regulatory mechanisms than through proximity-seeking behaviors as in childhood, but relational representations based on anxiety-avoidance dimensions acquired during childhood [7, 8]. Secure caregiving relationships in childhood later function as protective systems, producing competent adaptation in difficult contexts and from which resilience is derived. In developmental sciences, resilience designates a dynamic process of positive adaptation despite adversity, not a fixed trait of the person [9].

Secure internal working models support cognitive reappraisal, tolerance to distress, and the ability to reflect on mental states (mentalization). Contemporary literature integrates attachment as a theory of emotion regulation: secure individuals use flexible strategies (approach, reappraisal, planning), while attachment anxiety favors hyperactivation (rumination, affective amplification), and avoidance favors deactivation (suppression, pseudo-autonomy) [10]. These profiles explain differences in resilience in the face of adversity. Therefore, attachment security confers a flexible reactivity profile (resilience), while insecure patterns predispose to hypersensitivity or hypo-reactivity to stress [11].

Key Terms and Relationships

Safe haven ↔ stress downregulation ↔ physiological resilience. Safety base ↔ exploration/competence ↔ adaptive resilience. Internal working models ↔ mentalization and reappraisal ↔ psychological resilience.

Risk and protective profiles associated with attachment styles

- **Secure:** calibrated physiological reactivity; flexible regulatory strategies; self-efficacy; social integration—increased resilience in stressful contexts [12].
- **Anxious/preoccupied:** affective hyperactivation, intense reassurance seeking, difficulty reappraisal—unstable resilience, vulnerability to anxiety/internalization.
- **Avoidant/rejective:** affective suppression, avoidance of intimacy, "pseudo-autonomy"—apparent adaptation, but long-term costs (somatization, isolation, rigidity) and fragile resilience to interpersonal trauma.

Identifying patterns of regulation (hyperactivation vs. deactivation) derived from attachment styles guides the targeting of intervention (e.g., developing distress tolerance vs. increasing emotional expression). Strengthening relational safety and mentalizing have been central objectives in psychodrama through techniques such as role reversal, doubling, and mirroring—supporting the reconfiguration of internal working models and, implicitly, resilience.

Psychodrama as an Integrative Method

Psychodrama, formulated by J. L. Moreno, is an action-based group psychotherapy that leverages sociometry, role-playing and "surplus reality" to explore and reconfigure relationships and self-representations [13]. The classic process includes three phases—warm-up, action and sharing—and uses characteristic techniques such as role reversal, doubling, mirroring and monologue (soliloquy) to facilitate spontaneity and creativity, factors considered core to psychological change. In the study conducted, psychodrama is the platform that brings together and harmonizes psychoanalytic perspectives (access to unconscious defenses through projection/role play), systemic (staging of family and transgenerational dynamics), cognitive behavioral (cognitive restructuring in simulated situations), mindfulness/experiential (self-observation, "body scan," anchoring in the here and now), and psychoeducational (sheets, visualizations, reflection themes). This integrative architecture allows for emotional processing, restructuring of internal working models, and rapid translation into functional behaviors in real contexts.

Research Methodology

Study Design and Research Procedure

Study type. The approach has two complementary components:

- (I) Constantiative study (observational, cross-sectional) on a sample of N = 250 adolescents (16–18 years old), focused on the relationships between attachment (to mother, father, friends; RSQ styles), IPPA (trust, communication, alienation; mother/father/friends), emotional intelligence (INEM), emotional maturity (Friedmann), ASSI (self-esteem, self-deprecation, infatuation), maladaptive personality traits (PID-5) and specific indicators (Q25 Friedmann Test - suicidal ideation).
- (II) Formative experiment with test–retest design and control group (comparative), father-centric oriented and focused on increasing self-regulation skills and relational security.

Groups: GE = 12 adolescents with insecure attachment, GC = 12 comparable adolescents; period February–June 2025, 13 group sessions concurrently with 10 individual sessions (with a role of personalized deepening of the contents addressed in the group).

Participants and Sampling (Confirmative Component)

- Socio-demographic dimensions: gender, family type, the environment of origin.
- Distributions retained in the analysis:
- **Family type:** complete families 64% (160/250); single-parent families 27,2% (68/250); institutionalization (foster care/placement)8,8% (22/250).
- **The environment of origin:** rural 59,5% vs. urban 40,5%.
- **Exclusion criteria:** mental retardation/retardation and other psychiatric disorders confirmed by a specialist.
- **Ethics:** informed consent of the adolescent and the parent/legal representative, the principle of information and consent according to the Decision of the College of Psychologists no. 4/2013; confidentiality and the right to withdraw at any time.

Applied Tests

1. INEM – Emotional Intelligence Level Inventory (50 items, True/False; dimensions: understanding one's own/others' emotions; regulating one's own/others' emotions). Reported psychometric rigor: global Cronbach $\alpha \approx 0.888$ (standardization T. Constantin, 2008) [14].
2. Friedmann – Emotional Maturity Scale (indicator of affective balance/maturity; also used for the suicidal indicator in summative interpretation) [15].
3. IPPA – Inventarul atașamentului față de Părinți și Prieteni (dimensiuni: Încredere, Comunicare, Alienare; scoruri separate pentru mamă, tată, prieteni) Parent and Peer Attachment Inventory (dimensions: Trust, Communication, Alienation); separate scores for mother, father, friends) [16].
4. RSQ – Relationship Scales Questionnaire (attachment styles: secure; preoccupied/anxious; avoidant-rejecting; avoidant-fearful/disorganized).
5. ASSI (self-esteem, self-deprecation, infatuation) [17].
6. PID-5 (Negative Affectivity, Detachment, Antagonism, Disinhibition, Psychoticism) [18].

