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A Study Of Rigidity Among Secondary School Students In Relation To Their Adjustment

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Abstract

The present study examines the relationship between rigidity and adjustment among secondary school students. Rigidity, understood as the tendency to resist change in thoughts, beliefs, or behavior, can influence how individuals adapt to academic, social, and emotional demands during adolescence. Using a descriptive survey method, data were collected from a representative sample of secondary school students through standardized psychological scales measuring rigidity and various dimensions of adjustment, including emotional, social, and educational domains. Statistical analyses were employed to determine the nature and strength of the relationship between the two variables. Findings indicate that higher levels of rigidity are generally associated with lower adjustment scores, suggesting that cognitive and behavioral flexibility may play a critical role in fostering positive adaptation in school settings. The results have implications for educators, counselors, and policymakers in designing interventions to promote adaptability and well-being among adolescents.

Keywords: Rigidity, Adjustment, Adolescence, Secondary Education, Cognitive Flexibility, Student Well-being

Introduction

In our world, no two things are completely identical. Each individual, whether a child, adolescent, or adult, has a unique identity that manifests in all activities, varying from person to person. This concept encompasses the organization of an individual's natural tendencies towards behavior & their distinct adaptation to the environment. It involves the dynamic interplay of psychophysical systems within a person, which shapes their characteristic behavior & thought. Personal behavior is crucial for adapting to life.

RIGIDITY

Rigidity, as defined in dictionaries, refers to stiffness or immobility. It is used to describe behaviors that are characterized by an inability to change habits, fixed attitudes, & biases. When we are unwilling to deviate from our established ways of thinking, attitudes, & biases, it results in a high degree of rigidity in our behavior. Consequently, we tend to ignore new methods, facts, or ideas. Many psychologists & researchers have attempted to define rigidity. The concept of rigidity was integrated into the study of personality by Luchins (1942) during his research on "set & Einstellung."

Approaches to Rigidity

In modern clinical & experimental studies, rigidity is often explored through psychoanalytic perspectives. Many psychoanalysts have examined behaviors that are maladaptive & repetitive, which can be understood as rigid behaviors.

Sigmund Freud,Freud's studies of rigid & repetitive behavior led to the development of several key concepts, such as "Repetition Compulsion," "Death Instinct," "Personality Division," "Fixation," & "Ego Defenses." He connected rigid behavior with neurotic disorders, anxiety, fear, & emotional stress. For instance, individuals with neurotic tendencies often have a history of fixation, where they regress to earlier stages of development, causing them to become detached from the present & future. Freud described such people as being "wrecked by their rigidity." Freud noticed that many of his patients would repeatedly share certain experiences or stick rigidly to specific routines, like compulsive hand washing or intricate bedtime rituals. He also observed that "normal" adults & children often engage in repetitive behaviors or recount past experiences. Freud believed that a person’s character is largely a repetition of their past experiences.

According to Freud, the aim of therapy should be to assist patients in realising the unconscious factors that underlie their problems. Transference can lessen obsessive & repeated behaviour if it is handled well. **Other**

Adjustment

A key quality for a good life in modern society is adjustment. Help with adjustment for self-initiated development in the areas of intellectual, emotional, social, physical, & career domains.
The psychological process by which people handle or cope with the demands & challenges of any individual in their lives is referred to as adjustment. Adjustment is a crucial aspect of human life, continuing from birth to death. Both the individual & their environment are constantly evolving, necessitating ongoing adaptation.

Adjustment is intimately linked with the concept of fulfilling needs. It occurs when there is a reasonable balance or harmony between an individual's needs & the demands of their environment. This state of balance is what we refer to as adjustment.

The concept of adjustment can be understood in various contexts. Broadly, it signifies that an individual must adapt to meet the requirements of their environment.

Gates (1954) defined adjustment as a lifelong process in which an individual changes their behaviour to establish a more harmonious relationship with their environment.

Social Adjustment

The concept of social adjustment & social competence is multifaceted & intricate, encompassing various aspects such as social, emotional, cognitive, behavioural, & acquisition skills. These include affect regulation, information retrieval, processing, acquisition, & perspective taking. Additionally, motivation & expectation sets, such as moral development & self-efficacy, are essential for effective social adaptation. According to Sermud (2007), social competence also includes the capacity to see things from another person's point of view, learn from other people's experiences, & use that knowledge to alter social interactions.

Educational Adjustment

Historically, school adjustment has been framed in terms of kids' academic success or advancement. Although this result is relatively restricted, it is nonetheless significant since it focusses the search for early events & precursors in children's environments that could have an impact on adjustment. In a larger sense, adjustment may be seen to include children's growth & accomplishments as well as their attitudes towards learning, worries, feelings of isolation, social support, & academic motivation (e.g., engagement, avoidance, absenteeism).

Adjustment during secondary stage of school

Although humans are more intelligent than animals in every way, humans are not all alike—each person has a different & distinct growth pattern. Every child develops at a different rate. The progression of a person's life follows a systematic pattern.

