1.0.0 Introduction:

“Teachers are the backbone of any country, the pillar upon which the aspirations of students are reconverted into realities. The teachers must be perpetual seekers of intellectual integrity and universal compassion”

Dr. Abdul Kalam

The whole process of education is shaped and moulded by a human personality that is, the teacher who plays a pivotal role in any system of education. The American Commission on Teacher Education remarked that the quality of a nation depends on the quality of its citizens. The qualities of its citizens depend not exclusively but in critical measure upon the quality of their education. The quality of their education depends, more than upon any other single factor, upon the quality of their teachers”. It is noted that teaching has been the largest, oldest and noblest profession. In spite of the technological advancements in the process of teaching-learning, it has not been possible to replace the teacher. It is, therefore, not mere rhetoric to say that the teacher is the living ideal, the fountainhead of knowledge and the potential guide to provide direction for the growth and development of students, who are worthy citizens of tomorrow. In nutshell, teacher is the backbone of educational system, the maker of mankind and the architect of society (Rymbai, 2011). In the words of Dr. Abdul Kalam-

“I believe there is no other profession in the world that is more important to society than that of a teacher”.

Enlightened, emancipated and empowered teachers lead communities and nations in their march towards better and higher quality of life. They reveal and elaborate the secrets of attaining higher values in life and nurture empathy for the fellow beings. Teachers are the torch
bearers in creating social cohesion, national integration and a learning society. They not only disseminate knowledge but also create and generate new knowledge. They are responsible for acculturating role of education. No nation can even marginally slacken its efforts in giving necessary professional inputs to its teachers and, along with that, due status to their profession.

Kothari Commission (1966) in its report observed that of all the factors that influence the quality of education, the quality, competence and character of teachers are undoubtedly most significant. The National Policy on Education (1986) has rightly remarked that no pupil can rise above the level of its teachers. The National Council of Teacher Education document (1998) has stressed that teachers are torch bearers in creating social cohesion and national integration by revealing and elaborating the secrets of attaining higher values in life. A teacher with sufficient competencies can render effective service and help in around development of younger generations. In the context of present day realities, aims and objectives of education, a teacher is expected to perform multiple activities like teaching, evaluation, diagnosis of learning difficulties, providing remedial measures, organization of co-curricular activities etc, together with activities which are intrinsic to teaching and learning (Patri and Nanda, 2011). The teacher guides, understands, inspires, clarifies, facilitates, shares, serves as a role model, touches and transforms the life of a student with care and compassion. Thus, a teacher in the modern age, essentially require to be equipped with modern competencies to work effectively in order to cater to the needs of learners as well as the needs of modern society.

Teaching is a highly professional activity which demands specialized knowledge, skill and behaviour. Teacher professionalism comprises at least three essential characteristics: competence, performance
and conduct, which reflect on teachers’ personality and the way they behave in school and society. Competence is fundamental in teaching profession, which includes preparation of teachers for classroom processes and acquisition of knowledge of subject, and facilitates personality development of children. Competencies of an effective teacher include interpersonal communication, pedagogical empowerment and organizational leadership. Professional competence results in performance of teachers in terms of overall development of children. The competent teachers are expected to perform better in the interest of children and society. High level of competency empowers teachers with high self-concept, commitment and motivational level. The third characteristic of teacher professionalism—conduct—is significant for a humane teacher, particularly in the Indian context. The manner in which the teacher conducts him/herself has impact on classroom, school, community and educational system. The teacher’s conduct is reflected in the behaviour of young generation taught by him/her (Chaudhary, 2012).

Teaching as a social activity creates a dilemma for the person in this profession where on one hand he/she is faced with the requirement of satisfying his/her personal needs and desires, while on the other hand, people present around him/her expect him to fulfill roles, responsibilities/behavioural patterns that they decide for him/her. The teacher has to remain in constant interaction with others. He is also required to deal with negative behaviours, like being criticized or forced to do some task, and maintain his emotional equilibrium. Needs of being able to identify one’s own and others feelings, being able to communicate affectively and to manage one’s own behaviours so that it remains socially acceptable, become significant for teachers. These and many other social skills are very important for developing healthy relationship with others and can affect many facets of a teacher’s success in life.
On the part of various roles that a teacher has to play in his or her personal and professional life, assertiveness come up as a set of important skills to deal with a wide range of challenging situations, which demand expression of thoughts, feelings and beliefs in direct, honest and appropriate manner, standing up for personal rights while respecting the rights of others and as a process of social communication, involving exchange of thoughts and feelings, to establish satisfying social relationships.

