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**GENDER AND CLASS DIFFERENCES IN SELF-CONFIDENCE
AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS OF JAWAHAR
NAVODAYA VIDYALAYA, ASSAM**

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Keywords	Abstract
<p><i>Self-Confidence, Secondary School Students, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Gender Difference, Class Difference.</i></p>	<p>The current study aimed to determine the level of self-confidence among secondary school students at Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Lakhimpur, Assam, and to analyze differences based on gender and class level. A self-confidence scale created by the researcher was used to collect data, and statistical techniques such as percentage analysis, mean, standard deviation, and t-test were used for data analysis. The results showed that most students had an average level of self-confidence, while fewer students fell into the low and high categories. There was a significant difference in self-confidence between male and female students, with females exhibiting higher levels of confidence. Students in Class X showed greater self-confidence than those in Class IX, and there were also notable differences</p>



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Manash Protim Neog & Babita Choudhury (2026). *Gender and Class Differences in Self-Confidence Among Secondary School Students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Assam*. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research & Reviews. 5(4). 393-405.

between the two groups.

Introduction

Self-confidence is the foundation of personal growth, success, and well-being. It empowers individuals to take risks, overcome obstacles, and achieve their goals. Self-confidence is the unwavering faith and trust in oneself, one's abilities, and one's judgment. Self-confidence is an attitude about our skills and abilities. It means we accept and trust ourselves and have a sense of control in our lives. We know our strengths and weaknesses well and have a positive view of ourselves. We set realistic expectations and goals, communicate assertively, and can handle criticism. This internal conviction enables individuals to perceive various situations objectively and to tackle challenges with sufficient self-knowledge. This intrinsic belief system cultivates a positive yet realistic self-perception, allowing individuals to maintain a sense of control and pursue their aspirations with conviction (Chen et al., 2024). It allows individuals to effectively integrate mental and physical energies towards a goal, serving as a precursor to significant accomplishments even in daunting situations. Moreover, self-confident individuals exhibit a willingness to operate autonomously, recognizing their inherent strengths and confronting life's myriad challenges with courage and resolute conviction. This confidence, grounded in a realistic understanding of one's abilities, fosters trust from others and guides individuals toward better decision-making rather than exaggerated certainty. This belief in one's capabilities extends beyond mere personal conviction, often translating into a positive mindset that allows for favorable and objective perceptions of both self and circumstances (Gist & Mitchell, 1992; Navickienė & Vasiliauskas, 2024). This positive mindset is crucial as it underpins the capacity to accept personal shortcomings and failures without fear, thereby fostering continuous self-improvement and resilience (Messaoud, 2022). This resilience, cultivated through a realistic understanding of personal attributes, forms a critical component of one's broader self-concept, which encompasses the totality of beliefs and perceptions about oneself. This self-concept, characterized by a favorable outlook, is fundamental to psychological well-being and life satisfaction (Sholehati et al., 2023). This intricate relationship highlights how a positive self-concept, incorporating diverse self-perceived facets, inherently nurtures and reinforces self-confidence, leading to greater assurance across life's varied domains. This robust self-belief is not merely an innate characteristic but is also dynamically shaped by life experiences and can be intentionally developed through education and continuous interaction with one's environment (Suhartiwi, 2020). Fundamentally, self-confidence entails an individual's acknowledgment and acceptance of their own capabilities, often manifesting as an optimistic and proactive stance in various life scenarios (Abdurrahman et al., 2024).