Human development involves several stages, each marked by specific changes in physical, intellectual, social, & character traits. Different psychologists have defined these stages as follows:

Types of Adjustment:

School Adjustment: Their ability to cope with academic demands, school rules, & relationships with teachers & peers.

Social Adjustment: How they interact & form relationships with friends & other social groups.

Emotional Adjustment: Managing emotions & stress effectively.

Justification of the Study

The role of human personality & behavior is crucial in life. It is through behavior that individuals find adjustment, satisfaction, & happiness, or alternatively, face dissatisfaction. Behavior is a key factor in determining success or failure in life. It plays a fundamental role in one's personal development & overall betterment of life. Proper development of behavior is essential for improving life quality. While heredity

influences individual behavior, these genetic factors are beyond one's control. The environment also plays a significant role in shaping behavior. Rigidity in behavior can significantly affect an individual. It can hinder creativity, problem-solving abilities, social adjustment, abstract thinking, & initiative. To the best of the investigator's knowledge, deficiency of research studies have been conducted in this field. There is a lack of data to confirm the relationship of rigidity on their student adjustment. Therefore, it is crucial to assess whether students exhibit high or low levels of rigidity. Additionally, understanding how their rigidity levels influence their adjustment across various life domains is essential.

Statement of the Problem

"A study of Rigidity among Secondary School Students in Relation to their Adjustment."

Operational Definitions of Terms Used

Rigidity:

Here in the present study, Rigidity refers to a lack of flexibility in thinking or behavior. In the context of secondary school students, rigidity may an evidence as a disinclination to adapt to new ideas, rules, or environments.

Adjustment:

Here in the present study Adjustment refers to secondary school students i.e. how students adapt to different environments & situations, including school, social settings, & emotional challenges.

Objectives of the Present Study

1) To study the level of rigidity among secondary school students .
2) The study the level of adjustment among secondary school students .
3) To study the relationship between rigidity & adjustment secondary school students(Total sample).
4) To study the difference between level of adjustment among girls & boys students.
5) To study the difference between level of rigidity among girls & boys students.

Hypotheses Formulated in the Present Study

1. There exist no significant relationship between rigidity & secondary school student's adjustment.
2. There exist no significant difference between adjustment of girls & boys students.
3. There exists no significant difference between level of rigidity among girls & boys students.

Population

In research, the term "population" is used in a broader context than its everyday meaning of people. It refers to the entire group from which a sample is drawn, & this group can include individuals, objects, attributes, behaviors of people & animals, responses to various items, preferences, & more. In the current study, the population consists of government school students in the adolescent age group(12-18) from Pundri Town of Kaithal district in Haryana.

Sampling is a method in which a small group of individuals, or measurements of individuals, objects, or events, is chosen & analyzed to make generalizations about the whole population. This method reduces costs, saves time & energy, & allows for measurements with greater scope & accuracy. The sample is a representative portion of the population. Collecting data from all members of a population is impractical, so researchers use sampling techniques. This study employed random sampling.

Sample

In research, the term "Sample" refers to the representative portion of entire group from which a sample is drawn. This group can include individuals, objects, attributes, behaviors of people & animals, responses to various items, preferences, & more. In the current study, the population consists of government school students in the adolescent age group from Pundri Town of Kaithal district in Haryana. The sample for this study included 80 students from **9th grade** in Pundri Town.

Research Sample & Methodology

A sample of 40 boys & 40 girls from the 9th grade was selected from three schools in the Pundri Town from Kaithal district of Haryana. The adolescent learners from the 9th grade were chosen randomly. Below is the detailed distribution of the sample:

Table 3.1.1

Distribution of Students by Class & Gender

Sr. No.	Class	Boys	Girls	Total
1	9th	40	40	80

Research Tools

To explore new facts or fields, researchers need various instruments. The selection of these tools depends on factors such as the objective of the study, the time available to the researcher, the variability of suitable tasks, & the reliability & validity of the tools.

In this study, the following tools were used for data collection:

1. Self-made Rigidity Inventory

2. Adjustment Inventory for School Students (AISS) by A.K.P. Sinha & R.P. Singh

Description of Tools

3.2 Description of the Self-Made Rigidity Inventory

The "Self-Made Rigidity Inventory" is designed to assess the rigidity of individuals, particularly students, based on their responses to various statements. This inventory consists of 40 questions that explore different aspects of rigidity, including responses to change, emotional control, interpersonal interactions, & attitudes towards rules & principles.

Instructions for Respondents:

For each question, respond with "Yes" or "No."

Your answers will help determine your level of rigidity in various situations.

Scoring the Self-Made Rigidity Inventory:

Scoring System:

Assign a value to each response:

"Yes" = 1 point

"No" = 0 points

Calculate the Total Score:

Sum the points for all 40 questions. The maximum possible score is 40 points, & the minimum is 0 points.