Particular attention is being paid to the role of assertiveness in the modern educational system. Many authors have accepted assertive behaviour as the most constructive method of communication in teaching process. Its application in teaching practice not only increased the effectiveness of training activities, but also had a positive educational impact on young people, facilitating development of valuable personal qualities amongst them (Edwards, 2005; Nelsen et al., 2001). Implementation of pedagogical interaction of this type required specialized training in assertive techniques and skills by both teachers and students.

Assertiveness training is an area of study which has a long history within the field of behaviour therapy. Salter (1949) and Wolpe (1958) have recognized that certain individuals have specific problems in standing up for their rights and expressing themselves appropriately. These pioneers introduced the concept of providing assertiveness skills to help such individuals to function more effectively (Makhija & Singh, 2010). Since then the concept of assertiveness training has drawn the attention of many scholars, highlighting both its significance and making the term more precise. Lazarus (1973) influenced the development of cognitive therapy in the field of clinical psychology. Liberman (1975) introduced assertion or personal effectiveness training as a fundamental component of clinical services offered by community health centres.
Alberti and Emmons (2008), creators of the first assertive training intended not for clinical practice of psychological treatment of nerve disorders but for activation of human potential, emphasized that all people have equal rights regardless of their social status and believed that a sense of self-worth along with the assertive style of behaviour was not only desirable, but also necessary to be developed in everyone. They agreed that assertiveness was not a panacea against all troubles and failures that could occur in one’s life, but through it, meeting challenges with confidence, the problems could be resolved in the best and adequate manner. The evidence established the effectiveness of structured learning and behaviour modification that occurs within groups. Assertiveness training is an important part of any form of behaviour therapy and based on the assumption that when any overt expressions of emotions are learned, displayed and reinforced, the corresponding subjective feelings will be felt (Anant, 2009).

Assertiveness training is based on the principle that we all have a right to express our thoughts, feelings and needs to others, as long as we do so in a respectful way. When we feel that we cannot express ourselves openly, we may become depressed, anxious or angry, and our sense of self-worth may suffer. Our relationships with other people are also likely to suffer because we may become resentful when others do not read our minds as we are not assertive enough to tell them. Assertive behaviour is specific to the particular time, situation, and cultural context. In other words, behaviour that is appropriately assertive for one person in one situation may be either excessively passive or too aggressive for someone else in a different situation.

Assertiveness training is based on the idea that assertiveness is not inborn, but is a learned behaviour. Behaving assertively can sometimes be difficult for almost anyone, and is often impossible for some people. For this reason, assertiveness training focuses on not only talking about the
importance of assertiveness, but also on learning assertive behaviours and practicing these behaviours with the help of professionals. Assertiveness training aims to increase the number and the variety of situations in which assertive behaviour is possible, and attempts to decrease occasions of passive or aggressive behaviours (Hoffman 1983). Assertion techniques are tools for everyday life, enabling people to enhance their social contacts and become more effective in personal and professional spheres.

According to Smith (1985), in order to be assertive a human being not only ought to know his/her rights, but should be able to apply them in different situations and under different circumstances. Moreover, assertive training and compliance with assertive rights are important not only for the specific person (as means to realize his/her potential), but also for the society as a whole, as these would help to harmonize the social and labour relations. A detailed description of a training programme for group therapy, aiming to develop assertive skills in the communicative sphere, has been offered by Doty (1987). The necessary basic skills for the assertive training included the habits of dating and maintaining a conversation, skill of active listening, effectively dealing with conflict situations and ability to openly and adequately express feelings (both positive and negative) (Peneva & Mavrodieva, 2013).

