CHAPTER 3

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ELEMENTS IN

WINGS OF FIRE AND TURNING POINTS

3.1 OVERVIEW

This chapter examines the autobiographical elements that constitute the major aspects of Kalam’s personality in *Wings of Fire* with reference to the concepts of identity, intention, memory, gender, responsibility, freedom, youth, patriotism, self, self-awareness, optimism, work strategy, motivation, philosophy of life, spirituality, etc. It also searched the aspects of Kalam’s personality through his descriptions. Kalam discussed the major aspects of his personality that transformed him from a humble and rural person to an extraordinarily talented scientist, spiritual guru and the President of India in *Wings of Fire* (1999) and *Turning Points* (2012). He highlighted his personal, physical, psychological and professional struggles that stirred his spirit to achieve his noble goals. He depicted the ways in which Kalam portrayed his characters as well as the characteristics of “others” that acted as his internal and external motivators. He identified and shared the secrets, attitudes, nature, and will power which acted as the agents of his success. He revealed the methods that he followed to narrate the journey of his self which aims at attaining universality by associating it with the development of the nation and humanity. He noted the importance of “collective effort” that created a peculiar identity for him in India and in the globe, particularly in the field of missile technology. He unveiled his spiritual thoughts and personal
philosophies deeply rooted in altruism. Kalam presented his personality in *Wings of Fire* and *Turning Points* to achieve his aim of motivating Indians, particularly the youth to dream high for a developed nation.

### 3.2 AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ELEMENTS IN WINGS OF FIRE

An autobiography depicts the journey of the protagonist’s life through various stages like childhood, boyhood, middle age and old age. Kalam did his schooling at Saamiyar School in Rameshwaram, Schwartz School in Ramanathapuram, B.Sc. Physics in St. Joseph’s College, Trichy, and Aeronautical Engineering in MIT, Chennai. He narrated a number of small incidents from his childhood days to highlight his family background, traditions and the circumstances that prevailed in Rameshwaram. He introduced his image as a small boy trying to understand the material and spiritual life of his father, Jainulabdeen. He proceeded to depict his image as a pupil tutored by Sivasubramania Iyer and Iyadurai Solomon, an obedient and intelligent student molded by the teachers like Pandali, a flourishing rocket engineer spotted by M G K Menon and groomed by Prof. Sarabhai, a leader supported by a large team of brilliant and dedicated professionals and a great personality tested by failures and setbacks.

In *Wings of Fire*, Kalam presented himself as a good leader, a good motivator, a good project manager, a good scientist and above all someone with devotion towards work. He shared his thoughts by analyzing his educational and professional career. He showed his mind that expects nothing, finds no enjoyment in anything except in serving the humanity to lead a peaceful life and that sweated and enjoyed the success beyond its level. He also illustrated the result of his everlasting energy and spirit consumed for the success of Satellite Launch Vehicle (SLV) and Integrated Guided Missile Development Program (IGMDP). He hopes to inculcate a spirit of integrity, unity, teamwork and honesty in the minds of young students, managers,
scientists and technocrats to cherish their dreams. He recorded his love and passion for his parents, mentors, teachers, colleagues and nation. He presented the struggles of independent India for technological self-sufficiency.

3.2.1 Identity, Intention and Memory

According to Gusdorf, the task of writing autobiography is to be undertaken by an “aging man to appease the more or less anguished uneasiness” (Anderson 2001). Kalam took the task of writing *Wings of Fire*, at the age of sixty. He said: “I have acquired nothing, built nothing, possess nothing, no family, sons and daughters” (Kalam 1999). It is evident that he has dedicated his life completely for the development of India. He has nobody, for whom he has to earn money or save property. He attained the status of self-fulfillment, in which a person would question “what is there in pleasure and property by knowing the truth what is there in it”.

Bamberg (2009) declared that a person’s identity would be notable, only when it includes more “others” which can be “non-human beings or human subjects”. Kalam depicted himself as an obedient son, a good friend, an obedient, intelligent and lovable student of many visionary teachers and professors, a powerful team leader, an excellent project leader, a project director, and director of various scientific organizations. He did not exaggerate that his sense of self alone was responsible for his greatness. He was so frank that his life was shaped by the guidance and motivation of many people. The characteristics and positions of the shaping forces changed from time to time. He became a successful missile man, and then the President of India. He followed his father’s spiritual philosophies and habits, Sarabhai’s leadership qualities, Brahm Prakash’s characteristic of giving awakening voice about the problems, Jallaluddin’s character of creating awareness about education, Iyadurai Solomon’s nature of instilling self-esteem, the power of
dream and aim, and Prof. Sponder’s nature of pointing out the weakness of every Indian.

The autobiographer’s intention in writing autobiography plays a vital role. Pascal considered the “intention of the autobiographer” equal to “the seriousness of the author” and “the seriousness of his personality” (Anderson 2001). Lejeune criticized ‘intentionality’ as a connecting force of the author, the narrator and the protagonist in an autobiography. *Wings of Fire* reflected Kalam’s multi-dimensional intentions. As an author, Kalam registered his views and intellectual maturity for the betterment of the society and as a narrator he recorded the account of his life history and highlighted his personality and achievements. Kalam (1999) trusted that his thoughts would “liberate the Indian industry from the self-created image of being mere fabricating factories” and “liberate the poor children” who live in the “underprivileged social settings.” He conveyed his gratitude to the shaping forces of his destiny, his parents, immediate family members, his teachers, professors, scientists and directors. In addition, he depicted the success and setbacks of science establishment of modern India.