Data Collection Procedure (Observational Component)

- Informing and obtaining consent (adolescent + parent), presenting the purpose and benefits, guaranteeing confidentiality.
- Individual Administration, under standardized conditions, of the battery of instruments (INEM, Friedmann, IPPA, RSQ, ASSI, PID-5).
- Examination of inclusion/exclusion criteria; ensuring the possibility of individual psychological counseling regarding the results.

Intervention Design (Formative Component)

- **Session Structure:** The duration of a psychological intervention session was 60 minutes;. the intervention's focus on the father figure (activation relationship), on co-regulation, emotional validation, role-playing/psychodrama, CBT reappraisal and problem-solving techniques.
- Assessments: pre-test (GE & GC) → program implementation (GE) → post-test (GE & GC) with the same battery of instruments; test–retest and between-group comparisons.

Data Analysis

- Descriptive: means, standard deviations, frequencies/percentages..
- Inferential (non-normal data): Mann–Whitney U, Kruskal–Wallis + post-hoc on ranks; Spearman ρ for correlations; multiple regressions (attachment mother/father/friends; criteria: IE dimensions, especially emotion regulation); for the formative component: Wilcoxon (within GE/GC) and GE vs. GC comparisons (test–retest).
- Software: analysis performed in SPSS version 27.0
- Significance threshold: $p < 0.05$.

Operational Summary (in brief):

- Observational: N=250; administrare individuală; etică și confidențialitate; baterie standardizată; analize non-parametrice/corelaționale/regresive.
- Formative: comparative design GE (n=12) vs. GC (n=12), 13 group sessions concurrently + 10 individual sessions.

Research Results

Observational Results (N = 250)

Differences in Emotional Intelligence (Ei) By Gender, Environment and Family Type

→ Gender. No differences were found in global EI (INEM). Girls have higher scores in intrapersonal EI ($U=6679$, $p=0.042$), understanding of one's own emotions ($U=5860$, $p<0.001$), recognizing the emotions of others ($U=5073.5$, $p<0.001$) and social desirability ($U=5108$, $p<0.001$). Emotion regulation (one's own and others') and interpersonal EI do not differ significantly between genders. Emotional maturity (Friedmann) does not differ significantly between girls and boys.

→ Urban vs. Rural. For all INEM dimensions, urban–rural differences are not significant. Friedmann observes a trend of slightly higher mean values in urban ($M\approx2.50$) vs. rural ($M\approx2.37$), consistent with a more diverse social/educational exposure in urban areas.

→ Family Type. INEM (global and subscales) does not show significant differences between complete, single-parent, and foster families. Emotional maturity (Friedmann) differs significantly: $\chi^2(2)=8.387$, $p=0.015$, with higher values in complete families ($M\approx2.52$) compared to single-parent ($M\approx2.24$) and foster families ($M\approx2.27$).

Attachment Quality (IPPA/RSQ) by Gender, Environment and Family

→ Gender. For the relationship with the mother (Trust/Communication/Alienation) no significant differences appear. For the father, boys report higher trust ($U=6256$, $p=0.007$), communication ($U=5933$, $p=0.001$) and total attachment ($U=6015$, $p=0.002$); girls report higher alienation ($U=6091$, $p=0.003$). With friends, girls have better communication ($U=6133$, $p=0.004$).

→ Urban vs. rural. Higher in urban: total attachment to mother ($U=6502$, $p=0.037$), to father ($U=6191$, $p=0.008$) and to friends ($U=6305.5$, $p=0.015$). Higher alienation in rural: to father ($U=6258$, $p=0.012$) and to friends ($U=6532$, $p=0.042$).

→ Familiy type. Significant differences in favor of complete families in: trust in mother ($\chi^2=24.401$, $p<0.001$) and father ($\chi^2=14.347$, $p=0.001$), communication with mother ($\chi^2=20.210$, $p<0.001$) and father ($\chi^2=12.793$, $p=0.002$), total attachment to

both parents (mother: χ^2=12.737, p=0.002; father: χ^2=6.533, p=0.038).

Attachment Style (RSQ) and Emotional Functioning

RSQ prototypes (indicative distributions). Of adolescents with secure attachment, 77% come from complete families, 17% from single-parent families, 6% from foster care; secure is more common in urban (55%) than rural (45%) and slightly more common in boys (56%) than in girls (44%). Preoccupied attachment occurs more in rural (67%) than in urban (33%); avoidant, dismissive, and fearful are relatively more common in rural areas; fearful is more common in girls (69%). (Percentages describe the distribution of cases of each style by demographic subgroups.)