Review of Related Literature

Several studies have highlighted the role of self-confidence in students' personal, academic, and psychological development. Dwyer and Peters (2004) examined American students who participated



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in semester-long study abroad programs and found that self-confidence emerged as one of the most frequently reported personal gains after program completion. In a related context, Kashima and Loh (2006) investigated the psychological adjustment of international students in Australia. Their findings revealed that self-confidence played a crucial role in successful adaptation. Students who perceived themselves as competent in communication and problem-solving skills reported better psychological well-being and smoother adjustment to the new environment. Focusing on Indian students, Desai and Mehta (2017) explored the relationship between self-confidence and career choices. The study revealed that students with higher levels of self-confidence were more inclined to select careers aligned with their personal interests and abilities, suggesting that self-confidence influences decision-making and career clarity. Similarly, Singh and Mukherjee (2018) studied Indian students participating in study abroad programs and found that cultural immersion significantly enhanced self-confidence, particularly in communication skills and problem-solving abilities. The relationship between self-confidence and academic performance has also been widely studied. Sharma et al. (2018) reported a positive correlation between self-confidence and academic achievement among Indian students, indicating that confident students tend to perform better academically. Supporting these findings, Choudhury and Ahmed (2018), in a study conducted among university students in Sikkim, found that self-confidence significantly influenced study habits and examination performance. The study also noted slightly higher self-confidence levels among female students compared to male students. Salisbury et al. (2010) further emphasized that international experiences enhance self-confidence by requiring students to adapt independently, solve real-life problems, and interact with culturally diverse groups. Beyond academics, Rao and Kumar (2019) investigated the relationship between self-confidence and emotional intelligence among Indian adolescents. Their findings indicated that higher self-confidence was associated with greater emotional intelligence, particularly in areas such as self-awareness and empathy. Extending this line of inquiry, Kumar et al. (2020) examined self-confidence in relation to mental health and found that individuals with higher self-confidence reported lower levels of anxiety and depression, reflecting better overall mental health. Sharma and Kumar (2020) compared Indian students who studied abroad with those who remained in their home country and found significantly higher self-confidence among the former group, especially in decision-making and interpersonal interactions. In a non-academic setting, Sharma and Das (2018) studied small-scale entrepreneurs in Tripura and observed that higher self-confidence was associated with risk-taking behavior, access to funding, and business profitability, underscoring the broader relevance of self-confidence beyond educational contexts.

Significance of the Study

Adolescence is a critical period when self-confidence is instrumental in the academic achievement, emotional wellbeing as well as the whole personality development of students. It is a vulnerable time in their lives as students experience the pressure of academics, social needs, and making crucial



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choices about their future in secondary school years. Proper self-confidence in life assists students to handle life difficulties, make sound decisions, and excel in academics as well as personal lives. Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas offer students a special residential and competitive learning environment to students of different backgrounds. Even so, there has been little research to be found in order to learn the degree of self-confidence among secondary school students of JNVs, especially in the case of Assam. The analysis of gender-based and class-level differences in self-confidence can also be used to determine the student requirements and support mechanisms.

This research is likely to have implications for teachers, school administrators, counselors, and parents as they prepare the right educational and psychological intervention. Through learning the self-confidence levels of the students, the schools can implement strategies to foster emotional wellness, efficient decision-making, and positive academic interactions in the secondary school students

Operational Definitions-

Self-Confidence-

In the present study, self-confidence refers to cultivating good attitudes, dealing with emotions, setting goals, decision-making skills, and problem-solving ability of Secondary school students of JNV Lakhimpur

Self-Confidence

In the present study, self-confidence is defined as the ability of secondary school students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV), Lakhimpur, to develop positive attitudes toward themselves, manage and regulate their emotions effectively, set and pursue meaningful goals, make appropriate decisions, and solve problems encountered in academic and everyday situations.

Secondary School Students

For this study, secondary school students refer specifically to students studying in Class IX and Class X of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya located in Lakhimpur District.

Research Questions

1. What is the prevailing level of self-confidence among secondary school students studying in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV)?
2. Does a statistically significant difference exist in the level of self-confidence between male and female students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya?
3. Is there a statistically significant difference in the level of self-confidence between Class IX and Class X students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya?



Manash Protim Neog & Babita Choudhury (2026). *Gender and Class Differences in Self-Confidence Among Secondary School Students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Assam*. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research & Reviews. 5(4). 393-405.