Memory is the storehouse of a person’s learning and observations. His thoughts, decisions, reactions and doubts are rooted in the memory storehouse. Intention and meditation help the autobiographer to grasp the necessary and essential information to construct his identity. Focused and pursuing mind, scientific project experience, character analysis, intention to recollect the incidents that have broad national relevance and Tiwari’s assistance helped Kalam to grasp and filter the materials stored in his powerful and sharp memory storehouse to write *Wings of Fire*. Kalam included the incidents only when he was convinced himself about their relevance and worthiness. It motivated Kalam to search information from the exact compartments of his memory. These phenomena kept him free from
complexities and helped him to classify and to organize the materials in an order to shape *Wings of Fire* as a motivating tool. Kalam (1999) organized the materials as if it would provide an emphatic positive answer to the question “Can India be a leader in the field of technology?”

### 3.2.2 Educational and Financial Barriers

Polkinghorne (1991) discussed five kinds of beginning-middle-end narrative episodes identified by Carr (1986). They are departure and arrival, departure and return, means and end, suspension and resolution and problem and solution. Kalam constructed *Wings of Fire* with the problem and solution method of narrative. He registered the barriers of education, responsibility and the difficulties of nation’s development. He identified the problems, found out solutions out of his experience and shared the solutions for the benefit of the society.

Being a member of the middle class society, Kalam crossed the difficult situations and came out of them with the assistance of his observation, skills and great dreams. Rao & Jayaprakash (2010) shared many thoughts from Bama. Bama, a writer in Tamil, is known for her writings *Karukku* (1992), *Sangati* (1994) and *Kusumbukkaran* (1996). Her writings are well known for representing her voice for her people who are trying to climb up from a deep well, which has no steps or no root except some drenched and weak roots to the place of equality. Bama shows them a strong robe called education to attain the equality in *Karukku*. The same root was shown by Kalam to the poor and middle class village people as he was also a victim of the communal partiality found in India.

Social and financial status of the students and their physical, mental and psychological changes and challenges are the problems that most often direct the Indians and educational status of India towards despondency.
Kalam (1999) said, “… I was unaware of any other option for higher education. Nor did I have any information about career opportunities available to a student” and “…but admission to this prestigious institution was an expensive affair… and my father could not spare that much money”. These words reflect the financial condition of Kalam in particular and the financial status and innocence of village people in general. Kalam also faced a lot of problems due to his humble background, lack of standard sources and materials, communal partiality, homesick, ignorance, doubt and confusion about higher education and career opportunities, the act of procrastination, poor financial condition, lack of communication, internal and external changes, teachers’ ill-treatment and the expectation of the fascinating age during his educational career. These problems at one time “darkened his future”. Due to these problems, many students discontinue their course and go in different directions even today.

Kalam mentioned that his parents, relations and teachers helped him to overcome the problems through motivation, care and help. Jainulabdeen, Kalam’s father counseled him with affection. Ashiamma’s care, Jallaluddin’s advice about “the power of positive thinking” and Zohara’s financial help by mortgaging her gold ornaments motivated Kalam to overcome his financial crisis and created awareness about education. According to Kalam, Iyadurai Solomon handled the evolution of his students wisely. He explained complex thoughts and the meaning of success in simple ways and instilled a sense of self-understanding in his students. Through the voice of Lakshmana Sastry, Kalam (1999) said, “the teacher should not spread the poison of social inequality and communal intolerance in the minds of innocent children”.

Prof. Sponder, Prof. K. A. V. Pandalai and Prof. Narasingha Rao from Madras Institute of Technology (MIT) fed Kalam’s intellectual hunger
and shaped his thinking skills with their “sheer brilliance, untiring zeal, and distinct personalities” to form a strong foundation for his professional career. Prof. Sponder encouraged and guided him in a right way when Kalam was in after choosing Aeronautical Engineering in MIT. Prof. Srinivasan, the Director of MIT, cured Kalam of his procrastination. These helped him to overcome the setbacks, disappointments and distractions.

3.2.3 Professional Barriers

Kalam also recorded many obstacles he had faced in his professional career. The first director of Vikram Sarabhai Space Research Centre (VSSC) and the person who played a major role in Kalam’s life and in “the story of Indian science” (introduction), Dr. Brahm Prakash called these obstacles “performance degraders”. Kalam wrote Wings of Fire by asking himself “Why not write about the victimization which is a hallmark of the tragedy of Indian science and technology?” He exposed the ways to organizational success by describing his interview experience in Directorate of Technical Development and Production (DTD&P), Indian Air Force (IAF) and Indian National Committee for Space Research (INCOSPAR) and his work experience in DTD&P, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC), Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL).

Some of the serious problems that Kalam explained in detail are the discouragement of the senior colleagues, lack of a prime organization to look after the working conditions of Indian scientific organizations and India sometimes forgetting to recognize the achievements of Indians. He felt that the discouragement of the envious senior colleagues discouraged him from dreaming high. Through the words of Dr. Vikram Sarabhai who set a vision for SLV-3 and interviewed Kalam in INCOPSAR, Kalam articulated that the
lack of a “single roof to carry out system integration for the rocket stages and systems” was the root cause for the failure of the Pyro timer circuit. He also expressed his dissatisfaction when he observed National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) recognized Tipu Sultan as a hero of warfare rocketry which India did not. He (1999) said, “The painting depicted a fact forgotten in Tipu’s own country but commemorated here on the other side of the planet”.