→ Pairwise comparisons (Mann–Whitney). Secure > Preoccupied (U=2026.5, p=0.002) and Avoidant Fearful (U=1011.5, p=0.010) on global EI; Secure > Preoccupied (U=1815, p<0.001) and Fearful (U=990.5, p=0.007) on intrapersonal EI; Secure > Preoccupied (U=1720.5, p<0.001), Fearful (U=906.5, p=0.001) and Avoidant Rejective (U=2445, p=0.005) on emotion regulation. Emotional maturity is highest in Secure and lowest in Fearful (e.g. Secure vs. Fearful U=499.5, p<0.001).

Relational security is associated with superior emotional self-regulation and emotional maturity; the fearful avoidant style focuses on regulatory and adaptive vulnerabilities.

Legături IPPA– INEM/Friedmann Links (attachment to parents/friends)

→ Mother. Trust correlates with intrapersonal EI (r=0.212, p<0.05), regulation (r=0.285, p<0.05) and maturity (r=0.238, p<0.05); Communication correlates with global EI (r=0.209, p<0.05), intrapersonal EI (r=0.229, p<0.05), regulation (r=0.297, p<0.05) and maturity (r=0.308, p<0.01). Alienation is negatively associated with regulation (r=-0.287, p<0.05) and maturity (r=-0.393, p<0.01).

→ Father. Trust: Intrapersonal EI (r=0.226, p<0.05), regulation (r=0.342, p<0.01), maturity (r=0.283, p<0.05). Communication: Intrapersonal EI (r=0.244, p<0.05), regulation (r=0.374, p<0.01), maturity (r=0.311, p<0.01). Alienation: negatively with regulation (r=-0.286, p<0.05) and maturity (r=-0.396, p<0.01).

→ Friends. Trust and Communication are associated with interpersonal/global EI (r≈0.20–0.26, p<0.05), while Alienation is negatively correlated with regulation (r=-0.232, p<0.05) and maturity (r=-0.306, p<0.01).

Trust and communication in key relationships (mother/father/friends) support EI (especially self-knowledge and regulation), and alienation predicts regulation difficulties and low emotional maturity.

Attachment Styles (RSQ) and Self-Esteem (ASSI) as Predictors of EI/Maturity

→ RSQ. Secure correlates positively with emotion regulation (r=0.322, p<0.01) and emotional maturity (r=0.459, p<0.01). Avoidant-rejecting (r=-0.208) and fearful-avoidant (r=-0.237) correlate negatively with maturity (p<0.01). (For the preoccupied, a modest positive association with regulation appears – interpreted as hyperactivation with relational conditioned regulation).

→ ASSI. Self-esteem correlates positively with global EI and all subscales (e.g. global EI r=0.394, p<0.01; intrapersonal EI r=0.321; regulation r=0.314) and indicates a protective socio-emotional effect. Self-deprecation correlates negatively with global EI, intrapersonal EI, regulation and maturity (|r|≈0.22–0.31, p<0.01). Infatuation is positively associated with global EI and interpersonal EI (e.g. r=0.262, p<0.01), suggesting increased but potentially unstable interpersonal sensitivity.

Constatative Summary (Implications for Intervention)

1. Relational security (trust + communication) is the pivot of self-regulation and emotional maturity; vulnerabilities arise when the relationship with the father is alienating or when the global style is avoidant fearful.
2. Gender differentiates awareness of emotions (girls > boys), but not emotional maturity; environment influences the quality of bonds (urban: better overall attachment to parents and friends).
3. Family type matters for emotional maturity (higher in complete families), even though EI as a skill (INEM) does not differ significantly between family types.

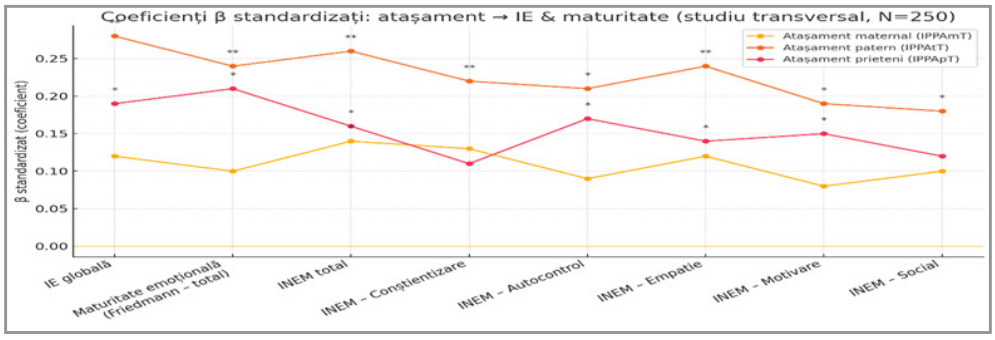

Figure 1: Observational results

Relevance for the Psychodrama Program: the results delineate the target groups for group work/corrective roles – adolescents with pronounced paternal alienation, from rural environments and/or single-parent/foster families, respectively with a fearful or preoccupied avoidant style, where the reconstruction of the internal working model through corrective attachment experiences and staged practice of regulation has the greatest chance of increasing attachment resilience.

Multiple Regressions And Predictors

The collinearity diagnosis indicated tolerances > 0.79 and VIF < 1.30, suggesting the absence of problematic collinearity.