Salter (1949) and Wolpe’s (1958) emphasis on assertiveness skills was located in the field of behavior therapy, where individuals deficient in the ability to express themselves and stand up for their rights were provided certain skills during therapies. This approach seems to have later evolved into organization of assertiveness training programmes for individuals with special needs and for general students. Research activity under this approach typically involved selection of experimental and control groups, pre-testing these groups on assertiveness and some associated variables, introducing one or other form of assertiveness training and carrying out post-test in both the groups. The studies by Pitt
and Roth (1978), Grant and Devorah (1980), Rotheram and Armstrong (1980), Hatzenbuehler and Schroeder (1982), Stewart and Lewis (1986), Lee and Crockett (1994), Firth (2001), Sert (2003), Lina, et. al. (2004), Flowers (2006), Tavakoli, et. al. (2009), Makhija & Singh (2010), Agbakwuru & Stella (2012) and many others followed this approach. Many of these studies have noted that changes in assertiveness as a result of assertiveness training are also accompanied by changes in variables like self-esteem, self-concept, social skills, participation in different activities and academic achievement (Gangwar, 2012).

A large volume of research has been conducted on assertiveness training and these programmes are introduced in many settings. However, many of the assertiveness training studies were conducted on adults and some specific groups such as nursing staff (Gerry, 1989 and Segal, 2005); college students (Averett & Mc Manis, 1977); students with learning disabilities (Firth, 2001); indecisive students (Nota & Soresi, 2003); working women (Brockway, 1976) and elderly people and adults with mental retardation (Hatzenbuehler and Schroeder, 1982; Franzke, 1987 and Donnelly, 1992).

With growing feminist attitudes in society during the 80s and 90s of the twentieth century (Castro, 1999) more attention has been paid to the role and rights of women. In response to the need for training of women in assertive skills and techniques, specialized training programmes for psychologists working with groups and tutorials for personal use were prepared (Heighway, et.al, 1992; Butler, 1992; Dickson, 1982; Goodman & Fallon, 1995; Leman, 1998; Shaevitz, 1999). Positive consequences of applying assertive techniques and acquiring assertive skills, authors indicated not only increased self-esteem, confidence and self-acceptance (Leman, 1998; Stake & Pearlman, 1980), but also reduction of emotional distress, depression, and general mental health (Butler, 1992; Chan, 1993; Pattenson & Burns, 1990).
In late twentieth century, use of assertiveness was more as a desirable aspect and it was used as a tool for self-development and self-improvement. In new millennium, this quality is being increasingly recognized as a prerequisite for employment in many professions, which are mainly related to communication. In early twenty-first century, assertiveness has become an integral part of professional relations in economic sphere, education, medicine, sports etc. Several specialized training programmes are being created for preparation of employees (Peneva & Mavrodieva, 2013).

To facilitate development of assertive skills among the professionals in educational system, certain programmes have been developed with the aim of increasing communicative culture, empathy, ability to self-control and emotions. Particular attention has been paid to the need of expressing respect for students and regarding their rights as fundamental characteristics of assertive behaviour (Savage & Savage, 2010). Application of these assertive techniques, according to specialists, affected the quality of teaching, improved self-esteem and personal satisfaction of teachers and led to lowering of occupational stress (Peneva & Mavrodieva, 2013). To build assertive skills in students, manuals containing guidelines for working with students of different age groups have been developed. Mainly these recommended techniques to develop the ability to recognize one’s own emotions and needs, to cope with negativity, to express positive feelings, to build respect and thoughtful attitude towards peers and elderly, and to raise self-esteem and self-acceptance (Christopher, Edwards, & Eppler, 2012; Kaufman, Raphael, & Espeland, 2000).

Special attention has also been paid to development of assertive skills among upper grade and college students, as it is believed that this age is conducive to build a vision, perseverance, self-reliance and initiative, qualities that are prerequisite for development of assertiveness (Peneva & Mavrodieva, 2013). This was implemented not only through specialized
training and training programmes (Christopher, Edwards, & Eppler, 2012) but also through self-development, supported by tutorials for personal use.

Establishing effectiveness of assertiveness training in facilitating development of assertiveness and positive change in certain characteristics is one approach of understanding the phenomena associated with assertive behaviour and related aspects. Another, naturalistic approach, focused on surveying the level of assertiveness in a population of interest and attempting to analyze certain characteristics as input factors and others as dependent outcomes. Sex, age, social group membership, birth order, educational status etc. have been considered as input characteristics in shaping assertiveness, and similar to the experimental approach, self-esteem, self-concept, academic self efficacy and adjustment have been considered as outcomes (Gangwar, 2012).