Contemptuous pride is a serious problem in Indian organizations. It creates disturbances among leaders, subordinates, workers and juniors and paves the way for abusing power and status. Kalam (1999) viewed that “… due to this contemptuous pride … on one side are a few hundred heroes keeping nine hundred and fifty million people down on the other side.” He believed that man’s pride was the root of all sins. He described how pride injected satanic character in man by recollecting the religious thought uttered by his mother in the bed time stories.

Kalam brought many strategies to the light to overcome the barriers. He appreciated Sarabhai for his analytical capability and his capacity for redefining tasks in a short period. He learnt the value of tolerance and patience from Dr. Brahm Praksh before undertaking the responsibility for SLV-3 project. He took bold decisions to create opportunities for himself and for the scientists to put forth their effort with complete dedication. He created a space for collaboration with a few prestigious institutions and organizations in India and abroad. He developed the ability to utlize the skills of the talented scientists for a noble cause. Moreover, Kalam’s nationalism prompted him to ask “why not in India?” when he saw developments in foreign countries. His heart was always for a developed India. These are a few aspects that helped in the success of SLV-3 which was launched on 17th July 1980.
In DRDL also, Kalam identified the drawbacks and barriers of organizational growth. Kalam (1999) said, “I have worked with many people and organizations and have had to deal with people who were so full of their own limitations”. He faced the people who were “highly talented but egotistic and rebellious”. According to Kalam (1999), they “would discuss matters very enthusiastically, but would finally accept what a select few said… would unquestioningly believe in outside specialists”. Kalam felt for the scientists who were excellent professionals but not able to recover from their disappointments. For Kalam, the lack of powerful and visionary leaders, funding, space availability and facilities like wind tunnel, the task of selecting Project Directors among “the go-getters, planners, mavericks, dictators and team men and the senior colleagues, and tempo of hopelessness” created a stagnant situation in DRDL. He explained the situation in DRDL through the words of Coleridge:

Day after day, day after day
We struck, nor breath, nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

In order to overcome the drawbacks, Kalam (1999) decided to bury the devil in the mind of the scientists of DRDL and to raise the hope and vision among them. Inspired by Sarabhai and Brahm Prakash, he searched the ways to build leaders “who could elucidate the goals” could achieve the “missions larger than their lives” and could “inspire their entire workforce”. Kalam (1999) also framed a set of rules to select the right type of leaders “who could clearly visualize the goal and channelize the energy of the team members who would be working at different work centers in pursuit of their own individual goals”. Through hard work, he and his team set valuable goals and ambitions like involving in indigenous missile programs in order to get fund and co-operation from the government. Kalam (1999) arranged special
lectures by the eminent personalities of prestigious institutions and organizations to stress “the goal of India, having her own missile systems” in the mind of the doubting Thomases. Through the strategy ‘partnership’, he used the sources like Prof. S.M. Deshpande and Prof I. G. Sharma from Indian Institute of Science (IISc.), and many experts from other institutions like Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras. The team of Despande developed the software for Computational Fluid Dynamics for Hypersonic Regimes within six months. Prof. I G Sharma developed “Anukalapana” a Missile Trajectory Simulation Software, to evaluate multi-target acquisition capabilities of an Akash-type weapon system and the young team from IIT, Madras developed the re-entry vehicle system design methodology for Agni. Kalam (1999) praised the eminent personalities worked for the achievement through partnership. He called his collaboration as “three - fold strategy - multi- institutional participation”. These were the stones rubbed together to create Agni.

3.2.4 Freedom

Ruled by the west for a long time, modern Indians living in the age of technological supremacy are still indirectly controlled by the minds of developed countries. Kalam provided a number of solutions to free India from the technological supremacy of the developed countries. As a revolutionist, Kalam also revealed many factors that enslave human beings. He wanted every human being to be free from personal bondage and other oppressing forces. He treated every human being as human being. Kalam (1999) expressed his opinion on equality as, “You, me and everyone on this planet is sent free by Him to cultivate all the creative potential within us and live at peace with our own conscience”. He stressed that “everyman should retain his/her birthright to be a person in order to attain his/her desire in real life.” Man’s freedom reflects the freedom of a community, organization and nation.
Kalam viewed ‘interdependence’ as an important characteristic of a leader of an organization or of a nation and as the most important quality equal to power and influence. He recommended hard work and determination in order not to be a slave. He downplayed the negative face of lack of hard work by saying “if you do not” (work hard) “you are surrendering your fate to others”. Coal can produce fire. It could be used for cooking purpose as well as for pulling a train having many compartments of people and goods with a great speed. Similarly, the human brain can be used for small or greater purposes. Determination also decides the level of freedom and struggle a person or a country has to face. Kalam anticipated his countrymen to use their brain which is the deciding agent to achieve impossible tasks of personal freedom as well as national freedom.

3.2.5 Youth

Kalam recorded the problems of Indian youth in *Wings of Fire*. As a young man, he faced challenges, because of his lack of assertiveness, humble background, failures, loneliness, negative comments, etc. He was so disappointed when he lost the opportunity to join the Indian Air Force at Dehradun. He felt sad when senior colleagues targeted him and commented negatively on the Ground Equipment Machine (GEM) Project, as “… a group of eccentric inventors in pursuit of an impossible dream”. But Kalam’s optimistic mind utilized the negative comments to generate positive energy from his team. Kalam blamed Indian’s attitude towards hard work by saying “As the process of confronting and solving the problems often requires hard work and it is painful we have endless procrastination.” It is this procrastination that does not allow the innate courage and wisdom of Indian to grow. The huge problems, he found in Indian youth are lack of clarity of vision and a lack of direction. He also observed that most of the Indians are suffering unnecessary misery throughout their lives due to their ignorance of
the techniques to manage their emotions and the value of selecting “the next best alternative”. Kalam called this problem “psychological inertia”.