1) Global Emotional Intelligence (gEI)

The model is significant: R = 0.260, R^2 =0 .067, R^2aj = 0.056, F(3,246) = 5.927, p = 0.001. The significant predictor is attachment to friends (β = 0.162, p = 0.012). Attachment to mother has

a trend (β = 0.121, p = 0.080), and attachment to father is not significant.

In adolescence, peer relationships (friends) contribute the most to the variation in global EI; parental influences seem to be more indirect/mediated.

2) INEM – Intrapersonal (INEMIntra)

The model is globally significant (F(3,246) = 7.530, p < 0.001, ~8.4% variance explained). Significant predictors: IPPAtT (β = 0.151, p = 0.026) and IPPApT (β = 0.157, p = 0.014); IPPAmT not significant.

Intrapersonal emotional self-regulation/clarity is supported by both the secure relationship with the father and the support from the peer network.

3) INEM – Emotional Expressivity/Perception (INEMÎep)

The model is not globally significant (R^2 = 0.022, F(3,246) = 1.802, p = 0.147), but IPPApT is a significant positive predictor (β = 0.132, p = 0.045).

Sensitivity to emotional signals seems to be more involved in friendships.

4) INEM – Emotion Regulation (INEMRep)

Strongly significant model:: ~16.8% variance expained, F(3,246) = 16.581, p < 0.001. Major predictor: IPPAtT (β = 0.313, p < 0.001). IPPAmT and IPPApT –marginal positive effects (p ≈ 0.086–0.089).

The father figure has a leading contribution to emotional self-regulation in adolescence.

5) INEM – Interpersonal (INEMInter)

Significant model (R^2 = .039, F(3,246) = 3.304, p = 0.021). The only significant predictor: IPPApT (β = 0.154, p = 0.018). IPPAmT/IPPAtT – insignificant.

Empathic and relational skills rely predominantly on the quality of relationships with peers.

6) INEM – Understanding Emotions (INEMÎec)

Significant model (R^2 = 0.066, F(3,246) = 5.749, p = 0.001). Single, robust predictor: IPPApT (β = 0.242, p < 0.001). Parental predictors – insignificant.

Decoding/understanding emotions is especially strengthened in the peer context.

7) INEM – Recognizing the Emotions of others (INEMRec)

Model nu este semnificativ (R^2 = 0.024, F(3,246) = 1.975, p = 0.118). IPPAtT manifestă o tendință marginală negativă (β = –0.117, p = 0.094); restul predictorilor, nesemnificativi.

Recognition of others' emotions seems determined by other factors (temperamental/interactional) not included in this model.

8) Emotional Maturity (Friedmann Scale– scorFriedm)

Significant model (R = 0.424, R^2 = 0.179, R^2aj = 0.169, F(3,246) = 17.935, p < 0.001). Predictors: IPPAtT (β = 0.286, p < 0.001), IPPAmT (β = 0.187, p = 0.004); IPPApT insignificant.

Affective maturity (impulse control, frustration tolerance) is more strongly anchored in the family context, with a pronounced paternal role.

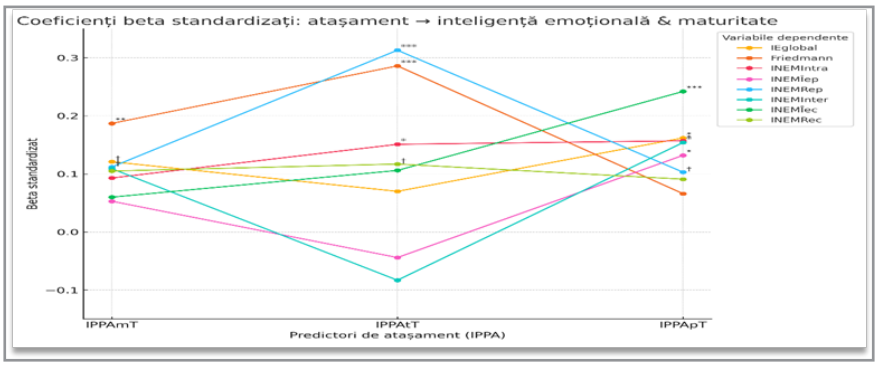

Figure 2: Regression Models

Transversal Synthesis

- Paternal figure (IPPAtT) → main predictor for emotion regulation and emotional maturity; significant predictor also for the intrapersonal component of EI.
- Maternal figure (IPPAmT) → positive, moderate effects, more visible in emotional maturity; in other dimensions they appear as trends, possibly masked by collinearity with IPPAtT.
- Peers (IPPApT) → predictor cel mai stabil pentru IE globală, interpersonală și înțelegerea emoțiilor; contribuție și la intrapersonal și expresivitate. most stable predictor for global IE, interpersonal EI and understanding of emotions; also contributing to intrapersonal and expressiveness/ perception of emotions.
- Robustness and internal validation. For all models, the diagnosis indicated low collinearity (tolerance ≈ 0.796; VIF ≈ 1.22–1.26), strengthening the interpretability of the coefficients.

