

# The Role of the Oedipus Complex on the Perceived Romantic Security of Males

Jayson S. Digamon<sup>1</sup> Reymarvelos M. Oros<sup>2</sup>, Zerg D. Encenzo<sup>3</sup>, Blessed Joana O. Takling<sup>4</sup>,  
Rynia Mariastelle I. Apugan<sup>5</sup>, John Dave Lingatong<sup>6</sup>, Jericho O. Pon<sup>7</sup>,

<sup>1</sup> Gingoog City Comprehensive National High School, Philippines ([jayson212012@gmail.com](mailto:jayson212012@gmail.com))

DOI: 10.29322/IJSRP.9.04.2019.p8858  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.29322/IJSRP.9.04.2019.p8858>

## ABSTRACT

In Freudian psychoanalysis, Oedipus complex refers to the attachment, usually to the extent of sexual desire, of a son to his mother. It typically occurs during the son's age of three to five years old and is said to be a precursor of future romantic attachment styles. If left unresolved, the Oedipus complex will lead to social interaction defects. With the above premise, this research determined the role of Oedipus complex on the perceived romantic security of male students. Data for this mixed explanatory methodology research were obtained through purposive homogenous sampling design with 51 male students engaged in a romantic relationship as the main respondents of the study. Using descriptive and multiple linear regression analysis, the researchers established the impact of Oedipus complex on perceived romantic security. It was revealed that there existed an adverse effect of Oedipus complex on perceived romantic security such that as they become more attached to their mothers, the more is the tendency for them to develop anxiety concerning their relationship status. The study concluded that the Oedipus complex is one of the factors that affect the perceived romantic insecurity of males. The authors recommend further investigations on the aspect of unresolved Oedipus complex since their data regarding it is limited.

**Keywords:** *attachment style, mother-son relationship, Oedipus complex, perceived romantic security, romantic relationship*

## Introduction

Perceived romantic security in relationships is a crucial factor in determining the psychological health of a person particularly in healthy functioning of emotions. Any insecurity may cause mental insanity and unsoundness. If persons experience insecurity in their romantic relationship, the persons will suffer emotional dysfunctionality. Eventually, the dysfunctional emotions and insecurity will pave psychological disorders such as depression, withdrawal, and suicide (Overbeek et al., 2003). The insecurity felt by a person in a romantic relationship may be explained as a result of the earlier relationships that the person has experienced. Due to the experiential remnants that the more previous relationships have brought about, relational complexities whether positive or negative might be encountered in the current relationship (Overbeek et al., 2003).

According to psychoanalytic theories, current relationships have juvenile roots; thus, past experiences contribute to the present conditions. One of the potential sources that explain the status of existing relationships is the Oedipus complex, a term coined by Sigmund Freud. It refers to the perception of a child on his same-sex parent as a rival towards the opposite sex parent in terms of attention, love, and care (Josephs, 2010).

The relationship established between the son and the mother is classified as positive Oedipus complex, and when resolved as the age of the son increases, will develop into affection without sexual desire for the mother and the son will soon look for his opposite-sex partner. However, the negative Oedipus complex which refers to the unconscious sexual attraction to the same sex parent will potentially result in the child's homosexuality, pedophilia, and neurosis (Freud, 1899 as cited by Haiyan et al., 2016).

Additionally, the signs of the positive Oedipus complex deal with the possessiveness of the child concerning his mother thus prohibiting his father from kissing her. At this stage, the child views the mother as an ideal woman to marry in the future (Cherry, 2018). However, Sigmund Freud believed that the Oedipus complex is resolvable resulting in psychological masculinization of the child where the child finds an identity with his father and develops decent affection to his mother. Accordingly, if Oedipus complex is not resolved, there will be an emergence of the so-called fixation which refers to the psychological imprisonment of the child in his past relational experiences. Consequently, it results in adverse effects in the proper social, romantic interactions of the child when he grows up (Cherry, 2018).

Romantic relationships suffer detrimental conflicts for different reasons. Localizing this issue in the Philippines, adultery caused by romantic insecurity is one of the most common problems that a romantic relationship undergoes (Diola, 2015). Many families are shattered due to this unhealthy conflict which can be explained by the occurrence of past experiences of the persons involved.

The importance of this study lies primarily on assessing the degree of Oedipus complex and its effects on the perceived romantic security of male students, provided that few studies were delving on the concept of Oedipus complex and its impact on perceived romantic security.

The dearth of literature particularly in the domestic setting observed by the researchers regarding the topic on Oedipus complex and how it interplays romantic security during adolescence makes them interested in studying it. Moreover, the results of this study shall encourage the parents, faculties, and staffs in school to develop interventions that will provide understanding to the male students on how they perceived romantic security in their romantic relationships.

Given the potential problems mentioned above that can be explained by childhood roots as supported by psychoanalytic theories, this study must be conducted to provide firsthand information about this rare study on the role of Oedipus complex on the perceived romantic security of males.

### **Framework**

This study anchors on the following theories: Sigmund Freud's Oedipus Complex Theory, Erik Erickson's Psychosocial Theory, and John Bowlby's Attachment Theory.