Kalam gave a solution by comparing the attitude of Americans and Indians in facing problems. Kalam (1999) noted the difference: “I realized that people in this part (India) of the world meet their problems head on … They (Americans) attempt to get out of them rather than suffer them”. He aimed to spread the seeds of ambition, vision, desire and thirst for achievement in the hearts of Indian youth. Believing in their power, he made use of young research scholars’ cooperation for the success of IGMDP. Kalam found a way to reduce the average age of young scientists from 42 to 33 to join in DRDL. He showed much interest in visiting many places, particularly to meet the youth of India and he tried to tie their minds with big dreams for his nation’s development. He sowed the national pride in them. Kalam advised them to un-learn the “self-defeating way of living life” and to have belief in the Almighty’s power to overcome the problems.

3.2.6 Patriotism

Apart from desire and dedication, Kalam maintained a great pride for his nation. Though he felt ‘pride’ as a ‘Satan’, he was not able to control his nation’s pride, when he observed Tipu Sultan, an Indian, was glorified by NASA, “as a hero of warfare rocketry”. All of Kalam’s efforts, ideas and activities were connected with the development of India, like all the rivers mingled with ocean. For example, Kalam concentrated on completing the nation’s prestigious Project SLV, by suppressing the unbearable pain he had due to the loss of his father, mother and cousin. Kalam (1999) expressed the condition of his determined mind as “… physically exhausted, emotionally shattered, but determined to fulfill our ambition of flying an Indian rocket motor on foreign soil”. Kalam (1999) also recalled the words of Prof. Dhawan “… progress on the SLV project would bring … solace”, when Jainulabdeen
died. This nature of Kalam motivated him to work for the nation despite his personal sufferings.

The great secret behind the success of Kalam’s life is that he did not like to become a great personality, but he liked to do great things for his nation to transform his fellow citizens as great personalities. He observed the notable qualities, admirable, positive and useful characteristics of the visionary leaders and successful personalities. Ultimately Kalam grew up as a visionary leader and a good human being. He infused these qualities in the minds of Indian children and youth to produce more good human beings, visionary leaders and successful personalities for India and to create an egalitarian Indian society.

Kalam identified many things to be done “for the first time in India”. He revealed his understanding on the importance of research and development in the field of science and technology, when he observed “a piece of sculpture depicting a charioteer driving two horses” at Longley Research Centre (LRC), NASA. His understanding matched with Sarabhai’s dream project of the Indian Satellite Launch Vehicle (SLV). As a result, the collective capabilities and effort of Indian scientists launched SLV-3 on 18 July 1980, from SHAR Rocket Launch Station. This achievement made India as a “fifth country in the world to achieve satellite launch capability”. Kalam (1999) expressed his joy by saying “It was both the culmination of a national dream and the beginning of a very important phase in our nation’s history”. The strategies he learned in ISRO helped Kalam to dedicate his effort to combine and to utilize the efforts of the scientists of DRDL for the success of IGMDP. When Prithvi, a surface-to surface missile was launched on 25 February 1988, Kalam (1999) felt that “it was an epoch-making event in the history of rocketry in the country”. He wrote the importance of determination in a poem after the successful launching Agni missile on 22 May 1989 as,
Do not look at Agni
As an entity directed upward

It is fire
in the heart of an Indian

as it clings to the
burning pride of this nation.

Former President R. Venkataraman appreciated Kalam: “it is a tribute to your dedication, hard work and talent”. But, Kalam’s inner mind seemed unsatisfied with his past achievements and his spirit looked forward to do greater things. The visionary in Kalam (1999) said “if Indians were to play a meaningful role in the community of nations, they must be second to none in the application of advanced technologies to their real-life problems”. Kalam (1999) believed that “the great country will make enormous strides in all fields if we think like a united nation of 900 million people”.

3.2.7 Self

Dan Zahavi (2005) discussed the problems of self to be constructed in language and shared a remedy too. Self-construction is blamed for its open-ended construction under constant revision. Zahavi noted that “the problems of the self seemed to be pinned on culturally relative narrative hooks like aims, ideas and aspirations”. He brought out the views of Daniel Stern. Stern, revealed the confused status of self by distinguishing the persona and self. According to him, persona can be constructed completely in language and the self can only be partly constructed. He believed that self belongs to the living person and is experienced by the subject and the persona is ‘the other’ bound in text a textual signifier called the autobiographical ego. Poststructuralists
criticized that autobiographical patterns as meaning of life are not found or
given but made. They also blamed the structures used to construct the
personal identity and subjectivity with the help of the tools like individual
consciousness. According to Olshen (2001), due to the puzzles in describing
self, the postmodernists reduced the self to a textual signifier.

Olshen (2001) suggested applying the concept of the psychiatrist
Stern to avoid the confusions of self-narration. Stern suggested using the term
“senses of self” instead of the concept of self. Stern has many reasons to alter
the term “self” to “senses of self”. It serves as the primary subjective
perspective that organizes social experience, dominates early social
development, emerges before the sense of “a verbal self” and each one defines
a different domain of self experience and social relatedness. Identity is an
attempt to differentiate and integrate a sense of self along different social and
personal dimensions. In an analysis on the aspects that helped Kalam to
construct his identity in *Wings of Fire*, it was identified that the aspects like
his self-esteem, self-respect, self-consciousness, self-awareness, selfishness
and many served Kalam as his senses of self in the process of his inward
search.