Implications for Intervention (anchored in results)

- Emotion relugation — targets paternal relationship (mentoring, clar boundaries, coping modeling), is where the predictive effects are maximum..
- Empathy/emotional understanding and global EI — se optimizează prin grupuri de egali (ateliere de cooperare, reflecție reciprocă), dat rolul consistent al IPPApT. is optimized through peer groups (cooperative workshops, mutual reflection), due the consistent role of IPPApT.
- Affective maturity —integrated parenting programs (mother + father) may have the best yield for increasing the Friedmann score.

Results of the Formative Experiment (GE vs. GC, N = 24)

Changes in Attachment Styles (RSQ). Between groups (post): the securing style was significantly higher in GE vs. GC (U=40,000, p=0.041). The other styles did not reach significance. This profile indicates increased relational securing in participants involved in the program.

Within GE (pre–post): significant increase in secure (Z=–3.353, p=0.001) and significant decreases in preoccupied (Z=–3.849, p<0.001), dismissive (Z=–3.009, p=0.003) and fearful (Z=–3.669, p<0.001). This pattern shows the deactivation of defensive strategies and the strengthening of trust, a central marker of attachment resilience (see Figure 3).

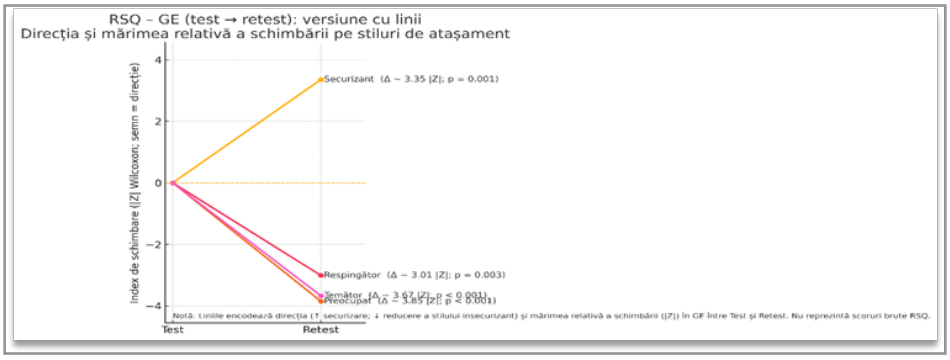

Figure 3: Direction and Relative Magnitude of Change in the Attachment Style Variable (RSQ)

The "↑ secure & ↓ insecure" pattern corresponds to a leap in attachment resilience – that is, a better ability to maintain connection, regulate relational stress, and bounce back from micro-breaks without hyperactivation (preoccupied) or deactivation (rejecting/fearful).

Quality of Relationships With Parents (IPPA)

Between groups (post): GE outperforms GC in trust, communication, and total attachment to mother (p≤0.001–0.003) and in communication and total attachment to father (p=0.012; p=0.035). Alienation is lower in GE. The conclusion supports direct effects on the father–adolescent relationship and cross-sectional effects on the relationship with mother.

Within GE: for mothers, trust (Z=–2.526, p=0.012) and total attachment (Z=–2.202, p=0.028) significantly increase; for fathers, communication (Z=–2.138, p=0.033) and total attachment (Z=–2.822, p=0.005) significantly increase. The dimensions for friends remain stable, suggesting that the intended effects were predominantly familial.

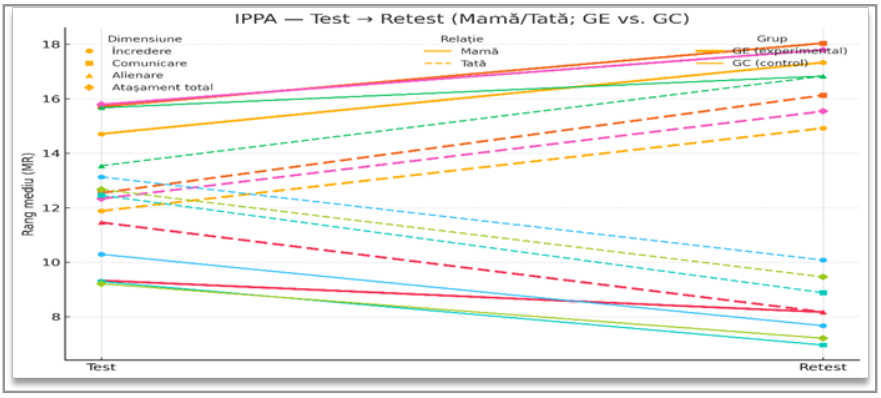

Figure 4: Direction and Relative Magnitude of Change in Attachment Dimensions Trust, Communication, Alienation (IPPA)

Emotional Competences (INEM)

Between groups (post): higher global EI in GE (U=17,500, p=0.001); significant subscales: intrapersonal (p=0.021), personal emotion regulation (p=0.015), interpersonal (p=0.008). Other subscales – positive trends, non-significant.

Within GE: significant increases in global EI (Z=–2.800, p=0.005), intrapersonal (p=0.012), interpersonal (p=0.008) and personal emotion regulation (p=0.020). These acquisitions are proximal mechanisms for attachment resilience (mentalization, self/coregulation).