The socio-demographic and cultural milieu in which a person lives and grows is an important factor in deciding whether he or she will develop into an aggressive person, submissive person or an assertive person. In Indian context, this socio-demographic and cultural milieu can be visualized as being shaped by factors associated with individuality, educational environment in which he finds himself and the socio-cultural environment produced by parental occupation and educational characteristics. The need to understand the role of socio-demographic and cultural milieu in development of assertive behavioural tendency is highlighted through the significance ascribed to assertive behaviour by different authors. (Gupta, et. al. (2002); Kaur and Mehta (2007); Noushad and Musthafa (2008); Makhija and Singh (2011); Gangwar (2012) and Asokan and Muthumanickam (2013).

On account of perceived benefits of assertiveness training programme in various fields, a need was felt to study the impact of providing training in assertiveness on various aspects of personality among prospective female teachers. Therefore, the investigator attempted to study
the effectiveness of assertiveness training programme on personal and psychological characteristics of female teacher-trainees. These aspects seem to have not been explored in Indian situations and it is in this perspective that present study has been designed to explore certain background characteristics of pupil-teachers as input factors in shaping assertive behaviour, and impact of such kind of training on assertiveness, self acceptance and academic achievement motivation variables.

1.1.0 Statement of the Problem:

In view of the perspective evolved in preceding section the problem of present study was stated in following words-

“A STUDY OF EFFECTIVENESS OF ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING PROGRAMME ON ASSERTIVENESS, SELF-ACCEPTANCE AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION OF FEMALE TEACHER-TRAINEES”

The problem of the study, as stated above, attempted to analyze the effect of assertiveness training programme on certain psychological characteristics of female teacher-trainees at B.Ed. level. These output characteristics included assertiveness, self-acceptance and academic achievement motivation among teacher-trainees. The basic assumption behind selection of these particular variables was the expectation that as assertiveness training programme are designed to raise an individual’s self confidence and self –esteem, these will tend to impel trainees towards better acceptance of self and an increased motivation for achievement in academic field. The second aspect of the study envisaged survey of level of assertiveness among the selected group of teacher-trainees, and to analyze and compare this level of assertiveness across groups of trainees, identified
on the basis of their selected socio-demographic and academic characteristics. This survey, analysis and comparison aspect of the study assumed that level of assertiveness among trainees is likely to be influenced by their background characteristics. Various background characteristics explored in this context, included socio-demographic characteristics like caste group, income group, father’s occupational group, and parents’ educational status, and academic characteristics like previous academic achievement of trainees.

1.2.0 Definition of the Terms:

The statement of the problem of present study includes following key terms that need to be defined clearly.

1. Assertiveness
2. Assertiveness Training Programme
3. Self-Acceptance
4. Academic Achievement Motivation
5. Female Teacher Trainees

1.2.1 Assertiveness:

Assertiveness has been defined in various terms by different authors. Lazarus (1971) stressed the idea of “emotional freedom” and described assertiveness as its subunit. He defined assertive behaviour as a ‘social competence’. Jakubowski (1973) defined assertiveness as an act of protecting own human rights without violating the fundamental rights of others. Alberti and Emmons (1974) observed it as a behaviour that enables a person ‘to act in his own best interest’ and ‘stand up for himself without undue anxiety’. It has been referred to as cognitive, emotional, and behavioural response that maximizes one’s potential for reaching personal goals (Rich and Schroeder, 1976). Gervasio and Crawford (1989) have
defined assertiveness as a style of conversation occurring in complex interpersonal context.

Wolpe (1990) defined assertiveness as ‘socially justified motor or verbal expression of feelings’. Lizarraga, et. al. (2003) referred to assertiveness as an ability ‘to express and advocate ideas, interest and feelings’. Noshad and Musthafa (2008) referred to it as ‘courage to be oneself’ and ‘communicating honestly with family, friends and colleagues’. It has been characterized as an attitude of ‘openness and receptiveness’ by Anant (2009). Bishop (2010) defined assertiveness as the most constructive means of interpersonal interaction.