Kalam recorded the growth of his psyche and the ways in which he
attained his social status. Brockmeir (2001) denoted that identity is also said
to be constructed through many forms of discourse that we order our
experiences, memories, desires and concerns in an autobiographical
perspective. Kalam constructed his identity through his narration describing
his past experiences with the threads of his and his nation’s life history.
Brockmeir also viewed identity “as a figure against a background of
instability and it is of something firm that develops or manifests itself against
the backdrop of change and temporality in the flux of time.” Kalam’s
narration in his autobiography shows him as a spiritualist, student, scientist,
leader, human being, politician, patriotic person and writer. His spiritualism,
humanism, nationalism, and hard work did not change throughout his life though there was a transformation of personalities from student to a scientist, a leader, a politician, a writer, etc. Despite being a Muslim, he appreciated the religious of others. Although he was a bachelor, he understood the difficulties of married people. His self as an individual transcended to encompass the national self through his vision 2020.

3.2.8 Narrator and the Subject

In *Wings of Fire*, Kalam is the narrator of his own subject. However, he differentiated his roles as a narrator and as a subject skillfully. The role of the subject and the narrator is differentiated by a thin line drawn by Kalam’s consciousness. The complexity could be viewed through the reflections of Kalam’s conscious mind revealed in an incident that Kalam had with Sarabhai. Sarabhai informed Kalam to take charge of the Rocket-Assisted Take-off (RATO) system. As a narrator, Kalam had to register his reactions. But, the narrator looked into the status of Kalam’s heart and rewarded that the plan went in his mind. The narrator described that when Kalam heard the word, he shifted his thinking from present to future. He had been thinking about the benefits and working conditions of the RATO. The narrator described that the inner mind’s imagination was diverted to present reality by a coffee served. It is Kalam’s interest in science and technology which combined the status of Kalam’s inner mind and the personality of Kalam. At the same time, Kalam proved the authenticity of his work by presenting his life through interlinking a number of contemporaries and popular politicians and scientists. This proves Kalam’s consciousness of identity and different roles.
3.2.9 Undertaking Multiple Tasks

In *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689), John Locke noticed “undertaking multiple tasks” as a part of personal identity. Kalam’s consciousness made Kalam strong physically and mentally and at the same time helped him to undertake multiple tasks concurrently and positively. Kalam even used his morning walk with a broader and purposeful way. He used to think about his regular schedule, during his regular walking. It saved his valuable time and that of his colleagues. This habit kept him free from taking wrong decisions that would lead to misery of the team as well as the nation. It helped him to achieve the job in time, and sometime in advance. Kalam (1999) uttered, “I used to prepare a general schedule during my morning walk and emphasized two or three things I would definitely like to accomplish during the day including at least one thing that would help achieve long-term goals”. It also helped Kalam (1999) to scan all the papers on the table and quickly divide them into different categories, like “those that require immediate action, low priority ones, ones that could be kept on pending and reading material.” This may be the reason that Kalam and his team members were able to complete many tasks before the targeted time.

3.2.10 Self-Awareness

Richardson considered “a sense of casual agency” as “a necessary condition of narrativity” (Abbott 2002). Brockmeir (2001) observed the capability of identity as “it can transform itself and adapt to the challenges of growing cultural multiplicities in increasingly globalizing environments”. Kalam adapted all the circumstances and mingled with all kinds of human beings. Self-realization, self-confidence and self-thirst are a few aspects that served Kalam to identify and build his self. These aspects instilled courage and dedication in Kalam and motivated him to achieve his desires and to face all the circumstances. Kalam’s educational experience and positions in
various places and his intentions to look at all human beings as the creation of God gave him strength to adopt the culture of globalization which did not pollute his purity. In the process of his narration, he did not fail to note the root causes behind generating each and every sense of self. The initial stage of his focused mind was rooted through his observation of the seagulls flying in the sea-shore. Kalam (1999) said, “Simple, provincial boy though I was, I was convinced that one day I, too would soar up into the skies; indeed I was the first child from Rameshwaram to fly”. It was this dream that increased his patience and stimulated his spirit for success. It also became the best example for Kalam’s self-realization.

3.2.11 Selfishness

Selfishness causes partiality and crimes among human beings. It destroys the personal peace and the peacfullness of the soul. It paves way for nepotism. Kalam is a person who always bothers about society. The history of his life confirms his total dedication for the nation. Throughout his career, he was not charged by the blame, nepotism, though he worked in the positions, where there were chances to involve in the act of nepotism. It does not mean that Kalam is not a selfish man. Kalam (1999) had selfishness which is visible when Kalam (1999) emotionally talked as “I never used any outside influence to advance my career” but, Kalam’s peculiar nature is revealed in utilizing his “selfishness” in the positive and useful way for himself as well as for his nation. His optimistic nature allowed him to use his “selfishness” to upgrade his knowledge. Kalam (1999) expressed his selfishness by saying that “I desired to feel more, learn more, express more. I desire to grow, improve, purify and expand”. 
3.2.12 Optimism

The most admirable nature of Kalam is his optimism. He used his optimism to console the disturbed people at the time of their crisis and to motivate himself when egoistic colleagues and reporters commented on him negatively. It strengthened his self-confidence. For example, Kalam answered “yes we can” to the question of Sarabhai, “if I get you the motors of this system from Russia, could you do it in eighteen months?” Through this optimisitic nature, he maintained a good relationship with teachers and all others. He maintained unsurpassed interest in knowing and observing subjects. He expressed his fascination towards the structural, thermal, electrical, chemical and mechanical properties while talking about his experience in Thumba Equatorial Rocket Launching Station (TERLS), as “I was in a hurry to know everything about them almost overnight.” He learned decision making skills, many leadership qualities and spiritual understanding from his close observation of personalities like Jallaludin, Iyadurai Solomon, Sarabhai, Dhawan and Bram Prakash.