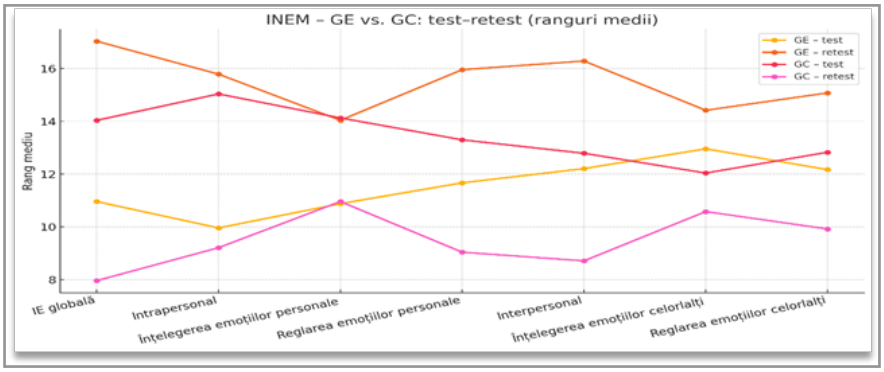

Figure 5: The direction and relative magnitude of change in the components of Emotional Intelligence

The results show effects on:

Strengthening the Basis of Family Attachment

Mother: after the intervention, GE clearly outperforms GC in trust, communication, and total attachment, and alienation is lower — differences confirmed by Mann–Whitney on retest ($p=0.001$; $p<0.001$; $p<0.001$; respectively GC>GE in alienation, $p=0.003$). This indicates the perception of a more available and receptive mother, which strengthens the adolescent's sense of security.

Father: direct effects are seen in communication ($p=0.012$) and total attachment ($p=0.035$), with a reduction in alienation (GC>GE, $p=0.003$) and a trend towards increased trust ($p=0.094$). The pattern suggests that opening adolescent–father communication channels becomes a central mechanism of relational change, with positive reverberations throughout the family system.

Wilcoxon analysis in GE shows significant increases in trust in mother and total attachment to mother, respectively in communication with father and total attachment to father; alienation tends to decrease, and relationships with friends remain stable ($p>0.05$). This pattern reflects a reconfiguration of internal working models towards more security and co-regulation in the presence of parents.

The research results outline a direct effect of the program on the relationship with the father (especially communication, total attachment) and a cross-sectional effect on the relationship with the mother (more trust/communication, reduced alienation) — a systemic dynamic through which strengthening the bond with the father stabilizes the family climate and, subsequently, the quality of the relationship with the mother.

Attachement Resilience

The decrease in alienation and the increase in trust/communication signal relational resilience: adolescents update their expectations of parental availability, can more easily call on emotional support and tolerate relational ambivalence better. In conservative terms, the strengthening of co-regulation with the father figure seems to be a pivot that also leads to security in the mother, without "forcing" changes in relationships with friends (where no significant differences appear, $p>0.05$).

Psychological Resilience And Clinical Risks

- Friedmann (GE, pre–post): emotional maturity increases ($Z= -2.663$, $p = 0.008$) and the suicidal indicator decreases ($Z= -3.500$, $p < 0.001$); when comparing groups post-intervention, the differences are trending in favor of GE.
- PID 5 (post): GE obtains significantly lower scores than GC on Anxiety ($p = 0.006$), Detachment ($p < 0.001$), Antagonism ($p < 0.001$), Disinhibition ($p=0.006$) and Psychoticism ($p < 0.001$) – an index of decreased personality vulnerabilities.
- ASSI (GE, pre–post): self-deprecation decreases significantly ($Z= -2.600$, $p = 0.009$); self-esteem tends to increase ($p = 0.072$), without encouraging infatuation.

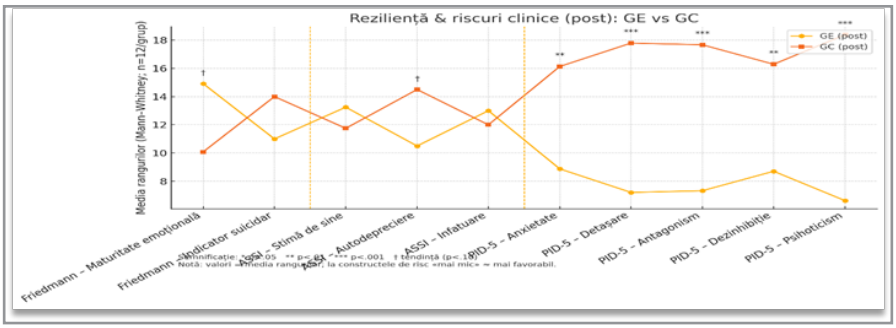

Figure 6: Mean ranks for Friedmann, PID-5 and ASSI

Conclusions

The convergence of RSQ–IPPA–INEM–Friedmann–PID 5–ASSI indicates relational security, strengthening of self-regulation and reduction of affective/behavioral risks – defining elements for attachment resilience in adolescents. Security is associated with lower internalizing/externalizing symptoms and better social competence.