The Oedipus Complex Theory of Sigmund Freud posits that every person experiences unconscious yet resolvable sexual desire during their childhood years towards their opposite-sex parent. It denotes that even though a child does not know about it during his juvenile growth and mental development, there is the likelihood that he will resolve it through various ways of interaction within his environment which is not limited to the other same-sex parent. In this study, it is proposed that Oedipus complex revolves around the son-to-mother relationship and occurs during the 3-6 years of son's age.

According to Sigmund Freud, conflicts typically occur in a family and mainly revolve on love and competition. The theory about Oedipus complex denotes that a child (son) at the age of three to six perceives the same-sex parent (father) as a competitor or rival in terms of the opposite-sex parent's (mother's) attention, love, and care. Similarly, Oedipus complex also means as "the medley of strivings, feelings, and unconscious ideas" which connects to the desire towards the opposite sex parent (Josephs, 2010).

There are two major types of Oedipus complex: the positive Oedipus complex and the negative one. The two differs in terms of who is the parent in which the child is more attached.

The positive Oedipus complex deals with the hostility and rivalry felt by the young boy towards his father when it comes to his mother's attention. These feelings will eventually lead to the "masculinization" of the young boy if the Oedipus complex is resolved when the boy finds an identity with his father. Sigmund Freud believed that this resolution of the child is brought about by the "castration anxiety" in which the father will castrate him if he continues to have sexual desire towards his mother.

Moreover, this envy felt by the boy due to his father's intimacy with the mother will lead him to focus on his father's traits of character. It is then where the resolution is achieved when the boy acquires the masculine characteristics. And knowing that it is immoral to find sexual satisfaction in his mother, the boy will divert his desire to other female or females, and this happens in the child's later age.

Putting these concepts into a more psychologically legal manner, the signs of the positive Oedipus complex deal with the possessiveness of the child concerning his mother thus prohibit his father from kissing her. At this stage, the child views the mother as an ideal woman to marry in the future (Cherry, 2018). However, when this perception is resolved as the age of the young boy increases, the young boy will develop affection for his mother without sexual desire and will soon look for his appropriate opposite-sex partner (Freud, 1899 as cited by Haiyan et al., 2016).

Moreover, with this positive Oedipus complex, the son will have a psychological registration concerning his perspective about his mother as a human avenue of secure attachment, provided that the son finds trust in his mother in the early stage of psychosocial development. This psychological registration of emotional functioning is supported by the psychosocial theory of Erik Erickson since this theory posits that the caregiver or mother is the first source of the son's enduring trust which serves as a foundation for the success of the next stage. Thus, the trust-inspired perspective of the child about his mother will be unconsciously used by him in dealing with future romantic partners.

On the contrary, the negative Oedipus complex shows the development of affection and feminine characteristics of the young boy towards his father, thus leading to homosexuality (Cherry, 2018). It has a potential threat concerning the child in his later relationships due to the unnatural way of establishing romantic relationships. However, if asked about the conditions regarding secure relationships of gays and lesbians, it is a right answer to say that the secure homosexual relationship may be explained by the stability of the chosen gender identity of the persons involved in the homosexual relationships.

Complementing with the first theory, the Erik Erickson's psychosocial theory postulates that every person throughout his life undergoes different stages which are incremental, and in which one person must succeed in the preceding stage before proceeding to the next. It is to ensure the healthy functioning of the next stage.

Concerning the Oedipus complex, psychosocial stages describe the experiences that a person must undergo throughout his life. Without the successful undergoing of the preceding stages, there is a tendency that a person will develop negative consequences in his later life stages. The psychosocial theory of development by Erik Erikson tackles the stages of a person in developing his personality. Erikson believes that a person undergoes a series of stages and conflicts as it serves as a turning point of development.

The first stage of psychosocial development is "Trust vs. Mistrust." It happens during infancy where the child develops trust to his caregiver when the caregiver is highly dependable and continuously by his side. It connects to the Attachment theory of John Bowlby where the infant develops a sense of security towards his constant caregiver, and this wonderfully predicts future attachment style of romantic relationship. From this stage, the child undergoes the Oedipus complex until the age of 6 years old.

The child develops an unconscious sexual desire for his opposite-sex parent until he reaches the stage of "Industry vs. Inferiority" where the Oedipus complex is slowly resolved as the child develops the industry to copy the traits of character from his father. This stage has a positive effect on the resolution of the Oedipus complex.

If the resolution of the Oedipus complex is successful, the fifth stage of psychosocial development of Erik Erikson will be achieved. The child will know his own identity as a son towards his mother and a guy towards his opposite-sex romantic partner. It is then where he will develop the sixth stage of psychosocial development, the "Intimacy vs. Isolation," where people explore personal relationships. This stage will pave the way for a committed and secure relationship. The child will now look for his romantic partner where he will develop fidelity to his romantic partner.

Putting the two theories in context, the researchers deduced that the Oedipus complex by the son would result in a condition by which he experiences romantic security with his romantic partner.

The third theory utilized in this study is John Bowlby's attachment theory. This theory suggests that a young child needs to develop a relationship with at least one primary caregiver for social and emotional development to occur normally.