Kalam converted the negative outlook of his school teacher Ramakrishna Iyer and Prof. Srinivasan, the Director, MIT, Chennai. It became his special nature that served as an important sign of his identity. He used the stones thrown on him for constructing his self and identity. For example, the mathematics teacher of Rameshwaram Elementary School, Ramakrishna Iyer who scolded Kalam once praised him as “… this boy is going to bring glory to his school and to his teachers”. Kalam’s project experience in MIT and his experience during GEM, SLV and Agni projects evidence Kalam’s nature of utilizing the hurting stones of the seniors and media as awards for the nation building task.
3.2.13 Attempting Tasks beyond Capability

The best secret of Kalam’s success is his attempts to take tasks beyond his capability. This nature provided many turning points in his life. It helped him to understand his real strength to complete any tasks before the targeted time and to undertake multiple tasks. His project at Hidustan Aeronautical Limited (HAL) made him to understand the meaning of taking a task beyond one’s capability. Professor Srinivasan put Kalam under a difficult situation when he found no progress in the project assigned to Kalam. He reduced the deadline to complete the project from one month time to three days. He also kept a check point for Kalam’s life line and his dream, by warning Kalam that he would stop the scholarship, if the task was not completed in three days. Kalam successfully completed the task with his dedication, belief and effort. As a result, Srinivasan appreciated Kalam and his confidence. Kalam also understood that anything is possible if one attempted to do any task with dedication and single-minded focus. Such a focus helped him to take responsibilities which include crores and crores of nation’s money, higher level professionals and nation’s pride.

3.2.14 Work Strategy

An autobiography reveals an “agency” or “the desire for agency” to show how meanings are created for people, how people create meanings for themselves and how people engage the world around them (Smith & Watson 2001). Kalam expressed many agents that served for his success and created a peculiar meaning for him. Kalam’s firm belief in spirituality, encouragement of his mentors, reading strategies to understand the concepts and theories, realizing the dreams which urged his self, utilizing decisive mind to take strong and right decisions and implementing decisions in to action, dedicated attempt to do any work ahead of schedule and confidence and adaptive mind are a few agents described in the Orientation section in
**Wings of Fire.** Framing a new set of rules, enforcing supervision on the colleagues as a routine work and justifying the reflections of their desire in work, getting the involvement of the team, trust in team work and talent, using the combination of science and technology, taking very short time to recover from failures, skills in converting the primary project objectives into major tasks, fixing a target time duration to complete any work, categorizing the people into groups based on their potentiality and specialization, talent, character and dedication, nature and courage of taking responsibility for the failure of big scientific projects are a few agents described in the Creation section.

Arranging lectures and interconnecting old and youth and private and public sectors are strategies Kalam discussed as the agents in the Propitiation section. For example, he arranged guest lecturers by the experts from IISc, IIT, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) and from many other educational institutions to accelerate the pace of Research and Development activities at DRDL. He formed high level body called the Missile Technology Committee consisting of senior scientists to discuss and to motivate the team to take decisions to achieve tasks that were beyond the collective national capability. He arranged special meetings periodically, in which “all scientists, juniors and seniors veterans and fresher’ would sit together and let off steam.” He took follow-up actions of the project activities. He utilized partnership of 12 academic institutions and 30 laboratories from DRDO, CSIR and ISRO for designing and developing the scientific projects. He involved more than 50 professors and 100 research scholars to solve the missile related problems in the laboratories. Proper listening helped him to learn and to utilize collective wisdom for the success of the individual and nation.
There are some characteristics called work philosophies. They served as fuel to the burning fire in Kalam. There are five more stimulators of work which were elaborately discussed by Kalam. They are performance degraders, performance dimensions, communication, total commitment and flow. Kalam was aware of performance degraders reminded by Braham Prakash. In his narration, he did not directly blame the performance degraders. Some senior colleagues discouraged Kalam and his team who had undertaken a responsibility. But they would not work hard nor take any responsibility. They would also prevent others from doing any work.

Performance dimensions helped Kalam complete his tasks. As reported by Kalam, these performance dimensions went beyond the competencies of the knowledge and skills of an individual. They were broader, deeper and they included attitudes, values and characters. According to Kalam, the dimensions of performance can be revealed through behavioral level, intermediate level and core level. Observation of skills and knowledge are reflected in the behavioral level, social roles and selves are reflected in the intermediate level and motives and traits are reflected in the inner core level. Kalam’s life described in the three sections Orientation, Creation and Propitiation clearly reflects the three levels of performance dimensions. The section, Orientation describes how Kalam acquired knowledge and skills Creation talks about Kalam’s performance under major responsibilities and Propititation points to how Kalam motivated and guided the scientists at DRDL to achieve even higher national goals.