The data support that after the program, adolescents in the GE show lower personality vulnerabilities and a more stable emotional profile, compared to the CG. The differences on the PID-5 are statistically significant in favor of the GE, confirming the effect of the intervention; on emotional maturity and the suicidal indicator, the differences between the groups remain at the trend level, but in the GE there are clinically significant pre-post changes, which means less affective instability, isolation, oppositionality, impulsivity and bizarre thinking in the GE, therefore a strong clinical signal that the program increased emotional balance and reduced suicidal risk in the GE participants. Self-esteem has only a tendency to increase, clinically, suggesting a reduction in self-criticism and self-devaluation, even if the “boost” of self-esteem is not yet stabilized. Post-intervention results show significant increases in GE on global EI, intrapersonal, self-regulation of personal and interpersonal emotions, with no differences on social desirability ($p=0.519$) – so the changes are not due to dissimulating behavior.

Mechanisms of Change Specific to Psychodrama:

1. Role reversal and role play ("This is how it happened / This is how I would like it to happen") – externalizes the conflict in a contained setting, tests alternative scenarios, reduces hyperactivation of the attachment system (preoccupied), increases tolerance to proximity (rejecting/fearful).
2. The mirror and the double (functional, through colleague/therapist) – increase awareness of feelings and relational intonations; facilitate mentalization in the here and now, a prerequisite for self-regulation and for the internalization of safety signals. The methodological framework of the program explicitly allows these processes through staging and symbolic expression.

3. Role-reversal, doubling, staging facilitate the rewriting of internal working models and emotional processing – a natural bridge to reflective function / mentalization [11], with positive effects for emotion regulation, anxiety/depression or social adaptation.
4. „The surplus of reality" and symbolic expression (letter to real or symbolic father; objects/metaphors) – creates the space for tolerated emotional repair, without forcing direct contact, reinforcing the transition from disorganized schemas to coherent narratives about self and relationships.
5. Guided co-regulation (dyadic mindfulness, "uninterrupted listening", affective feedback) – trains non-defensive presence, reduces reactivity and strengthens the feeling of relational security.
6. Integration with cognitive-behavioral therapy and psychoeducation (e.g. "Fact vs. interpretation", "reframing the thought in the mirror") - reduces catastrophizing and hostile reading of the other's intentions, increasing predictability and control of feelings in proximal attachment situations.
7. Parental involvement (paternal vector) – provides real signals of availability in the played scenes, which allows for the re-learning of security (secure base) and its transfer to the relationship with the mother (transversal effect).

Synthesis: Statistical evidence shows an increase in security (RSQ), improvement in relationships with parents (IPPA), progress in EI (especially self-regulation) and reduction of both personality vulnerabilities and clinical risks (suicidal indicator), with a decrease in self-deprecation – a set that describes not only "symptom reduction", but also relational and functional re-organization. The results are consistent with psychodramatic logic: experiencing "on stage" a securing relationship (including with the father) transforms internal representations and disciplines the emotional systems involved in attachment.

The Dominant Role of the Paternal Vector

The paternally focused intervention simultaneously explains the decreases in anxiety/detachment (PID 5) and the increase in self-regulation: the father functions as a facilitator of safe exploration and a catalyst for balancing the family climate, with reverberations on the relationship with the mother. This shows attachment resilience: the emotional context becomes more predictable and supportive, and the adolescent tolerates frustration and stress better. These ideas are supported by the "activation relationship" theory (Paquette) which shows that the father, through stimulation and limit setting in exploratory contexts, specifically contributes to autonomy, courage in the face of risk and self-regulation – complementing the dominant "safe haven" function associated with the mother [19].

Psychodrama activates mentalizing and emotional regulation through techniques such as role reversal, mirroring, and doubling, providing safe corrective relational experiences. The focus on the father figure as a "therapeutic vector" adds a secure foundation that reconfigures internal working models. Sensitivity to fatherly challenging play predicts attachment and social competence patterns [20] in later years of psycho-emotional development. In this logic, increased self-regulation and empathy in GE are congruent with decreased disinhibition and antagonism, and enhanced emotional coherence is reflected in decreased psychoticism and detachment.

Discussions

In the analyzed sample, the quality of attachment in adolescents varies systematically according to gender, environment and family type, and the formative intervention with a psychodramatic basis produced convergent changes in emotional skills and in the attachment profile. Girls report better communication with friends, but also greater alienation from the father, suggesting an affective orientation towards the peer network concomitant with vulnerabilities in the paternal relationship. Urban adolescents present higher global attachment to mother, father and friends, while those from rural areas have greater alienation from father and friends. In complete families, higher levels of trust/communication with both parents are observed, and the distributions of styles show a robust share of secure attachment in these families. The parent-centered intervention was followed by significant increases in emotional intelligence (INEM) and an increase in the secure style (RSQ), concomitant with decreases in the avoidant-rejecting and fearful styles. This pattern suggests a process of relational security mediated by improved self-regulation and empathy. In agreement with the literature, resilience is a dynamic process of adaptation to adversity; in the attachment context, this translates into the flexibility of internal models (self/other) and the strengthening of emotional regulation strategies that maintain or restore the "secure base" function. Rutter's model conceptualizes resilience as an emergent property of the person-context system, not as a fixed trait; interventions that mobilize relational resources and emotional skills accelerate recovery trajectories [21]. Masten describes the "ordinary magic" of everyday processes (caregiving relationships, socio-emotional skills) as the engine of resilience [17]—exactly the area that psychodrama activates through relational practices in action. The data support that psychodrama, used integratively, increases attachment resilience in adolescents: it improves self-regulation and empathy (INEM), secures bonds with parents—especially with the father—(IPPA), and reorients global styles toward security (RSQ). This profile replicates trends in recent meta-analyses of psychodrama/drama therapy and aligns with current theories of resilience and attachment [22].