The theory further explains the emotional bond between infants and their caregivers and projects this child-caregiver relationship as an essential aspect of human experience (Bowlby, 1979 as cited by Fraley and Shaver, 2000). Many researchers have utilized Bowlby's theory as a framework for love and romantic relationships.

Results of recent studies showed that most lonely adults who experienced conflicts with romantic partners have problems with their parents during childhood. It suggests that the history of attachment affects the frequency and form of adult loneliness (Rubenstein & Shaver, 1982; Shaver & Hazan, 1987; Weiss, 1973 as cited by Fraley and Shaver, 2000).

In Hazan and Shaver's paper, they made use of Bowlby's attachment style in adult romantic relationships. They observed that the concepts of the theory apply to the ideas of adult romantic relationship, and this consequently urge them to generate the four categories of attachment: Secure, Anxious-Preoccupied, Dismissive-Avoidant and Fearful-Avoidant.

(1) The *secure attachment* refers to the style of securely attached adults who are satisfied with their relationship. They feel security and connection but still allow freedom in their relationship. Secure adult tends to offer support when their partner is distressed and also seek comfort towards their partner when they are troubled. This attachment has an open and independent and loving relationship.

(2) *Anxious-preoccupied attachment* exhibits desperation in forming a fantasy bond. They view their partner as a missing puzzle that will complete their being. However, the constant need for security towards their partner does not prohibit them from pushing them away. Their behavior reflects their fears.

(3) *Fearful-avoidant* exhibits the fear of being too close or too distant from their partners. They undergo overwhelming reactions and emotional storms. The person they considered as their partner is the same person they fear (Firestone, 2013).

(4) *Dismissive-avoidant attachment* exhibits selfishness and lack of interdependence. They think that they do not need anyone (Gonzales, 2018).

The next paragraphs explain the definitions of the variables in this study. These variables are extracted from the theories mentioned above.

#### *Oedipus Complex.*

It is also known as the parent-child relationship which refers to the attachment of the child to the parent of the opposite sex. Freud believed that the completion of this stage leads to the development of a mature sexual identity of the child.

The *Oedipus complex* of the respondents can be attributed to the *perceived romantic security* since results from studies showed that the conflicts within a relationship were due to the parent-child relationship initially experienced by lovers. These findings are supported by the *Attachment Theory* of Bowlby which is an essential evolutionary theory concerning human relationships. This theory explains that the behavior of infants seeking comfort and security from his responsive caregiver acts as a causing aspect of future conditions of relationship (Bowlby, 1979 as cited by Fraley and Shaver, 2000).

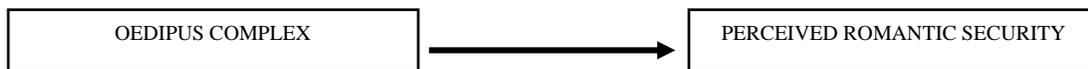
#### *Perceived Romantic Security.*

This concept is deduced from the theory of Bowlby concerning attachment styles. It refers to the security of a person towards his or her romantic partner and is theorized by Bowlby as affected by the person's past relationship with his or her parents (*Oedipus complex*).

As a final point, the experiences of a person can affect the current romantic relationship. Fraley and Shaver emphasized in 2000 that most of the lonely adults experiencing conflict with their romantic partners had problems with their parents during their childhood specifically during the stage of infancy. Therefore, it is vital in the aspect parenthood to have a good parental response towards infants because it will develop the child's working models in guiding his individual's feelings, thoughts and expectations in his later relationships.

With the discussions of the theories above, the researchers deduced from these theories that the resolution of Oedipus complex leads to a sense of individual mature sexual identity and fidelity which consequently results to security in relating with romantic partners.

Given the conceptions of different authors, experts and practitioners in the psychoanalytic field regarding the dynamics of *Oedipus complex* and *Perceived Romantic Security*, Figure 1, summarily explains the intent of this study.



***Figure 1. Schematic Presentation Showing the Interplay of Variables in the Study***

### **Materials and Methods**

This study utilized a mixed explanatory method research design. The researchers used both qualitative and quantitative data in a single study to have a more unobstructed view and understanding of the research problems (Creswell & Clark, 2011). Quantitative data are gathered through a researcher-made questionnaire in determining the level of Oedipus complex of the respondents and a modified questionnaire entitled "The Experiences in Close Relationships- revised Questionnaire" made by Fraley et al. (2000) in determining the level of perceived romantic security.

The validity of the instruments was carefully looked into by experts in the field of Psychology and the simplest, understandable and contextual vocabulary was utilized in the instructions and questions. The questionnaires were floated to five Grade 9 students to assess the instruments' vocabulary.

The reliability coefficients of the instruments in this study were determined after they were all pilot-tested. All survey questionnaires were subjected to a reliability test using SPSS 14 software. The reliability coefficient resulted in 0.880 for Oedipus complex and 0.886 for perceived romantic security.

The study employed the homogenous purposive sampling method where the target respondents under study share the same characteristics and are of the same nature (Crossman, 2016). The respondents of this study were the 51 Grade 12 male students from the Gingoog City Comprehensive National High School who currently have romantic partners and live with their two parents during their childhood ages of 3-6 years old.

The following procedures guided the organization of data in the study.