Objectives of the Study

1. To determine the level of self-confidence among secondary school students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV).
2. To examine whether there is any difference in self-confidence between male and female students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya.
3. To find out whether self-confidence differs between Class IX and Class X students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya.

Hypotheses of the Study

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in self-confidence between male and female students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in self-confidence between Class IX and Class X students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya.

Delimitations of the Study

The present study is delimited in the following ways:

- The study is confined only to secondary school students studying in Class IX and Class X.
- The sample includes students from Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya located in Lakhimpur District only; students from other districts or schools are not included.
- The study considers only male and female students enrolled in the selected Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya.
- The study focuses exclusively on self-confidence as the psychological variable, as defined and measured by the researcher-developed self-confidence scale.

Methodology

Research Design

The present study adopted the descriptive survey method to examine the level of self-confidence among senior secondary school students. This method was considered appropriate as it enables the researcher to describe existing conditions and analyze differences among groups without manipulating any variables.

Population of the Study

For this study, the population included all Class IX and Class X students studying at Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Lakhimpur.



Manash Protim Neog & Babita Choudhury (2026). *Gender and Class Differences in Self-Confidence Among Secondary School Students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Assam*. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research & Reviews. 5(4). 393-405.

Sample of the Study

A sample of 73 students studying in Class XI and Class XII was selected for the study. The sample represented approximately 50 percent of the total population, ensuring adequate representation of the population.

Sampling Technique

The multi-stage random sampling technique was used to select schools and students. This technique helped in reducing sampling bias and ensured a fair representation of different categories within the population.

Tool Used

Data were collected using a self-confidence scale constructed by the researcher. The tool was designed to assess various aspects of self-confidence relevant to senior secondary school students.

Sources of Data

Both **primary and secondary sources** were used in the study.

- **Primary data** were collected directly from students through the administration of the self-confidence tool.
- **Secondary data** were obtained from books, journals, research articles, theses, and relevant online resources.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

analysis and interpretation of data collected to examine the level of self-confidence among secondary school students of Lakhimpur JNV, Assam. Appropriate statistical techniques, such as percentage analysis, mean, standard deviation, and *t*-test, were used to analyze the data in line with the objectives of the study. The results are presented through tables and figures for clarity.

Objective 1

To determine the level of self-confidence among secondary school students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV).

Table-1.1

Level of Self-Confidence Among Secondary School Students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya Based on Z-Scores

Z- Score Range	Level	No. of students
-3.00 to-1.00	Low	18



Manash Protim Neog & Babita Choudhury (2026). *Gender and Class Differences in Self-Confidence Among Secondary School Students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Assam*. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research & Reviews. 5(4). 393-405.

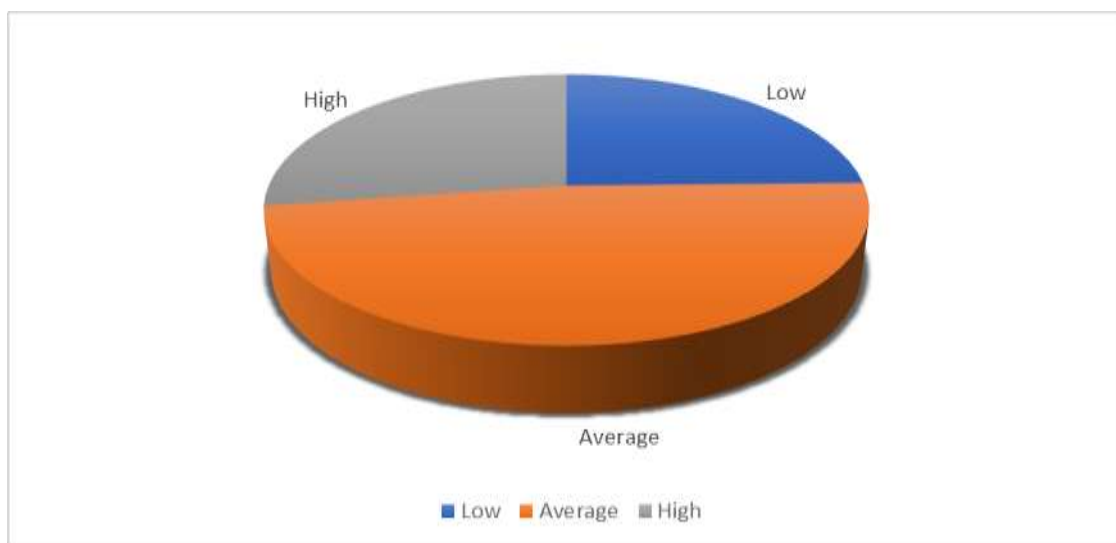
-1.00 to+1.00	Average	35
+1.00 to+3.00	High	20