Final Conclusions and Recommendations

Psychodramatic intervention, focused on the relationship and brief reparative scenarios, increases attachment resilience in adolescents. Data show security (RSQ, IPPA), significant increases in EI (especially self-regulation), reduction of maladaptive traits (PID 5) and decrease in clinical vulnerability (suicidal indicator), along with a decrease in self-deprecation. In the logic of psychodrama, the experience lived on stage – in the presence and with the participation of the parent, especially the father – recodes safety signals and flexibilizes internal working models, offering a robust and replicable path for strengthening attachment resilience in adolescence.

Psychodrama produces these changes at the level of attachment style because the program is integrative, with psychodrama as an experiential core (along with elements of cognitive-behavioral therapy, mindfulness and psychoeducation), built for attachment resilience and increase emotional regulation in adolescents. For each style, from a resilience perspective it means:

- Secure ↑: more trust in the availability of others, autonomy with closeness, and rapid recovery from traumatic events – the key signal of attachment resilience

- Preoccupied ↓:. reduction of hyperactivation (checking, seeking reassurance), increase in tolerance for relational ambiguity and sense of self-worth in the relationship.
- Rejective ↓: decreased deactivation (pseudo-self-sufficiency), more access to needs and affective expression, which allows for the negotiation of proximity without defensive withdrawal.
- Fearful ↓: less "I want you/I'm afraid of you" dichotomy, increases cautious trust and the ability to stay in the relationship at moderate emotional intensity.

Chain of Change

1. Role reversal and doubling (psychodrama) → access to affective states that are difficult to verbalize, rewriting attachment scripts;
2. Increased mentalization (reflective function) → better self-regulation, reduction of relational avoidance/anxiety;
3. Activation of the paternal vector (safe stimulation, limit setting) → exploratory courage, resilience and better communication, with cross-cutting effects on the mother and the family climate;
4. Transfer in global functioning → higher INEM scores and decrease in clinical indicators (ASSI/Friedmann).

Increases in INEM (global, intrapersonal, interpersonal, and emotion regulation) align with increases in trust/communication (IPPA) and shifts toward a secure style (RSQ), a pattern consistent with the hypothesis that emotional skills are the "proximal mechanism" that mediates security. Concomitant decreases in dismissive and fearful styles indicate a relaxation of defensive strategies (devaluation of intimacy, fear of rejection). This triangulated validation (INEM–IPPA–RSQ) reinforces the interpretation of structural change, not just transient mood. The data show that the relationship with the father has predictive power for self-regulation and affective maturity; after the intervention, indicators of attachment to the father increase, and alienation from the father tends to decrease. These results are congruent with longitudinal studies that associate paternal involvement with emotional well-being, reduced adjustment problems, and lower depressive states in adolescents. In terms of resilience, re-anchoring in a more available paternal relationship (real or symbolic) functions as a "pivot" of security for the adolescent's entire relational system.

Plausible psychological mechanisms would be: (a) Correction of internal models: through "surplus reality", the adolescent experiences new responses from attachment figures (including paternal ones), rewriting expectations of availability and responsiveness; (b) self-regulation training: experiential/mindfulness exercises integrated into sessions decrease reactivity and increase emotional awareness; (c) group co-regulation: sociometry and cohesion reduce shame and facilitate self-disclosure, with a protective effect on attachment anxiety; (d) behavioral rehearsal: role-playing games train securing interpersonal skills (request for support, assertiveness), transferable to everyday relationships.

Strengths and Limitations

Strengths: (i) combined use of IPPA and RSQ, with convergent validation of change; (ii) innovative focus on the father figure, aligned with evidence on the role of father involvement in emotional development; (iii) integration of mindfulness/psychoeducation into psychodrama, which enhances skill transfer. Limitations: (i) non-normal distributions that necessitated non-parametric tests (effects would benefit from reporting r-effects and confidence intervals); (ii) relatively small intervention sample and lack of longitudinal follow-up; (iii) self-reporting (social desirability bias); (iv) limited generalizability (regional context). Future studies should include strict randomization, multimodal measures (observational/parental report), and follow-up at 3–6 months.

Clinical/educational guidelines:

- Targeting Hyperactivation (Preoccupied): role-reversal with attachment figures, "reinsurance contracts" in the scene and training the "pause" before repetitive requests.
- Targeting Deactivation (Rejective): scenes of explicit request for help + the double who verbalizes the need; micro-dosing of physical/affective proximity in the scene.
- Working With Fear of Approach (Fearful): "controlled risk scenarios" (approach–gradual withdrawal), mirroring to strengthen self-compassion.
- Father-Centered Component (specific to the study): triadic scenes adolescent–father–feed security (trust/communication), in interchangeable roles – a direct alignment to your IPPA results (benefit of paternal trust/communication).

Attachment-centered psychodrama (with the father as the vector) functions as a corrective relational experience that strengthens attachment resilience and stabilizes emotional regulation – exactly the type of change that prevents the crystallization of maladaptive patterns in the transition to adult life.

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