Interpretation of Scores:

High Score (30-40 points): Indicates a higher level of rigidity. Individuals scoring in this range may have strong preferences for structure, resist change, & may have difficulties with flexibility in various situations.

Moderate Score (15-29 points): Reflects a moderate level of rigidity. Individuals with this score may show some preferences for structure & consistency but are generally more adaptable than those with high scores.

Low Score (0-14 points): Suggests a lower level of rigidity. Individuals scoring in this range are likely more flexible & adaptable to changes & less bound by strict principles.

Example Calculation:

If a student responds "Yes" to 25 questions & "No" to 15 questions:

Total Score = 25 points

Usage:

Use the total score to evaluate the student's rigidity level & tailor interventions or support strategies accordingly.

By following this method, you can effectively use the "Self-Made Rigidity Inventory" to assess rigidity & provide insights into areas where students might benefit from increased flexibility or support.

Table 3.1.2

Distribution of items in the rigidity inventory

Sr. No.	**Yes Response (Item having Yes)**	**No Response (Item having No)**
Question No.	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10, 11,12,13,14,15,16, 19,20,22,23,24,25, 26,29,30,31,33,34, 36,37,38,39,40	17,18,21,27 ,28,32,35
Total Questions	33	7

Discription of the Adjustment Inventory:

Adjustment Inventory for School Students (AISS): This inventory is intended for use with Hindi-speaking school children in India. It tries to distinguish between well-adjusted and poorly adjusted secondary school children (ages 14-18) in three areas: emotional, social, and educational adjustment. The test consists of 60 questions, 20 for each sort of correction.

Table 3.1.3

Distribution of Items in the Adjustment Scale

Sr. no.	Dimensions	Items
1	Emotional-Adjustment	1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, 22, 25, 28, 31, 34, 37, 40, 43, 46, 49, 52, 55, 58
2	Social-Adjustment	2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 23, 26, 29, 32, 35, 38, 41, 44, 47, 50, 53, 56, 59
3	Educational-Adjustment	3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 42, 45, 48, 51, 54, 57, 60

Scoring

After data collection, the investigator scores the answer sheet based on prescribed scoring keys.

Scoring Procedure of Adjustment Inventory

The inventory can only be scored manually. For any answer indicative of adjustment, a score of zero is given. Otherwise, a score of one is awarded. Table
3.4 shows the key responses indicative of a lack of adjustment.

The inventory is intended to aid in counseling school students aged 14-18 years whose personal problems pertain to any of the three areas included in the test.
The total score indicates the general adjustment status.

Table 3.1.4

Key Responses Indicating Lack of Adjustment:

EMOTIONAL		SOCIAL		EDUCATIONAL	
Item No.	Response Indicative Of lack of Adjustment	Item No.	Response Indicative Of lack of Adjustment	Item no.	Response Indicative Of lack of adjustment
1	Yes	2	Yes	3	Yes
4	Yes	5	Yes	6	Yes
7	Yes	8	Yes	9	Yes
10	yes	11	No	12	No
13	Yes	14	Yes	15	Yes
16	Yes	17	No	18	No
19	Yes	20	No	21	Yes
22	Yes	23	No	24	No
25	Yes	26	No	27	Yes
28	Yes	29	Yes	30	No
31	Yes	32	No	33	No
34	Yes	35	Yes	36	Yes
37	Yes	38	No	39	Yes
40	Yes	41	No	42	Yes
43	Yes	44	No	45	Yes
46	Yes	47	Yes	48	No
49	Yes	50	No	51	No
52	Yes	53	No	54	No
55	Yes	56	No	57	No
58	Yes	59	No	60	No

CLASSIFICATION OF ADJUSTMENT IN TERMS OF CATAGEORIES

Subjects can be classified into five categories based on their raw scores on the inventory. These categories are:

- A(Excellent): Scores of 5 & below
- B(Good): Scores of 6 -12 for males & 6 - 14 for females
- C(Average): Scores of 13 -21 for males & 15 - 22 for females
- D(Unsatisfactory): Scores of 22 -30 for males & 23 - 31 for females
- E(Very Unsatisfactory): Scores of 31 & above for males & 32 & above for females

Table:3.1.5

CLASSIFICATION OF ADJUSTMENT IN TERMS OF CATAGEORIES

Range of scores			
Category	**Description**	**Male**	**Female**
A	• EXCELLENT	5 & below	5 &below
B	• GOOD	6 -12	6 -14
C	• AVERAGE	13 -21	15 -22
D	• UNSATISFACTORY	22 -30	23 -31
E	• VERY UNSATISFACTORY	31 & above	32 & above

Reliability

The reliability coefficient was calculated using (i) the split-half method, (ii) the test-retest method, & (iii) the K-R Formula-20. Table 3.6 presents the reliability coefficients for the entire test as well as the sub-tests obtained through these different methods.