A covert assumption of respecting the needs of others by the person practicing assertiveness has been reflected by Makhija and Singh (2011). For Asokan and Muthumanickam (2013), acting assertively increases chances for honest relationships, feeling better about oneself and gaining sense of control in everyday situations. However, asserting oneself may not necessarily guarantee happiness or fair treatment. Nonetheless, by developing an ability to express, one is able to reduce stress, increase feelings of self-worth, improve decision-making abilities, and feel more self-confident in relationships. Assertiveness is the ability to reveal oneself overtly, straightforwardly and appropriately, to honour one’s own feeling and thoughts as well as oneself and to discover one’s own abilities and limits. Assertiveness is a behaviour that in addition to person’s health increases the possibility of gaining pleasant results (Noghabaee and Nikoogoftar (2014). It has also been defined as way of communicating and behaving with others that helps a person to become more confident and aware of oneself (Tannous (2015).

An attempt to clarify the meaning of assertive behaviour through the identification of associated behaviours has been made by different researchers in the field. Thus, Lange and Jacobowski (1975) defined it as ‘standing for personal rights, feelings and beliefs in direct, honest and
appropriate ways, which respect the rights of the other people’. Galassi & Galassi (1979) referred to assertiveness as direct expression of one’s feelings, preferences, needs or opinions in manner that is neither threatening nor punishing towards others.

Herzberger and Katz (1984) identified capability of free expression of emotions, ability to defend purposes or goals in general and specific situations as the components of assertive behaviour. Smith (1985) characterized assertive behaviour by mutual respect, benevolent perseverance and politeness. To Rees and Graham (1991), assertiveness means ‘taking responsibility for life and choice’, and ‘making own decisions, rather than simply going along with other people’s choices’. Okoli (2002) defined assertiveness as the proper expression of emotion other than anxiety, openness, directness, spontaneity and appropriateness.

In the view of Yong (2010), assertive persons ‘resist undue social influence, disregard arbitrary authority figures and refuse to confirm to arbitrary group standards’. Hasanzadeh and Mahdinejad (2012) characterized assertiveness as speaking and acting with power, while maintaining respect for others. Instead of passively giving up power or aggressively demanding it, assertiveness enables youth to positively and authentically influence others. Not only confined to the freedom in expression of emotions, assertive behaviour, according to Abed (2015), demands control over outbursts of anger, crying or other behaviour patterns that exhibit lack of professionalism in the work sphere.

The above conceptualization of assertive behaviour has been summarized by Gangwar (2012) through listing behavioural tendencies that characterize assertiveness as follows:

1. Feeling free to express one’s feelings and desires in various interpersonal situations.
2. Believing that one’s feelings and desires are worthy.
3. Feeling free and able to make request.
4. Feeling free and able to refuse request.
5. Feeling free and able to defend one’s opinions.
6. Feeling free and able to express feelings and desires in a direct and honest manner.
7. Feeling free and able to overcome pressures from others.
8. Feeling fearless in expressing one’s desires and opinions.

The above stated and similar behavioural tendencies in different interpersonal and social situations indicate presence of assertiveness in individual.

Assertiveness in present study referred to a variable measured by employing ‘Assertive Behaviour Assessment Scale’ (ABAS) developed by Dhoundiyal (2010) and re-standardized by the investigator for the teacher trainees at B.Ed.level.

1.2.2. Assertiveness Training Programme:

Assertiveness training has been used in helping people to reduce their fear of acting appropriately in social and interpersonal situations. Assertiveness training techniques include broken records, fogging, free information, self-disclosure, negative assertion, transactional analysis, role-playing and modeling (Okoli, 2002). Assertive training programme is a systemic approach to be more assertive in self-expression, based on a balance between achieving one’s own goals and respecting the needs of others. It is a psychological intervention which helps participants learn to integrate assertive behaviour skills into their daily lives. It deals with attitudes, beliefs, and cognitions about assertiveness as well as specific overt assertive behaviours. The assertiveness training is based on the assumption that individuals do not behave assertively because they have not had the occasion to learn assertive responses in given situations, and
aggression and non assertive behaviour are both learned response that can be replaced by an assertive response (Lin, et.al. 2004).

Assertiveness training is a life skill that causes an increase in self-esteem, rational stating of thoughts and feelings, anxiety reduction, improvement in social and relational skills, respecting other’s right and increasing the rate of satisfaction from life and happiness (Hashemi, 2007). Iruloh & Amadi, (2008) added that assertive training is not therapeutic technique although it helps to teach an individual on how to assert himself despite the intimidation and pressures coming from other people. Furthermore, Corey (2009) explained that assertive training is based on the principle of social learning theory and incorporates many social skills training methods. He explained further that the training is often conducted in groups using modeling, role-play, and rehearsal to practice a new behaviour in the therapy office and then enacted in everyday life.