A. Level of Oedipus Complex

Range	Point Value	Description
1.00 – 1.75	1	Strongly Disagree
1.76 – 2.50	2	Disagree
2.51 – 3.25	3	Agree
3.26 – 4.00	4	Strongly Agree

B. Perceived Romantic Security

Range	Point Value	Description
1.00 – 1.75	1	Strongly Agree
1.76 – 2.50	2	Agree
2.51 – 3.25	3	Disagree
3.26 – 4.00	4	Strongly Disagree

Descriptive statistical analysis such as percentage, frequency, mean and standard deviation, Pearson Product Moment Correlation and the linear regression analysis were used to treat the data gathered.

**Results and Discussion**

Table 1 shows the frequency, percentage, and mean distribution of the level of Oedipus complex of male students in Gingoog City Comprehensive National High School.

Table 1: Frequency, Percentage and Mean Distribution of the Level of Oedipus Complex of Male Students

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
1. When I was young, I viewed my father as a competitor of my mother's attention, love, and care.	2.29	.965	Disagree
2. Before seven years old, I am closer to my mother than to my father.	3.08	.977	Agree
3. During my childhood, I spend more time with my mother than my father.	3.08	.997	Agree
4. At a young age, I liked to be with my mother more than my father.	2.96	.848	Agree
5. I am uncomfortable when I see my mother with my father during my childhood.	2.31	1.122	Disagree
6. When I was young, I loved the personality of my mother compared to my father's.	2.88	.887	Agree
7. I am jealous when my mother gives more attention to my father than to me when I was young.	1.94	.705	Disagree
8. At a young age, I felt like I was competing for my mother's attention when my father was present.	2.08	.956	Disagree
9. Before seven years old, I viewed my father as a rival to my mother's attention, love, and care.	2.18	1.014	Disagree
10. When I was young, I prefer to ask something to my mother than to my father.	3.16	.784	Agree
11. During childhood, I didn't want other people to be around my mother.	2.25	.956	Disagree
12. When I was a child, I see my mother as an ideal wife.	2.92	1.163	Agree
13. When I was young, I hated seeing my mother hugging my father.	1.78	.856	Disagree
14. When I was a child, I felt angry towards my father for getting the attention of my mother.	1.94	.925	Disagree
15. I felt intimidated or afraid of my father when I was young.	2.41	1.004	Disagree
<b>Overall Mean</b>	2.485		
<b>SD</b>	.564		
<b>Interpretation</b>	Mildly Experienced		

Description	Interpretation	Frequency	Percentage
-------------	----------------	-----------	------------

Range		Positive Oedipus Complex:		(%)
1.00-1.75	Strongly Disagree	Not Experienced	4	7.8
1.76-2.50	Disagree	Mildly Experienced	25	49.0
2.51-3.25	Agree	Experienced	15	29.4
3.26-4.00	Strongly Agree	Highly Experienced	7	13.7
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Forty-nine percent (49%) of the respondents answered *they disagree* from the floated questionnaire of Oedipus complex which means that they mildly experienced the Oedipus complex when they were still at the age of 3 to 6 years old.

Per individual indicators, the fifteenth indicator *Feeling intimidated or afraid to my father* (M=2.41, disagree) was mildly experienced by the male respondents. This result was supported by the interview conducted by the researchers where the respondents were asked about the reason for disagreeing with the statement. The respondents reasoned out *"I do not feel intimidated with my father because as a son, I should respect him having an intimate relationship with my mother."* This finding was supported by the study of Hickey (2013) in his exploratory research entitled *"The Phenomenal Characteristics of the Son-Father Relationship Experience"* in which he found out that in a good relationship, a father is someone that you respect and someone that you might fear.

The small value of the mean spread (SD=.564) indicates that the responses are comparable.

The indicator with the highest mean was the tenth; *when I was young, I prefer to ask something to my mother than to my father* (M= 3.16, SD= .784, Agree) wherein a respondent reasoned out *"Yes because I feel comfortable to ask something to my mother than to my father."* It can be explained by the concepts formulated by Ainsworth (1973) and Bowlby (1969) as cited by Mallers (2010) stating that mothers traditionally serve as a primary caregiver from whom the initial parent-child bond is established, one that provides physical safety and comfort to both girls and boys. With this, the present research postulates that the strong bond between the mother and the child will develop to trust and comfort felt by the son particularly when he asks something to his mother.

Another indicator which garnered the highest mean is the second indicator *Before seven years old, I am closer to my mother than to my father* (M=3.08, SD= .977, Agree) in which most of the respondents reasoned out *"I am closer to my mother than my father because my father is always at work and my mother is the only one left at home."* This closer attachment to the mother could be attributed to the experience of the child where there is the existence of mothers feeding them as a baby, also the care and preparation for life that created love and feeling of trust (Sahin, 2014).

The last indicator with the highest mean is the third indicator, *during my childhood, I spend more time with my mother than my father* (M=3.08, SD= .977, Agree). The tendency for a child to spend more time with his mother particularly during the time of stress is caused by the characteristics of the mother who attempts to calm and reassure children (Paquette, 2004 as cited by Maller, 2010). Thus, the mother-child relationship serves as a salient foundation from which both men and women develop their secure base and therefore, their general emotional well-being (Maller et al., 2010).