Table -3.1.6 Reliability Coefficient of the Inventory

S. No.	Method Used	Emotional	Social	Educational	Total
1	Split-half	0.94	0.93	0.96	0.95
2	Test-Retest	0.96	0.90	0.93	0.93
3	K-R formula-20	0.92	0.92	0.96	0.94

Validity:

In item-analysis, validity coefficients were determined through biserial correlation methods, retaining items that showed biserial correlation with both criteria (total scores & area scores) at a significance level of 0.01. Inter-correlations among the three areas of the inventory were calculated.

Table 3.1.7

Validity Coefficient of the Inventory

Sr. No.	Areas	I	II	III
1	Emotional	-	0.20	0.19
2	Social	0.20	-	0.24
3	Educational	0.19	0.24	-

Administration

This inventory is designed to be self-administering. Gaining the cooperation of students who will be taking the inventory is crucial. The user, as well as the examinee, should try to build mutual confidence. Both the user & the examinee should carefully read the instructions provided on the front page of the test booklet. The test booklet includes specific instructions for the inventory's purpose & use. Separate sheets for each individual are provided for writing responses to the inventory items. The scores for each area & the total adjustment scores should be computed separately using the key provided in the manual.

Statistical Techniques

The data collected was carefully organized, coded, & entered into a spreadsheet. We will use the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 for data analysis. Researcher calculated descriptive statistics such as mean, median, mode, skewness, kurtosis, & standard deviation for each item & overall. For inferential analysis, we used correlation & independent samples t-test to study the rigidity among secondary school students in relation to their adjustment.

Section I: Descriptive Statistics

Objective 1: To Study the level of rigidity among secondary school students.

Analysis of Rigidity Scores of Secondary school students:

The researcher gathered data from an adjustment inventory designed for male adolescents. The data were organized into a frequency distribution, & the mean, median, mode, standard deviation (SD), skewness, & kurtosis were then calculated.

Table 4.1

Mean, Median, Mode, Standard Deviation, Skewness, Kurtosis for Rigidity scores of Secondary school students.

Mean	Median	Mode	SD	SK	KU
24.5	23	23	3.49	-1.24	2.18

Interpretation of Table 4.1

The analysis of the level of rigidity among secondary school students shows that:

The average rigidity level is relatively high (mean = 24.5). The median & mode being the same (23) suggests that most students' rigidity levels cluster around this value. The negative skewness (-1.24) indicates that there are more students with rigidity levels above the mean, although the data is slightly skewed to the left. The standard deviation (3.49) shows a moderate spread around the mean. The kurtosis (2.18) suggests a distribution with heavier tails, implying the presence of outliers.

This statistical analysis helps in understanding the central tendency & dispersion of rigidity levels among secondary school students, providing insights that could be useful for educational strategies & interventions.

Objective 2: To study the level of Adjustment among Secondary school students.

Analysis of Adjustment Scores of Secondary school students:

The second objective of the study is to examine the level of adjustment among secondary school students. The analysis of the adjustment scores reveals the following statistical characteristics:

Table 4.2

Mean	Median	Mode	SD	SK	KU
12.81	12.5	12	3.98	0.54	0.37

Interpretation of above Table 4.2:

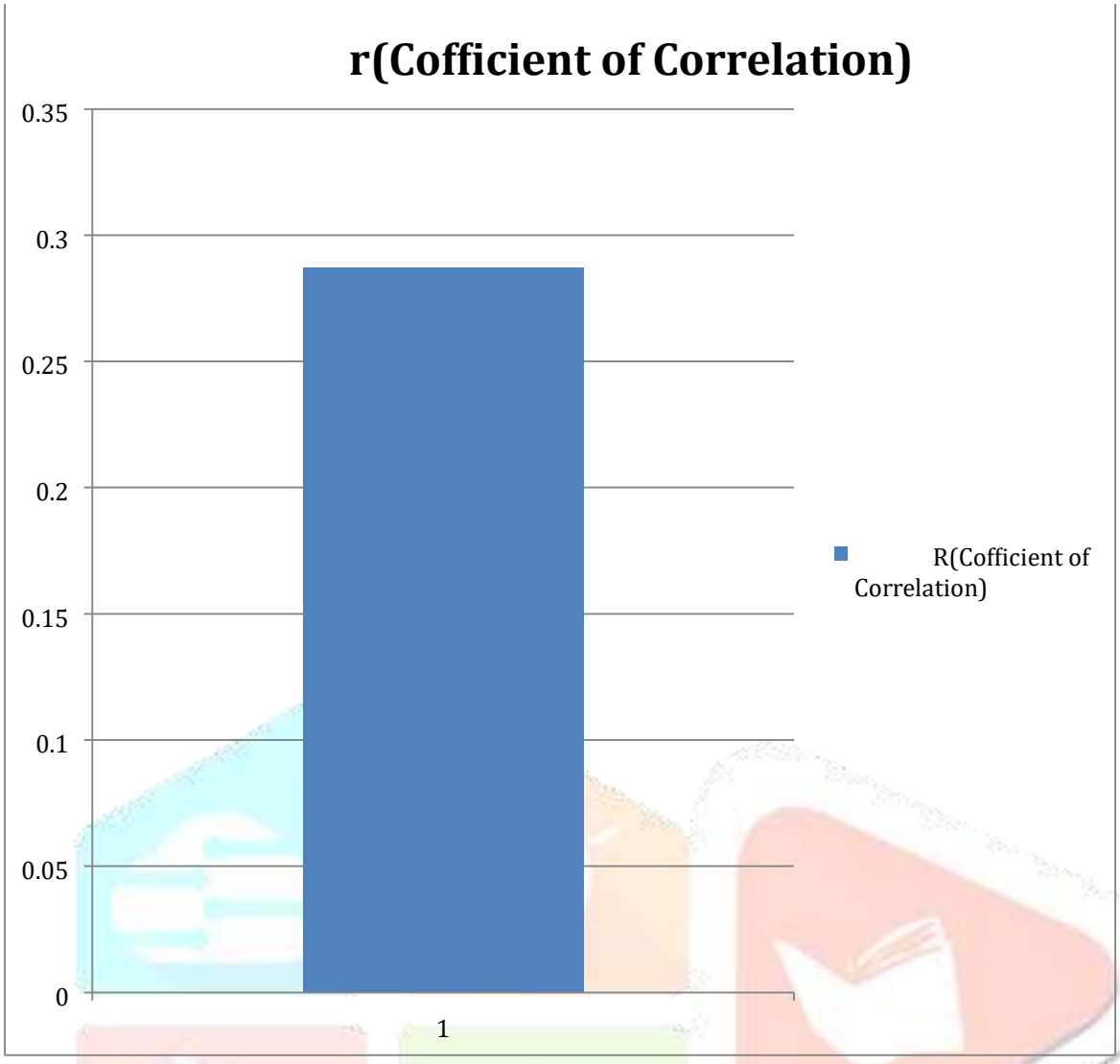
In summary, the data indicates that secondary school students generally have a moderate level of adjustment, with most scores clustering around the mean of 12.81. The slight positive skew & moderate variability suggest that while the majority of students have adjustment scores near the average, there are a few with significantly higher adjustment levels. The distribution is relatively normal, with a minor tendency towards higher scores.

Objective 3: To study the relationship between rigidity & adjustment among secondary school students (total sample).

Analysis of correlation between rigidity & adjustment of total sample

Table 4.3

Sr. No.	Group	N	r	Level of significance
1.	Total Rigidity	80	0.283	Significant at 0.01 level of significance
2.	Total Adjustment	80		



The third objective of the study aims to investigate the relationship between rigidity & adjustment among secondary school students, using a sample size of 80 students. The value of the correlation coefficient (R) is found to be 0.287.

Correlation Coefficient (R): The correlation coefficient of 0.287 indicates a positive relationship between rigidity & adjustment. This means that as the level of rigidity increases, the level of adjustment also tends to increase, although the relationship is weak.

Significance Level: The significance level (α) of 0.01 corresponds to a critical value of 0.283 for the correlation coefficient. Since the calculated correlation coefficient (0.287) is greater than the critical value (0.283), we can conclude that the correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

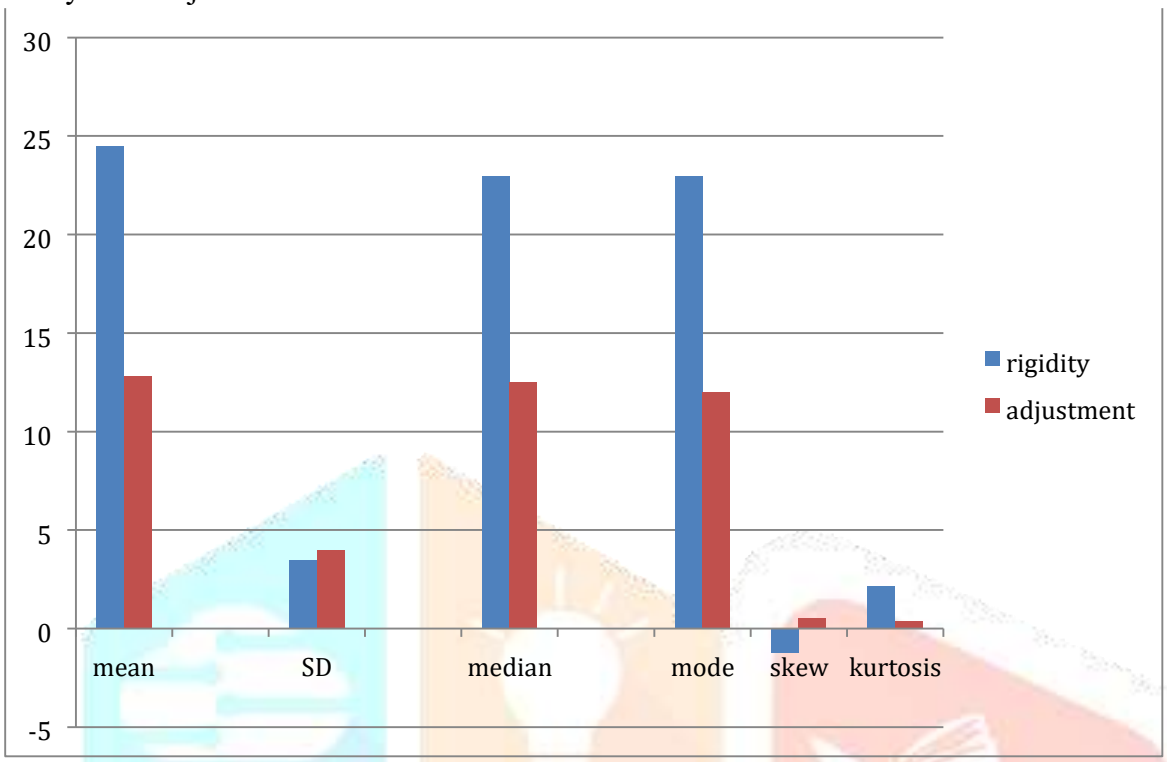
Interpretation:

The statistically significant positive correlation (R = 0.287) between rigidity & adjustment suggests that there is a weak but positive association between these two variables among secondary school students. In other words, students who exhibit higher levels of rigidity tend to show higher levels of adjustment, though the

strength of this relationship is not particularly strong. Given that the correlation is significant at the 0.01 level, we can be confident that this observed relationship is unlikely to be due to chance.

Objective 4: To study the difference between adjustment of secondary school girls & boys.

Analysis of objective 4:



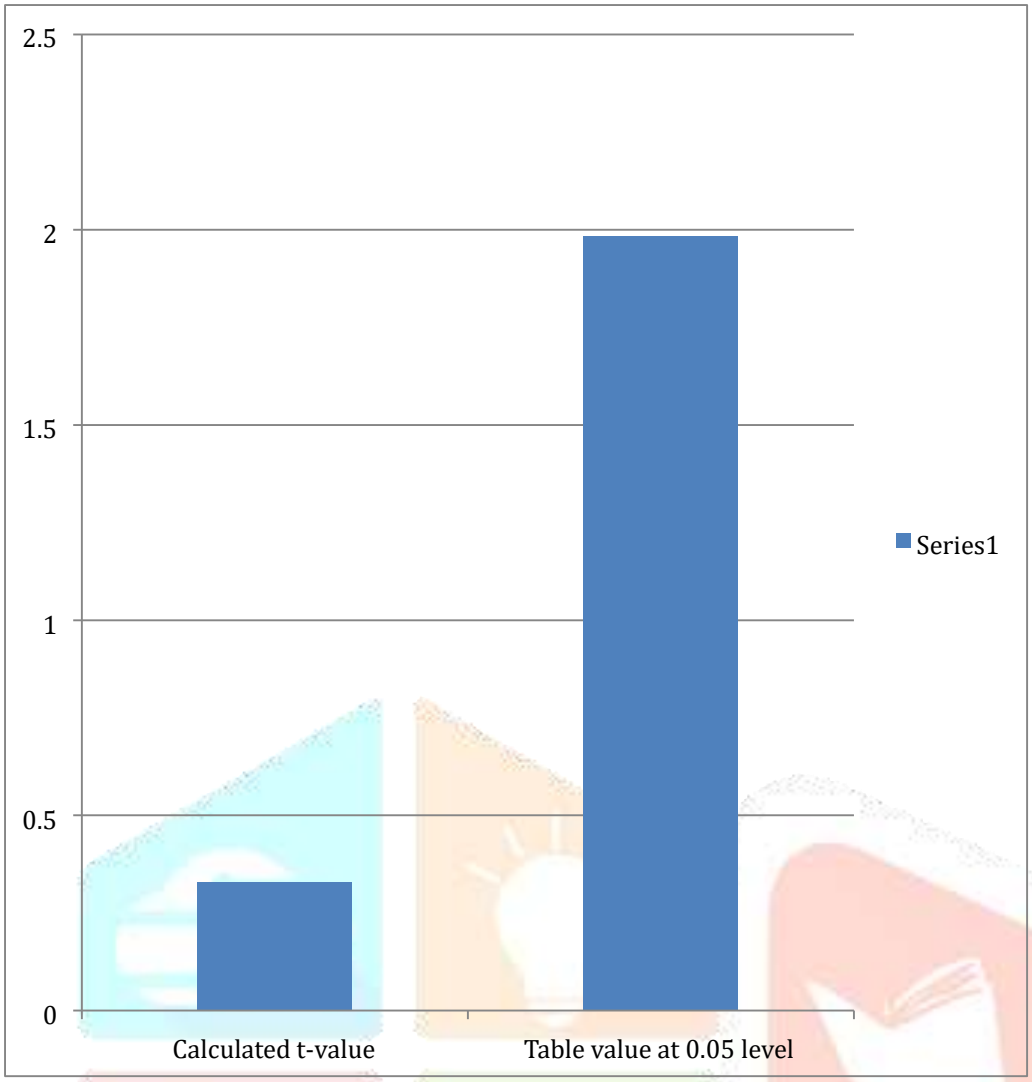
To examine the difference in adjustment levels between secondary school girls & boys, the study utilized two equal samples, each consisting of 40 students (n1 = 40, n2 = 40). The girls' mean adjustment score was found to be 13.25 with a standard deviation (SD) of 3.64, while the boys' mean adjustment score was 12.38 with a standard deviation of 4.30. The t-ratio calculated for this comparison was 0.328.