Communication served as an agent of success to Kalam. He used it as a ‘Mantra’ to emphasize the importance of each member’s specific contribution towards the realization of organizational goals, to promote colleagues understanding in defining the problems of the project and to unite their collective effort in actions to solve problems. Because of this practice,
his colleagues were able to get in touch with their goal based on a common goal of the organization. At the same time, they were able to present their thoughts and process well during the presentation in front of the higher authorities who reviewed the progress. They were able to satisfy the reviewers. Satisfying the reviewers is a sensitive process.

Kalam gave much importance to the word “flow”. Out of his experience and personal understanding he defined the term as a state to be achieved through meditation. He elaborated “flow”, as it shows the way to attain the status nature and its advantages. To him, “Flow is a sensation, we experience when we act with total involvement”. During flow, “action follows action according to an internal logic that seems to need no conscious intervention on the part of the worker”. Kalam stated that one could attain this “flow” status through continuously involving in a task and it could be increased by analyzing the pervious occasion, when ‘flow’ status was felt. Kalam expressed that, he realized the flow state in his work regularly. For him, it will take at least half an hour to join with the “flow status”. He called it “moments of magic” and a by-product of controlled creativity. Kalam described the special nature of “flow” as it could make a person “very relaxed, energetic and fresh, though he worked very hard”. Moreover, it could create a sense that he is performing a task better today than he did yesterday”. It is this flow felt by Kalam that helped him to get complete control over himself and over the SLV -3.

Another working philosophy Kalam used to follow was that he would enter the Assembly Shop leaving his other problems outside. The best example to prove how Kalam viewed the problems could be revealed when he said “just as my father used to enter the mosque for prayer, leaving his shoes outside” (Kalam 1999). Kalam’s comparison of his problems with shoes clearly shows the masculine nature of Kalam and the strength of his mind.
Kalam never bothered about time while working. Many evidences show that not only Kalam but also many of his team members rarely bother about “time”. Their working hours sometimes were extended till late night. This could be identified from the reply Kalam got, when he called Prof. Sarabhai’s secretary for an appointment. Kalam was asked to meet him at 3.30 a.m. at Hotel Asoka, Delhi. Like this, Kalam and his team members have lots of sleepless nights in the organizations like ISRO, DRDO and DRDL.

Kalam framed and applied new sets of rules in the necessary places. He kept the work environment lively with a good blend of the experience of the older scientists mixed with the skills of their younger colleagues. This positive inter-dependence of youth and experience according to Kalam not only created a very productive work culture at DRDL, but also it helped to renew the intellectual capacity of the experienced scientists and to achieve the highest possible integration in terms of both the quality of work and human relationships. Kalam’s (1999) love for his people and patriotism, which made him determining to fulfill the collective ambition of Indian scientists, to fly an Indian rocket motor on foreign soil, motivated the inner mind to think broadly and to achieve the vision of the nation. Kalam noted goal-setting, positive thinking, visualizing and believing as the four basic factors of successful outcome and involvement, participation and commitment as the key words of successful functioning. The very best nature of renewal energy of Kalam (1999) is expressed in the line “Let me clean my slate and write a new sum”.

Wings of Fire has many plots joining with philosophies of spirituality, work and life. There is one plot which describes how an ordinary village student became the leader of India’s prominent organization. He added many leadership qualities of visionary leaders in his autobiographies. Kalam’s views about leadership are summarized here: A leader must have competence
in staffing, introduce new blood into the organization, deal with problems and new concepts, skill in handling these complex entities, capable of instilling enthusiasm in his team and praise publicly, but criticize privately. He applied these principles in his work place that brought rewards for his colleagues after the launch of Agni Missile.

### 3.2.15 Motivation

Brockmeir (2001) viewed identity as “something that either guides or must be discovered or constituted during one’s life”. Anderson (2001) endorsed that often this constitution occurred after a crucial turning point or conversion as in Augustine’s *Confessions*. Another plot which runs through Kalam’s *Wings of Fire* is the effect and the role of motivation played in his life. It is also an agent which helped Kalam to view his dream. It made a path to realize his problems and weakness and made many turning points in his life. *Wings of Fire* portrays a successful leader whose life was shaped by internal and external motivators and became a book of motivation for others. According to Kalam (1999), motivation “is a force which is internal to the individual and forms the basis of his behavior in the work environment”. He found out that the motivational inventory of a leader is made up of three types of understanding. They are “an understanding of the needs that people expect to satisfy in their jobs”, “an understanding of the effect that job design has on motivation” and “an understanding of the power of positive reinforcement in influencing people’s behavior”. Kalam constructed his autobiography, in which the plot of motivation is introduced as if Kalam was motivated by his father, brother-in-law, teachers and professors, his reaction through the success of SLV project and Kalam becoming a tool of motivation through IGMDP. Kalam was motivated by both positive and hurting words of teachers and colleagues.
According to Bamberg (2009), “identities are constituted in the interplay of individuals with other people in social contexts of family, work, study …” The words of other personalities became a prophecy in the life of Kalam. They motivated Kalam’s inner self. For example, Kalam remembered the motivating words of Sivasubramania Iyer, Ramakrishna Iyer, and Prof. Sponder while he narrated the three phases of his educational career. Sivasubramania Iyer said, “I want you to develop so that you are on par with highly educated people of the big cities”, Ramakrishna Iyer encouraged him by saying, “Take my word, this boy is going to bring glory to his school and to his teachers”, and during the photo session at MIT, Prof. Sponder said, “You are my best student and hard work will help you bring a great name for your teachers in future”. This kind of motivation made lots of turning points in Kalam’s life. Moreover, Jallaluddin advised him to decide his further studies. He always spoke to Kalam about educated people, scientific discoveries and the achievements of medical science. Solomon sowed in him the dream to pilot an aircraft. Sarabhai stimulated Kalam to dedicate himself for India’s missile development.