On the other hand, three indicators got the least mean in this study, particularly the thirteenth indicator *When I was young, I hated seeing my mother hugging my father* (M=1.78, SD= .856, Disagree) where the respondent answered that *"It is normal because they are husband and wife. And as a son, I think they had a long time of bonding compared to the time that I had with my mother."* The current researchers interpreted this as a good sign that the son received from the parents in which it would secure them that their parents are not having relationship problems and that it would not result to divorce and such.

Another indicator, the number fourteen, in the items, *When I was a child, I felt angry towards my father for getting the attention of my mother* (M=1.94, SD= .925, Disagree), got the least mean. It can also be explained by the discussions in the preceding paragraph.

The last indicator, the seventh one, *I am jealous when my mother gives more attention to my father than to me when I was young* (M=1.94, SD= .705, Disagree) also got the least mean in this study. This could mean high-quality relationships of the son with their parents and would tend to cause better overall mental health (Mallers et al., 2010; Moore et al., 2011). The current researchers interpret this as a good sign of the relationship of both parents to their child which could lead to better development of the child.

However, the overall mean of the male respondents for the Oedipus complex is 2.485. The overall mean imply that they mildly experienced the Oedipus complex when they were still at the age of 3 to 6 years old.

Another variable that plays a vital role in this study is the *perceived romantic security*. *Perceived romantic security* is deduced from the theory of Bowlby concerning attachment styles. This term refers to the state of being free from anxiety and fear that the male

respondents feel with the partners of their current romantic relationship. Table 2 shows the frequency, percentage and mean distribution of the male students' perceived romantic security.

Table 2: Frequency, Percentage and Mean Distribution of the Male Students' Perceived Romantic Security

Indicators	Mean	SD	Description
1. I'm afraid that I will lose my girlfriend's love.	2.63	.958	Disagree
2. I often worry that my girlfriend will not want to stay with me.	2.41	.983	Agree
3. I often worry that my girlfriend doesn't love me.	2.53	.809	Disagree
4. I worry that my girlfriend won't care about me as much as I care about them.	2.41	.920	Agree
5. I often wish that my girlfriend's feelings for me were as strong as my feelings for him or her.	2.59	.753	Disagree
6. I worry a lot about my relationship.	2.31	.927	Agree
7. When my girlfriend is out of sight, I worry that he or she might become interested in someone else.	2.41	.853	Agree
8. When I show my feelings for my romantic partner, I'm afraid she will not feel the same about me.	2.65	.844	Disagree
9. I worry about my partner leaving me.	2.31	.883	Agree
10. My romantic partner makes me doubt myself.	2.53	1.007	Disagree
11. I often worry about being abandoned.	2.65	.820	Disagree
12. I find that my girlfriend doesn't want to get as close as I would like.	2.71	.965	Disagree
13. Sometimes my girlfriend changes her feelings about me for no apparent reason.	2.69	.883	Disagree
14. My desire to be very close to my girlfriend sometimes scares her away.	2.67	.909	Disagree
15. I'm afraid that once my girlfriend gets to know me, she won't like who I am.	2.86	.775	Disagree
16. It makes me worry that I don't get the love and support I need from my partner.	2.75	.845	Disagree
17. My girlfriend only seems to notice me when I'm angry.	2.92	.771	Disagree
18. I prefer not to show my partner how I feel deep down.	2.73	.874	Disagree
19. I feel uncomfortable sharing my private thoughts and feelings with my partner.	2.63	.958	Disagree
20. I find it hard to depend on my romantic partner.	2.41	.983	Agree
21. I am very uncomfortable being close to my romantic partner.	2.53	.809	Disagree
22. I find it uneasy about getting close to my partner.	2.41	.920	Agree
23. I don't usually discuss my problems and concerns with my partner.	2.59	.753	Disagree
24. It does not help me to run to my romantic partner in times of need.	2.31	.927	Agree
25. I do not tell my partner just about everything.	2.41	.853	Agree
26. I do not talk things over with my partner.	2.65	.844	Disagree
27. It's not easy for me to be loving with my partner.	2.31	.883	Agree

**Overall Mean** 2.4713

**SD** .507

**Interpretation** Insecure

Range	Description	Interpretation Security:	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.00-1.75	Strongly Agree	Highly Insecure	5	9.8
1.76-2.50	Agree	Insecure	22	43.1
2.51-3.25	Disagree	Secure	21	41.2
3.26-4.00	Strongly Disagree	Highly Secure	3	5.9
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>100.0</b>

More than 43% of the respondents answered *they agree* which implies that the perceived romantic security of the male respondents is interpreted to be insecure. This result means that the majority of the male students feel anxious and worried about the status of their relationship especially on tendencies and possibilities of breakups.

The fifth indicator, *I often wish that my partner's feelings for me were as strong as my feelings for him or her* (M=2.59, SD=.753, Strongly Disagree) is one of the indicators which got the highest mean. It indicates that respondents felt secure with his romantic partner since he trusted his partner's feelings. This concept is deduced from the study of Du Plessis et al. (2007).