Assertiveness training has been defined by Zade, et.al. (2009) as a structural intervention which is used for social relationship improvement, anxiety disorder therapy and phobias in children, teenagers and adults. Assertiveness training is about acquiring learned skills and assertiveness training programme is designed to improve an individual’s assertive beliefs and behaviours, which can help the individual change how they view themselves and establish self-confidence and interpersonal communication and subjective wellbeing (Paezzy, 2010). Akinteye (2012) opined that if well-taught, assertiveness training can help the person to recognize when they are being abused or maneuvered for someone else’s benefit and how to resist such treatment effectively without becoming angry and aggressive. It emphasizes the value of clear, calm, frank communication as a means of establishing relationships in which everyone knows where they stand and no-one feels ill-used. Yusefi, et.al. (2015) viewed that in assertiveness training an individual learns how to behave assertively. The person tries to solve and to define the problem, follows the aims assertively, repeats the
roles effectively, changes them to form the pleasant behaviours constantly, and learns appropriate methods to express his/her wildlings assertively.

In the present study, assertiveness training programme referred to a specifically designed training programme adapted by Dhoundiyal (2005) in congruence with assertiveness skill training developed by Sue Bishop (1996) and includes the components of Self awareness, Awareness of rights, Refining goals, Nurturing self esteem, Feeling talk, Awareness of reasons of non-assertion, Ability to handle putdowns, Awareness of one’s body language, Developing assertive body language, Being able to say ‘No’, Being able to make requests, Skill of handling conflicts, Ability to identify stereotypes and Handling discrepant situations.

1.2.3. Self-Acceptance:

Self-acceptance is acceptance of self inspite of deficiencies. According to Shepard (1979), self-acceptance refers to an individual’s satisfaction or happiness with himself, necessary for good mental health. Self-acceptance involves self understanding, a realistic, albeit subjective, awareness of one’s strengths and weaknesses. It results in an individual’s feeling himself as unique and worthy. Branden (1995) viewed self-acceptance to be the second pillar of self-esteem. The first steps of healing and growth, according to him, are awareness and acceptance-consciousness and integration. In clinical psychology and positive psychology, self-acceptance is considered the prerequisite for change to occur. It can be achieved by stopping criticizing and solving defects of one’s self, and then accepting them to be existing within one’s self. That is, tolerating oneself” to be imperfect in some parts.

In present study, self- acceptance was operationalized as indicated by scores obtained on, ‘Self Acceptance Inventory’ (KSAI) developed by Kakkar (2010).
1.2.4. Academic Achievement Motivation:

Achievement motivation commonly known as n-achievement, refers to the behaviour of a person who strives to accomplish something, to do his best and to excel others in performance. Atkinson’s theory of achievement motivation grew out of research initiated by McClelland et al. (1953), who viewed achievement motivation to be a drive that can be experimentally aroused, differs from person to person and is acquired. It is considered as an important determinant of aspiration, effort and persistence. Thus, it is defined as how well a person does in comparison with a given baseline (Gupta & Shagufta, 2007).

Academic achievement motivation has been broadly defined as, an academic drive, attitude toward learning, and enthusiasm for academic achievement. Academic drive involves measuring items such as work habits and scholastic expectations, and attitude toward learning involves students’ opinion of classroom environment and self-efficacy in learning (Entwistle, 1968). Enthusiasm for academic achievement involves the degree to which students possess certain specific behavioural characteristics related to motivation (Hwang, 2002).

In the present study, academic achievement motivation has been operationalized to be represented by scores obtained on ‘Academic Achievement Motivation Test’ (AAMT), consisting of two categories of statements, one indicating achievement motivation and the other showing absence of such motivation, constructed by Sharma (2010).

1.2.5. Female Teacher-trainees:

The teacher training set up in India has been construed as a hierarchical system, of grades, subdivided into different stages or levels. Training for nursery school teachers is envisaged to prepare teachers for teaching children up to 6 years of age. Elementary school teachers’ training extends to cover preparation of teachers for teaching class 1st to 8th.
Training for secondary school teachers is provided to develop necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes among the teachers to teach students of class 9th to 12th i.e. students at secondary and senior secondary levels. In addition to these, training for special school subjects has also been envisaged for teachers of language, physical education, art and sculpture. The Post-graduate teacher education courses provide education facilities for the students as well as teachers in higher education.