Table 4.4

Sr. No.	Group	N	M	SD	t-ratio	Level of significance
1.	Boys	40	12.38	4.30	0.328	Not significant at 0.05 level

Interpretation of Objective: Difference in Adjustment Between Secondary School Girls & boys t-Ratio: The calculated t-ratio for comparing the means of the two groups is 0.328.

Significance Level: The critical value of t at the 0.05 significance level is 1.984.



Interpretation:

The comparison of adjustment scores between secondary school girls & boys yielded a t-ratio of 0.328, which is much lower than the critical value of 1.984 at the 0.05 significance level. This indicates that the difference in mean adjustment scores between girls & boys is not statistically significant. In other words, there is no significant difference in the adjustment levels of secondary school girls & boys within this sample. Despite slight differences in their mean scores, these differences are not substantial enough to conclude that one group adjusts significantly better than the other.

Objective 5: To study the difference between level of rigidity among secondary school girls & boys students.

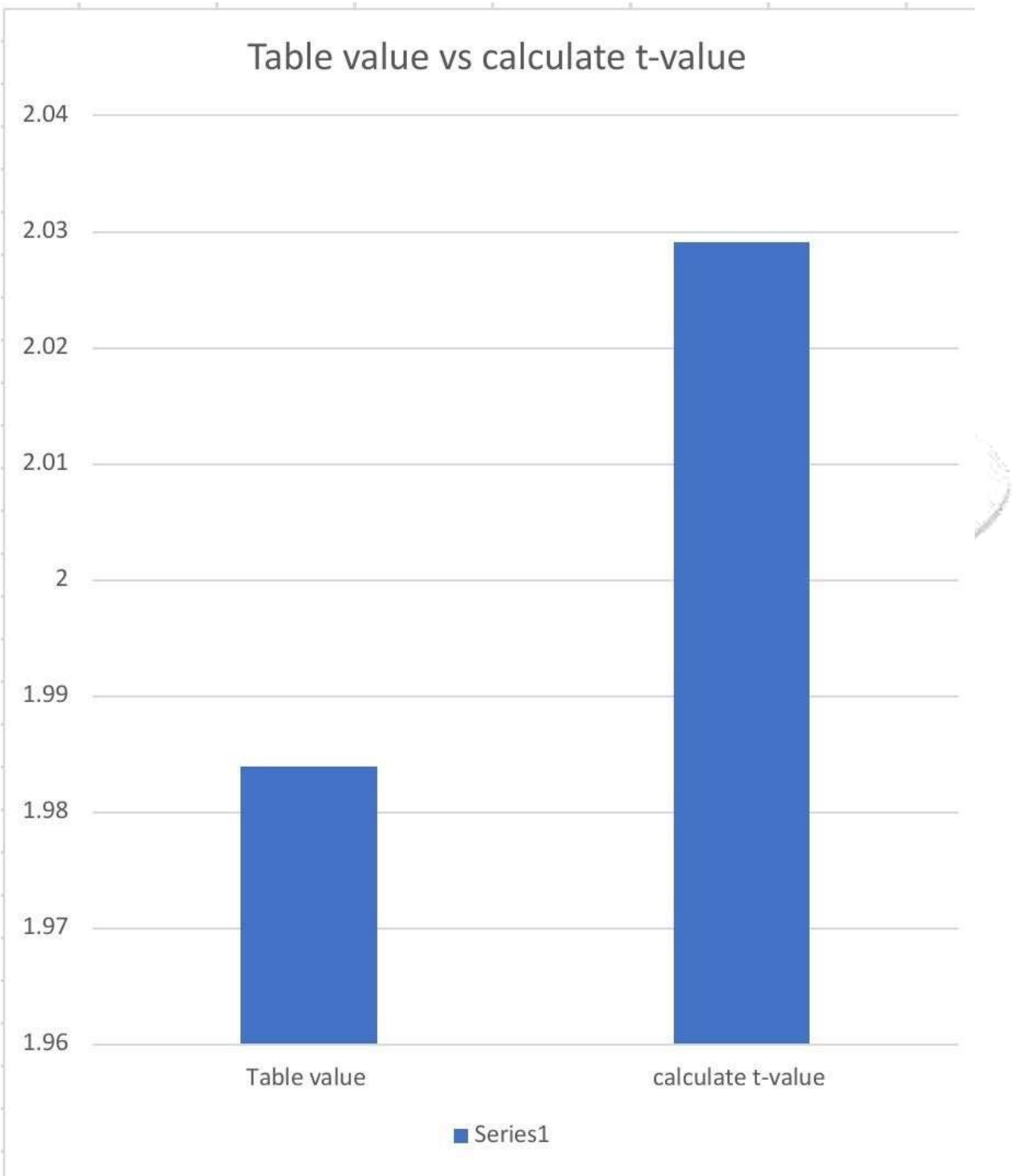
Analysis of objective 5:

To examine the difference between rigidity level among secondary school girls & boys students, the utilized the two equal samples ,each group consisting 40 respondent students (n1=n2=40). The

Boys' mean rigidity score was found to be 21.9 with SD of 4.29,while the girls' means rigidity score was 23.9 with SD of 2.24. The t-ratio calculated for this comparison was 2.0921.

Table 4.5

Sr. No.	Group	N	M	SD	t-ratio	Level of significance
1	Boys	40	21.9	4.29	2.0921	
2	Girls	40	23.5	2.24		Significant at 0.05 level



Interpretation:

The table 4.5, it is confirmed that the mean scores of girls & boys students was 21.9 & 23.5 respectively, standard deviation scores of girls & boys students were 4.29 & 2.24. The calculated t-ratio was 2.0921 which is much greater than the table value of "t" i.e. 1.984 at 0.05 level & 2.626 at 0.01 level. It indicates that there exists significance difference in the rigidity level among secondary school girls & boys students. Hence the result is statistically significant, means null hypothesis can be rejected.

5.1 Findings :

1.Rigidity Among Secondary School Students: The data shows a slightly negatively skewed distribution in rigidity levels, suggesting that most students score below the average rigidity level. The mean rigidity score is 24.5, with a median & mode around 23, & a standard deviation of 3.49. The negative skewness (-1.24) indicates that a larger proportion of students have lower rigidity, while the kurtosis value (2.18) points to a distribution that is a bit more peaked than normal.

2. Adjustment Levels Among Secondary School Students: The adjustment scores have a mean of 12.81 with a median of 12.5 & a mode of 12. The standard deviation is 3.98. The positive skewness (0.54) indicates a tendency for scores to be slightly above the mean, while the kurtosis (0.37) reveals a distribution that is flatter than the normal curve, suggesting a wider spread of adjustment scores.

3.Relationship Between Rigidity & Adjustment: There is a weak but statistically significant positive correlation (r = 0.287) between rigidity & adjustment. This implies that as rigidity increases, there is a slight tendency for adjustment to improve, although the relationship is not strong.

4.Gender Differences in Adjustment: The t-test results show no significant difference in adjustment levels between boys (mean = 12.38, SD = 4.30) & girls (mean = 13.25, SD = 3.64). The t-ratio (0.328) is much lower than the critical value (1.984), indicating that gender does not significantly affect adjustment levels.

5.2 Educational Implications:

- Schools should consider programs that help students manage rigidity & adapt to varying situations. Activities aimed at improving flexibility & adaptability could be beneficial.
- School should focus educational interventions & strategies to improve adjustment skills, especially since scores are widely spread & slightly positive skewed. Programs that support emotional & social adjustment can be effective.
- While the relationship between rigidity & adjustment is weak, educators can still use this insight to design activities that integrate rigidity & adjustment skills, potentially helping students to find a balance.
- Since there is no significant gender difference in adjustment levels, interventions should be designed to be inclusive & applicable to all students, without focusing on gender-specific strategies.

- School authorities should implement & evaluate programs aimed at reducing rigidity & improving adjustment among students.

- School should create learning environments that accommodate diverse rigidity levels, offering both structured & unstructured activities to cater to various student needs.

5.3 Suggestions For Future Research:

Here are some recommendations for future research on the topic of rigidity among secondary school students in connection with their adjustment:

- A similar study should conducted with a larger sample size, encompassing students from all districts of Haryana.
- Comparative research should undertaken as interstate & cross-sectional studies to explore rigidity & adjustment in a broader context.
- A study should performed to examine the attitudes towards rigidity & adjustment among various teachers.
- A broader study should conducted beyond the Pundri Town of Kaithal district to better understand the underlying factors contributing to rigidity & adjustment challenges.

Delimitation

- This study is confined to exploring the rigidity among secondary school students specifically in relation to their adjustment patterns.
- This study was confined to various schools in Pundri Town.
- Among the numerous variables affecting student adjustment, only the level of rigidity was considered.
- The study was limited on to the 9^{th} grade secondary school students.
- The study included only 80 students.