Another indicator with the highest mean is the twenty-third indicator, *I don't usually discuss my problems and concerns with my partner* (M=2.59, SD=.753, Strongly Disagree), which can be explained by the study of Sommer (2004) wherein he found that the quality and quantity of communication were dimmed significant predictors of both intimacy and relational satisfaction. It means that communication significantly affects the increase of intimacy and satisfaction of romantic partners.

The indicators mentioned above were highly observed from the male respondents implying their security with their romantic partners in terms of these questions.

However, five indicators were identified to have the least mean in this study. First was the sixth indicator; *I worry a lot about my relationship* (M=2.31, SD=.927, Agree). These findings are in congruence with the result of Kamenov and Jelic (2005) in which their results showed that people form a more insecure attachment in relation with their romantic partners compared to members of their families and friends. Based on the concept, the current researchers postulated that the occurrence of *worrying a lot about a relationship* is since compared to romantic relationships, relationship with friends and family does not undergo breakups.

Another indicator that got the least mean is the ninth indicator *I worry about my partner leaving me* (M=2.31, SD=.883, Agree), the interview conducted by the researchers resulted to respondents stating that "*Yes because I am afraid that she will have a relationship with another guy.*" This result can be supported by the study of Faber (2010) entitled "The Role of Anxious Relationship Beliefs in Relationship Satisfaction and Relational Maintenance Behavior" where he stated that people who endorse more anxious relationship beliefs are indeed less satisfied with their relationship. His findings suggest that anxious cognitions towards intimacy are associated with lower relationship stability and could, therefore, predict relationship dissolution.

The twenty-fourth indicator *It does not help me to run to my romantic partner in times of need* (M=2.31, SD=.927, Agree) is also included in the list of lowest means. It means that the relationship lacks mutual trust which is necessary for revealing the inner thoughts and emotions of the persons involved in a particular romantic relationship (Lewicki and Bunker, 1995).

The last indicator to have the least mean is the twenty-seventh indicator *It's not easy for me to be loving with my partner* (M=2.31, SD=.883, Agree), this result can be supported by Bartholomew (1990) as cited by Overbeek (2003), where he proposed that the adult avoidance of intimacy results from early attachment experiences in which emotional vulnerability has become associated with parental rejection. In turn, such an insecure working model of self-and-other may cause individuals to interpret losses and disappointments as personal failures, which contributes to the development of distress (Kenny & Rice, 1995 as cited by Overbeek, 20013).

Nevertheless, the overall mean of 2.47 suggests that the male respondents are insecure when it comes to their romantic partners, which implies that they worry about their relationship's susceptibility to breaking up.

One prerequisite test before the researchers can conduct correlation analysis is the conduct of a normality test. Normality assumption means that the distribution of the test is normally distributed (or bell-shaped) with 0 means, with one standard deviation and a symmetric bell-shaped curve (Statistic Solutions, 2019).

Table 3 below shows the Reliability and Normality Measures of the data and the constructs in the study.

Table 3. Reliability and Normality Measures

Variable	Shapiro-Wilk's Test	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach's Alpha
<b>1. Level of Oedipus Complex</b>	.141 NS	.219	-.684	0.880
<b>2. Perceived Romantic Security</b>	.949 NS	.189	.179	0.886

The different parts of the scale indicating the various constructs had the following Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient (R). The R values of the scale show a very high internal consistency considering that the acceptable range is from 0.7 to 0.9 (George et al., 2003). The variables are normally distributed as shown by their Skewness (S) and Kurtosis (K) values where the limit of S is from -0.5 to 0.5 and

K is from -2 to 2. Likewise, the Shapiro-Wilk Test showed no significant results for Oedipus complex level ( $p=.141$ ) and perceived romantic security ( $p=.949$ ) suggesting that the data are normally distributed.

The reliability and normality values assure that the confidence level or the significance level (p-value) in the multiple linear regressions is valid even with a sample of 51 male students. It also means that the indicators used in the constructs are highly reliable. Thus, it can be inferred that the indicators consistently represent the constructs of the study.

Table 4 shows the Pearson R-values showing the relationship of the Oedipus Complex with perceived romantic security.

Table 4. Pearson R-values Showing the Relationship of Oedipus Complex with Perceived Romantic Security

Variables	Mean	Pearson R-value	p-value
Oedipus Complex	2.485	-.455(**)	.001 S
Perceived Romantic Security	2.4713		

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table disclosed that there is a significant relationship between the level of Oedipus complex and perceived romantic security with the p-value at .001. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Furthermore, table 4 shows the negative correlation between the two variables ( $R= -.455$ ). It implies that with the increase of Oedipus complex, the perceived romantic security of the male respondents' decreases.

With an increase of more attachment to the mother, there is a tendency that the child will develop negative consequences in his future romantic relationship such as insecurity in particular. However, this research theorizes that these negative consequences can be explained not only by the Oedipus complex but also by the inexistence of Oedipus complex resolution.

According to the theory of John Bowlby on different attachment styles, the Oedipus complex of the respondents is exacerbated by the absence of the father. This social working model is instilled in the respondents and is used when relating to romantic partners. In other words, the lack of the father and the child's closeness to the mother cause the attachment style which is anxious-preoccupied.