Following this broad classification of Indian teacher training set up, female teacher-trainees of present study refer to the female teacher-trainees pursuing B.Ed. course from various institutions of Kumaun University, Nainital.

1.3.0 Aims and Objectives of the Study:

The proposed study broadly aimed to investigate the effect of assertiveness training programme on assertiveness, self-acceptance and academic achievement motivation of female teacher-trainees. This broad aim was, however, subdivided into following objectives:

1.3.0 To survey the level of assertiveness of female teacher-trainees.

1.3.1 To analyse and compare level of assertiveness of female teacher-trainees across sub-groups identified on the basis of their personal and socio-demographic characteristics. This was further divided into following objectives:

i To analyze and compare caste wise groups of female teacher-trainees on their level of assertiveness.

ii To analyze and compare income wise groups of female teacher-trainees on their level of assertiveness.

iii To analyze and compare groups of female teacher-trainees, identified on the basis of occupational
background of their family, on the level of assertiveness.

iv To analyze and compare groups of female teacher-trainees identified on the basis of educational status of their family, on the level of assertiveness.

v To analyze and compare academic achievement wise groups of female teacher-trainees on their level of assertiveness.

1.3.2 To study the effect of a specifically designed assertiveness training programme on level of assertiveness of female teacher-trainees.

1.3.3 To study the effect of a specifically designed assertiveness training programme on level of self-acceptance of female teacher-trainees.

1.3.4 To study the effect of a specifically designed assertiveness training programme on level of academic achievement motivation of female teacher-trainees.

1.3.5 To explore the effect of assertiveness training on level of assertiveness in groups of female teacher-trainees identified on the basis of:

i Caste

ii Family income

iii Occupational background of family

iv Parent’s educational status and

v Academic achievement

1.4.0 Significance of the Present Study:

The significance of present study is derived from the fact that it is an attempt to study effectiveness of a specifically designed assertiveness
training programme in teacher-education settings. Many benefits of training in assertiveness have been listed by different authors. These include reduction in anxiety, being able to make decisions in life, expression of feelings and thoughts, increase in interpersonal competence, self confidence, self-esteem and perceived self control through assertiveness training.

Teachers at present need to be goal directed, to be active towards attainment of these goals, to be expressive of their feeling and desires, and to be able in building healthy relationships with others. In order to face their challenging roles, teachers are required to understand their true selves and feel happy about themselves, besides being internally motivated for educational progress. In order to make our teachers more efficient in facilitation of knowledge development, more competent in providing quality education, more comfortable within society and more effective in using their professional knowledge and skills, it is necessary for them to be more assertive and have a high level of self-acceptance and academic achievement motivation. Therefore, we need to understand this dimension of behaviour in more detail, particularly in different socio-cultural settings. It is needless to say that assertiveness has to be instilled in a conscious manner through teacher education programmes. The present study is an attempt in this direction.

Development of personality is an important aim inherent in the organization of formal teacher education programme. How this personality is to be developed and towards what ends this development is to be facilitated, is a decision taken by educational planners. Inherent in various curricular and co-curricular components of educational process, this personality pattern incorporates elements like openness, industriousness, optimism, goal-directedness, ability to share thoughts and feelings, knowing one’s strengths and weaknesses and acting in ways to strengthen one’s self-esteem and productivity. An assertive behaviour pattern seems
to incorporate these desirable personality traits, and it can be safely proposed that an attempt to develop assertiveness needs to be explicitly incorporated in educational settings. Incorporation of an emphasis on assertiveness development in educational-process, however, needs to be preceded by an empirical verification of the positive effect of assertiveness training on assertiveness, self-acceptance and academic achievement motivation among prospective teachers. A test of these assumed positive relationship, is inherent in present study.

Researchers postulate that assertive behaviour is marked by openness and receptiveness but, in our Indian society female child tends to be rated as a lesser being, subjected to suppression and discrimination in all spheres since childhood and denied of opportunities for self development. In such situations, they are never able to recognize their own potential and worth, and it hampers their allround development, particularly their assertive skills. Assertive behaviour has been viewed as an essential communication strategy for women in pursuing equality. However, within Indian value system females usually retain a submissive role and do not assert themselves well.