Table 1.1 shows the level of self-confidence among secondary school students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Lakhimpur, based on Z-score ranges. The table indicates that 18 students have a low level of self-confidence, as their scores fall between -3.00 and -1.00 . These students may feel less confident in their abilities. Most of the students, that is, 35, fall under the average level of self-confidence, with Z-scores between -1.00 and $+1.00$. This shows that the majority of students have a normal and balanced level of self-confidence. The table also shows that 20 students have a high level of self-confidence, with Z-scores ranging from $+1.00$ to $+3.00$. These students generally have a strong belief in themselves and their abilities.

Overall, the table clearly indicates that most JNV secondary school students possess an average level of self-confidence, while fewer students fall in the low and high categories.

Figure -1

Distribution of Levels of Self-Confidence Among Secondary School Students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya



Objective-2

To examine whether there is any difference in self-confidence between male and female students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya.



Manash Protim Neog & Babita Choudhury (2026). *Gender and Class Differences in Self-Confidence Among Secondary School Students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Assam*. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research & Reviews. 5(4). 393-405.

Table 1.2

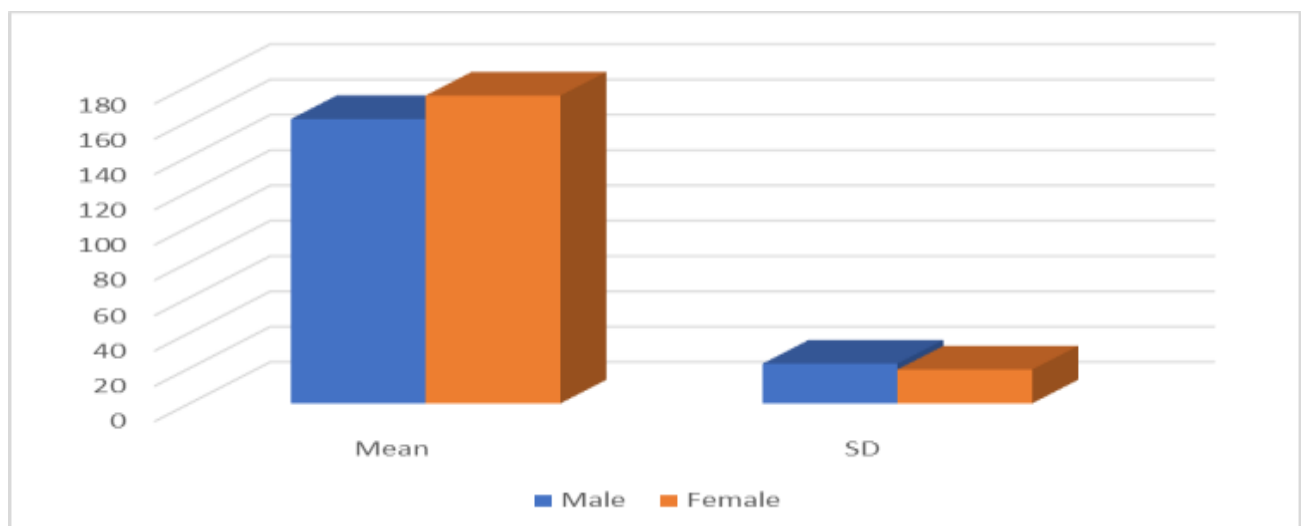
Comparison of Self-Confidence Scores of Male and Female Students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya

Gender	Number of Students	Mean	SD	df	Calculated t- value
Male	34	161.07	22.52	71	2.69
Female	39	174.37	19.15		

The table reveals that the mean score of females ($M = 174.37$, $SD = 19.15$) is higher than that of males ($M = 161.07$, $SD = 22.52$). The calculated t-value is 2.69 with 71 degrees of freedom, which is greater than the table value at the 0.05 level. This indicates a significant difference between the scores of male and female students. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. The mean and standard deviations given in Table 1.2 have been graphically represented in Figure 2

Figure-2

Mean and SD of Self-Confidence among Male and Female Students



Manash Protim Neog & Babita Choudhury (2026). *Gender and Class Differences in Self-Confidence Among Secondary School Students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Assam*. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research & Reviews. 5(4). 393-405.

Objective 3

To find out whether self-confidence differs between Class IX and Class X students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya.

Table-1.3

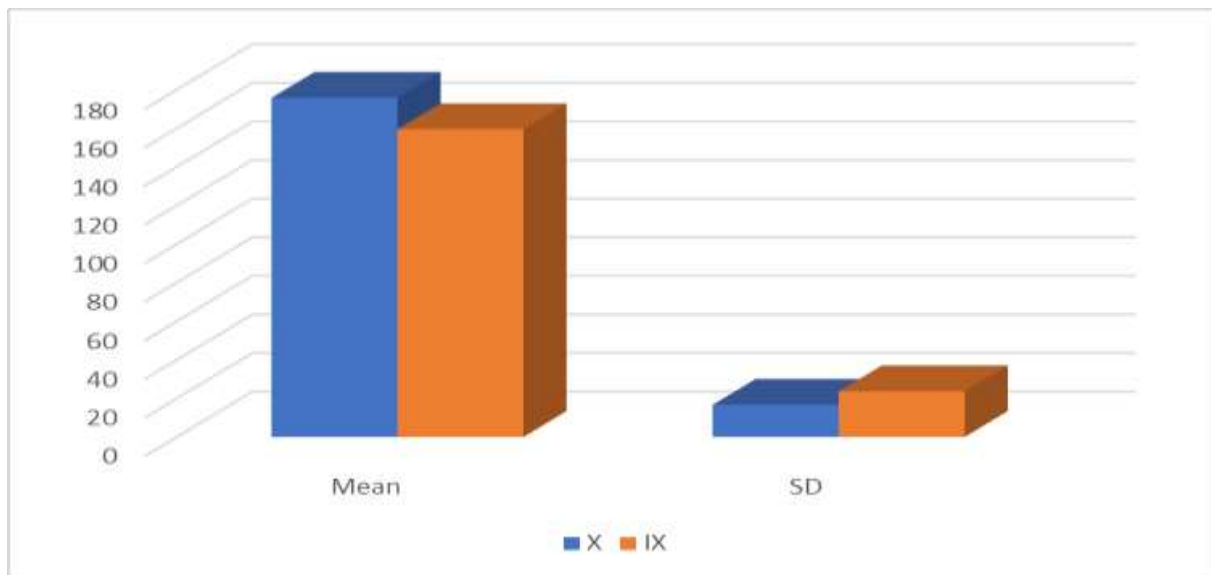
Comparison of Self-Confidence Scores of Classes IX and Class X Students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya

Class	Number of Students	Mean	SD	df	Calculated t-value
X	39	175.71	16.67	71	3.39
IX	34	159.42	23.63		

The table reveals that the mean score of Class X students ($M = 175.71$, $SD = 16.67$) is higher than that of Class IX students ($M = 159.42$, $SD = 23.63$). The calculated t-value is 3.39 with 71 degrees of freedom, which is greater than the table value at the 0.05 level. This indicates a significant difference between the scores of Class IX and Class X students. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. The mean and standard deviations given in Table 1.3 have been graphically represented in Figure 3

Figure-3

Mean and SD of Self-Confidence among Classes IX and Class X Students



Manash Protim Neog & Babita Choudhury (2026). *Gender and Class Differences in Self-Confidence Among Secondary School Students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Assam*. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research & Reviews. 5(4). 393-405.