As explained by anxious-preoccupied attachment style, the fear of being abandoned is present in the male's romantic relationship. These people who experienced anxious-preoccupied attachment styles are emotionally deprived and continuously fears rejection. According to Robert Karen, as cited by Gonzales (2018), anxious-preoccupied people are hypervigilant about separations. People with this kind of attachment possibly had troubled parents such as having parents who are always away or when the child has needs.

Moreover, results showed that there is perceived romantic insecurity among them implying that these respondents experienced "role confusion" in which they did not acquire the virtue of fidelity which is crucial in forming intimacy in the romantic relationship. It can be illustrated by the lack of industry induced by the absence of the father. This claim is supported by the qualitative data gathered during the interview where some of the respondents admitted that their "father needs to work" and that their "mother is the only person left at home" to take care of them.

It merely means that there was no resolution of the Oedipus complex among the respondents. This absence of resolution may be attributed to the argument that the respondents did not acquire the industry necessary to copy their father's identity which later on did not give them a sense of fidelity that is necessary to develop healthy relationship and thus would result to a secure relationship.

Since the correlation value between the predictor and the criterion variables was significant, a linear regression was done to determine the degree of variation that the Oedipus complex can contribute to the respondents' perceived romantic relationship.

Table 5 shows the linear regression analysis of the influence of Oedipus complex on the perceived romantic security.

The  $R^2$  value suggests that the independent variable Oedipus complex explains 20.7% of the variation of the perceived romantic security. With the f-value of 12.820, the model is highly significant at (P) 0.001. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected; the independent variable can explain and or predict the perceived romantic security of males.

Table 5. Simple Linear Regression Analysis of the Influence of the Oedipus Complex on the Perceived Romantic Security

Independent Variable	Beta	T-value	Sig.
<i>Oedipus Complex (OC)</i>	-.409	-3.581	.001 S

Dependent Variable	Perceived Romantic Security
Constant	3.488
R <sup>2</sup>	.207
F-value	12.820
Significance	.001

The final model is represented as:

$$\text{Perceived romantic security} = 3.488 - .409 \text{ OC}$$

The regression coefficient of the independent variable of -.409 shows the direction of the influence of Oedipus complex phenomenon on the perceived romantic security. The negative regression coefficient demonstrates the opposite effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable which means that an increase of the Oedipus complex will lead to the decrease of the perceived romantic security.

Based on the three theories mentioned above, as the attachment to the mother increases, a possibility of negative consequences on the romantic relationship of the child will develop. Moreover, the current study theorizes that not only can Oedipus complex affect but also other variables such as unresolved status caused by the father's absence can directly affect the perceived romantic security (Gonzales, 2018).

In the theory of psychosocial development, an individual should undergo varying "psychosocial crisis" to achieve the virtues, such as fidelity and individuality, present in it. With this, the researchers of this study postulate that the respondents had an unresolved Oedipus complex during the age of 5-13 years old which is the required stage for them to possess industry to copy the masculine identity of their fathers. Moreover, the unresolved Oedipus complex is caused by the absence of the father exacerbating the lack of industry to copy the father's masculine identity.

However, the results showed that there was insecurity among respondents indicating that the respondents experience "role confusion." It can be clarified by the absence of the father in which the son did not copy the identity of the father. This claim is supported by the qualitative data gathered during the interview where some of the respondents admitted that their "father needs to work" and that their "mother is the only person left at home" to take care of them. It implies that among the respondents, there was no resolution of the Oedipus complex.

## Conclusion

The role of the Oedipus complex experienced by the male respondents is a contributory factor on their perceived romantic security. There was a negative relationship between the Oedipus complex and the perceived romantic security of males.

## Literature Cited

- Barry, J., Seager, M. & Brown, B. (2015). Gender Differences in the Association between Attachment Style and Adulthood Relationship Satisfaction. *New Male Studies: An International Journal* Issn 1839-7816 Vol. 4, Issue 3, 2015 Pp. 63-74.
- Bowlby, J.(1979). Psychoanalysis as art and Science. *International Review of Psycho-Analysis*,6,3-14.
- Cherry, K. (2018). *The Oedipal Complex: One of Freud's Most Controversial Ideas*. [online] Verywell Mind. Available at: <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-an-oedipalcomplex-2795403> [Accessed 28 Jan. 2019].
- Coriat, I. et al.,(1912). The Oedipus Complex In The Psychoneuroses. Available at [https://archive.org/stream/journalofabnorma07ameruoft/journalofabnorma07ameruoft\\_djvu.xt](https://archive.org/stream/journalofabnorma07ameruoft/journalofabnorma07ameruoft_djvu.xt). [Accessed 1 Feb. 2019].
- Diola, C. (2015). *Leaked data: Big majority of adultery website users in Philippines are male | Philstar.com*. [online] philstar.com. Available at: <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2015/08/21/1490638/leaked-data-big-majority-adultery-website-users-philippines-are-male> [Accessed 18 Jan. 2019].
- Du Plessis, K. et al.,(2007). Secure Attachment Conceptualizations: The Influence of General and Specific Relational Models on Conflict Beliefs and Conflict Resolution Styles. *Interpersona* 1(1), 25-44.
- Firestone, L. (2013). *How Your Attachment Style Impacts Your Relationship*. [online] Psychology Today. Available at: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/compassionmatters/2013/07/how-your-attachment-style-impacts-your-relationship> [Accessed 28 Jan. 2019].
- Faber, I.(2010). *The Role Of Anxious Relationship Beliefs In Relationship Satisfaction And Relational Maintenance Behavior: A Comparison Of Anxious Beliefs Among Couples And Singles*. University Utrecht.