In recent times, government and non-government organizations are keen for improving the status of girl child. Great emphasis has been laid on girls’ education, placement, promotion and better career options, so that they can compete confidently and assertively with their male counterparts. Girls today have come up firmly by expressing their ideas, feelings and thoughts emphatically, without being rude and unreasonable, without offending others and having open, direct, honest communication and an active orientation towards life (Kaur & Mehta, 2007).

Teachers, more specifically female teachers have a vital role to play in the area of enhancing assertive skills among students and this is possible only when they themselves possess assertive skills and abilities. Assertiveness would help them to function more effectively in their
everyday lives in dealing with personal, social and professional relationships. A socially skilled teacher can easily reach personal success and happiness with his or her social interactions. In today’s world, where teacher has to play multiple roles, viz. friend, philosopher, leader, guide, counsellor, administrator and social activist, they have to face different challenging situations demanding dynamism, openness, communication skills and receptiveness. Therefore, teachers will have to possess different and specific social skills, including assertiveness.

Since assertiveness covers a lot of different social skills component, it is useful to give such training to female teacher-trainees, since women are generally considered to be lacking in these set of abilities (Shepherd, 2006). Especially, female teacher-trainees should be prepared for different life situations through assertiveness training so that they may transfer their learning to the next generation. Female, teacher-trainees are required to learn a complex set of social skills to engage in effective, confident and mutually beneficial interaction with others also. Female teachers, being reported to be emotionally high intelligent (Thilagavathy, 2013), could become an effective medium to transfer these assertive skills to students, more specifically to female students at various educational levels. In addition, it is a very important and useful social skill that has a power to enhance the social relationships, academic success and personal development.

Assertiveness and self-acceptance have a lot of commonalities: both are necessary and important character traits to live a satisfactory life and have healthy relationships with other people. Academic achievement motivation is also important factor for academic success and personal development. Thus, a thorough investigation of the interaction between these variables can highlight the ways to uplift interaction skills and assertiveness levels among female teacher-trainees. It is a necessity to
empower young teachers with the knowledge, understanding and skills to choose their own appropriate and effective patterns of behaviour.

1.5.0 Delimitations of the Study:

The effectiveness of assertiveness training programme on assertiveness, self-acceptance and academic achievement motivation could have been tested in different settings and within different populations. Moreover, research involving study on the effect of assertiveness training programme on behaviour, with different psychological and academic characteristics have been spread over different population groups and socio-cultural settings as outcome variables. The selection of population or setting for the present study is based on convenience of researcher, availability of relevant tools, availability of resources and familiarity with the context. Similar factors also guided the delimitations of present study. The present study is, therefore, delimited in terms of the following:

1.5.1 Population under Study:

Study of effectiveness of assertiveness training programme could have been taken in different population groups available within teacher education system. The pre-primary, primary or elementary teacher-trainees might be considered or it was equally possible to conduct the study in a population belonging to higher education teacher educators. However, the focus of the study was narrowed down to female teacher-trainees of B.Ed. level, considering ease of data collection among this group of teacher-trainees and the typicality of the nature of training undergoing within the group of secondary level teacher-trainees.
1.5.2 Variables Included in this Study:

A selected group of psychological characteristics viz. assertiveness, self-acceptance and academic achievement motivation were considered as dependent variables in analyzing the effect of assertiveness training programme in the present study. A different set of psycho-social characteristics could have been envisaged to find effectiveness of such a programme. A few may be identified as self-esteem, self-confidence, adjustment, anxiety, social skills, teaching effectiveness, teacher pupil-relationship, mental health and satisfaction with life. Some more personal, socio-demographic and academic variables could have been studied that impinge upon development of assertiveness among female teacher-trainees, including factors of age, marital status, nature of permanent residence, birth order, home environment, nature of family, number of members in the family, attitudes in home and society and academic stream etc. All these were not included in present study. The researcher included caste group, income group, father’s occupational group, fathers’ educational status, mothers’ educational status and previous academic achievement as independent variables to study their role in the development of assertiveness. The study was, therefore, delimited on selected variables only and did not include a number of possible variables due to constraints of time and resources.