Result and Discussion of the Study

The present study examined the level of self-confidence among secondary school students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Lakhimpur, Assam. The findings revealed that most students possess an average level of self-confidence, while a smaller proportion fall under the low and high categories. This result supports earlier studies, which suggest that self-confidence among students generally remains at a moderate level during the school stage and develops gradually with age and experience.

The present study found a significant difference in self-confidence between male and female students, with female students showing higher self-confidence. This finding is in agreement with the study conducted by Choudhury and Ahmed (2018), who reported slightly higher self-confidence among female university students. Similarly, Sharma et al. (2018) observed that self-confidence plays an important role in academic performance, and confident students tend to show better engagement and outcomes.

Further, the present study revealed a significant difference in self-confidence between Class IX and Class X students, with Class X students showing higher self-confidence. This finding is consistent with earlier research highlighting that self-confidence increases with age, experience, and academic responsibility. Studies by Salisbury et al. (2010) and Singh and Mukherjee (2018) also emphasized that exposure to new challenges and environments helps in developing higher self-confidence.

Findings of the Study

The main findings of the research are summarized below.

1. Within the JNV secondary school, the majority of students had a medium level of self-confidence.
2. Some students had low self-confidence, while the majority had middle or average levels. Few students demonstrated high self-confidence.
3. Female students had more self-confidence than male students.
4. It differs in terms of students' self-confidence between males and females.
5. Class X students showed higher self-confidence than Class IX students.
6. A significant difference was found in self-confidence between Class IX and Class X students.

Suggestions

Based on the findings of the study, the following suggestions are made:

1. Low self-confidence students should receive proper concern and care, encouragement.



Manash Protim Neog & Babita Choudhury (2026). *Gender and Class Differences in Self-Confidence Among Secondary School Students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Assam*. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research & Reviews. 5(4). 393-405.

2. Regarding the matter of student participation in class activities, joint efforts with classmates or school groups such as debating societies, choir, and school media broadcasts are all worthwhile.
3. Boys should be encouraged to talk about their ideas freely.
4. Class IX students will need even more help and encouragement if they are to gain confidence.
5. Schools should organize confidence-building classes, motivational training courses, and programs for the promotion of personality development.
6. The Parents and teachers should work together to help students develop a positive attitude and self-belief.

Conclusion

According to the current research, as far as general growth is involved, being self-confident is a significant advantage for students at the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya secondary school in Lakhimpur. Another conclusion that was made in the study is that self-confidence varies among the students depending on gender. The female students were discovered to possess better self-confidence than the male students. This disparity could be attributed to emotional adjustment or maturity, or support systems. Moreover, this analysis shows that self-confidence is also dependent on the level of the classes. The Class X students were more self-confident compared to Class IX students. This could be since the senior students can have more experience, academic exposure, and maturity as they advance through school. Generally, the research points out that motivation, counselling, and positive learning conditions should support the students, particularly those with low self-confidence. With adequate counselling and support, the schools will be able to help the students build a high level of self-confidence, and this will have a positive impact on their academic achievements and personal development.

AUTHOR(S) CONTRIBUTION

The writers affirm that they have no connections to, or engagement with, any group or body that provides financial or non-financial assistance for the topics or resources covered in this manuscript.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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Manash Protim Neog & Babita Choudhury (2026). *Gender and Class Differences in Self-Confidence Among Secondary School Students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Assam*. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research & Reviews*, 5(4), 393-405.

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