- Fraley, C. and Shaver P. (2000). Adult Romantic Attachment: Theoretical Developments, Emerging Controversies, and Unanswered Questions. *Review of General Psychology*. Vol. 4. No. 2, 132-154.
- Fraley, R. C., Waller, N. G., & Brennan, K. A. (2000). An item-response theory analysis of self report measures of adult attachment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 78, 350-365.
- Gonzales M. (2018) What Science Says About Healthy Love versus Dysfunctional Love. *Enrich Healthy Lifestyle and Living* Vol. 11 (115)
- Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. R. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52, 511-524.
- Haiyan, L., Rongqian, W. & Xiaojun, G. *Paul Morel's Oedipus Complex in Sons and Lovers*. *Studies in Literature and Language* Vol. 13, No. 1, 2016, pp. 28-32.
- Honari, B. & Saremi A. (2014). The Study of Relationship between Attachment Styles and Obsessive Love Style. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 165 ( 2015 ) 152 – 159.
- Hickey, C.(2013). The Phenomenal Characteristics of the Son-Father Relationship Experience. *Dissertations & Theses*. 22. <http://aura.antioch.edu/etds/22>.
- Kamenov, Z. and Jelic, M. (2005). Stability of Attachment Styles Across Student's Romantic Relationships, Friendships And Family Relations. *Review Of Psychology*, 12(2),115-123.
- Lewicki R. and Bunker B. (1995). *Trust in Relationships: A Model of Development and Decline*. The Ohio State University 1775 Road.
- Josephs, L. (2009). *The evolved function of the oedipal conflict*. Professor, Derner Institute of Advanced Psychological Studies, Adelphi University, Garden City, Long Island, New York, NY 11530, USA.
- Mallers, M. et al.,(2010). Perceptions of Childhood Relationships With Mother and Father: Daily Emotional and Stressor Experiences in Adulthood. *Developmental Psychology*. 2010, Vol. 46, No. 6, 1651–1661.
- McLeod, S. (2018). *Oedipal Complex / Simply Psychology*. [online] [Simplypsychology.org](http://www.simplypsychology.org). Available at: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/oedipal-complex.html> [Accessed 1 Feb. 2019].
- Moore, K. et al.,(2011). Parental Relationship Quality And Child Outcomes Across Subgroups. 4301 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 350, Washington, DC 20008 Phone 202-572-6000 Fax 202-362-8420 [www.childtrends.org](http://www.childtrends.org).
- Overbeek, G. and Vollebergh W.(2003). Parental Attachment and Romantic Relationships: Associations With Emotional Disturbance During Late Adolescence. *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 2003, Vol. 0, No. 1, 28–39.
- Sahin, F.(2014)Mother – Child Relation And Factors Affecting This Relation. *International Journal of Science Culture and Sport (IntJSCS)*.
- Sommer, T.(2004). The Effect Of Communication Quality And Quantity Indicators On Intimacy And Relational Satisfaction. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* Vol. 21(3): 399–411.
- Statistics Solutions: Dissertation and Research Consulting For Statistical Analysis. (2019). Retrieved from <https://www.statisticssolutions.com/> on February 16, 2019

## AUTHORS

Jayson S. Digamon, Master of Arts in Education  
Faculty, Gingoog City Comprehensive National High School  
Gingoog City, Misamis Oriental, Philippines  
Email: [jayson212012@gmail.com](mailto:jayson212012@gmail.com)

Reymarvelos M. Oros  
Student, Gingoog City Comprehensive National High School  
Gingoog City, Misamis Oriental, Philippines  
Email: [reymarvelosmapalooros@gmail.com](mailto:reymarvelosmapalooros@gmail.com)

Zerg D. Encenzo  
Student, Gingoog City Comprehensive National High School  
Gingoog City, Misamis Oriental, Philippines  
Email: [zergdencezo@gmail.com](mailto:zergdencezo@gmail.com)

Blessed Joana O. Takling  
Student, Gingoog City Comprehensive National High School  
Gingoog City, Misamis Oriental, Philippines  
Email: [taklingblessedjoana@gmail.com](mailto:taklingblessedjoana@gmail.com)

Rynia Mariastelle I. Apugan  
Student, Gingoog City Comprehensive National High School  
Gingoog City, Misamis Oriental, Philippines  
Email: [ryniabam@gmail.com](mailto:ryniabam@gmail.com)

John Dave Lingatong

<http://dx.doi.org/10.29322/IJSRP.9.04.2019.p8858>

ISSN 2250-3153

Student, Gingoog City Comprehensive National High School

Gingoog City, Misamis Oriental, Philippines

Email: [johndave4u@gmail.com](mailto:johndave4u@gmail.com)

Jericho O. Pon

Student, Gingoog City Comprehensive National High School

Gingoog City, Misamis Oriental, Philippines

Email: [ponjericho@gmail.com](mailto:ponjericho@gmail.com)