Kalam recalled the consoling words of others which helped him, overcome his failures and sad moments. For instance, Swami Sivananda’s words are memorable: “What you are destined to become is not revealed now but it is predetermined. Forget this failure, as it was essential to you to your destined path. Search, instead for the true purpose of your existence.” Dhawan consoled him when his brother-in-law died. Sarabhai consoled him when his father died. Kalam also endorsed that the words, encouragement and appreciation of others served as performance promoters of Kalam. Wernher von Braun who made the lethal V-2 missiles that devastated London in the Second World War, said, “Do not make rocketry your profession, your livelihood – make it your religion, your mission”. It taught Kalam to apply strategies with hard work. Defence Minister, V M Krishna Menon’s words
about Kalam to the Director of ADE, Dr. Mediratta “GEM flight is possible with the gadgets Kalam now possesses” increased Kalam’s self-confidence. Kalam earned the confidence of others too. For example, the Defence Minister, out of his confidence in Kalam recommended the cabinet to sanction Rs. 388 crores for the project under IGMDP. Shrimathi Gandhi expressed her confidence in Kalam: “Your fast pace of work is the hope of the entire nation”.

One way or the other, the motivation of others stimulated him to contribute great things to his nation. Many top level politicians and scientists appreciated Kalam for his remarkable achievements. After the success of SLV-3, Prof. Dhawan, appreciated Kalam “You are beautifully clothed in your success.” Dr. Brahm Prakash appreciated Kalam, when the Home Ministry announced the conferment of the Padma Bhushan award on Kalam on the Republic Day in 1981. He said, “I feel as if my son has got the award”. After the success of Agni launch, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi said that Agni launch is “a major achievement in our continuing efforts to safeguard our independence and security by self-reliant means… The country is proud of your efforts”. Kalam also showed his transformation from being motivated to be a motivator. For example, Kalam shared his SLV experience to motivate the members of DRDL, who were unhappy about the failure of Agni launch on 20 April 1989. Kalam (1999) said, “I lost my launch vehicle in the sea but recovered successfully. Your missile is in front of you. In fact, you have lost nothing but a few weeks of rework”. Kalam’s sharing like this and his guidance recovered the scientists in DRDL and recharged them with new energy to work for success.

3.2.16 Philosophy of Life

According to Olshen (2001), “Self” is best described as a kind of subjective structure that is one belonging entirely to the subject, to the
individual who experiences, who is conscious, who has an inner life and a point of view”. Zahavi (2005) viewed self as “a distinct principle of identity” interconnected with “proper understanding of consciousness”, such as “philosophy of conscious mind, social philosophy, psychiatry, developmental psychology and cognitive neuroscience”. The three disciplines in which Kalam’s self is utilized are philosophy of conscious mind, social philosophy and developmental psychology. Telling one’s own life however is not the only way of constituting self. Kalam talked about higher authorities and most of them are living. It served two purposes of Kalam: it avoided the blame of personal exaggeration and it supported the “authority” of his autobiography. Kalam’s life is narrated, as if it started from Rameshwaram moving to Ramanathapuram, Trichy, Madras, Bangalore, Delhi, etc. This movement from one place to other places of India and foreign countries to learn and for job provided Kalam vast knowledge and a broad mind. The feelings and perceptions came out of this generous mind and increased the psychological strength of Kalam.

Kalam’s great strength lies in his understanding on himself, and other individuals, society and the nature of work. He has a mind which can practically accept anything. He is spiritually bound and was not affected by the ordinary events of the world, including the death of his brother-in-law. Kalam (1999) said, “Death had never frightened me. After all everyone has to go one day”. Kalam viewed life “as a mixture of unsolved problems, ambiguous victories and amorphous defeats”. He also revealed that “setbacks and disappointments have always been and always will be an inherent part of any career”. What Kalam observed from his experience is that people analyze the problems and failures instead of dealing with them. Kalam showed the paths to face failures.
Kalam’s life teaches many strategies to lead a challenging but a successful and fruitful life. He treated facing failure as a learning strategy. He utilized Prof. Sarabhai’s strategy of “using errors as an opportunity to promote the innovation and the development of the new ideas”. He also adopted the habit of anticipating errors and joyful giving from the professors at St. Joseph’s College. He practically applied the idea of single-minded devotion to his goal throughout his life. According to Kalam, there are two possible reasons for failure: “setting a goal when one is at low ebb” and asking “wrong questions for right answers”. Delayed response can also be a reason for failure.

Kalam observed three major forces of success from Iyadurai Solomon. They are desire, belief and expectation. Kalam often told the people to have faith in themselves and “to know the direction in which they are moving”. He uttered, “The great thing in the world is not, knowing so much on where we stand”, as in “what direction we are moving”. He believed that making the right choices would give happiness, satisfaction and success. Kalam (1999) subscribed to the philosophy of General George that “a good plan violently executed right now is comparatively better than the perfect plan going to be executed in future.” This strategy decides one’s destiny. He has a research mind which motivated him to ask his own questions, seek answers and to evaluate his satisfactions. By comparing one’s career with reaching to the top of Mount Everest, Kalam suggested to have “strength in order to achieve the desired goal”. The ‘love’ involved in work is expressed by Kalam (1999) through the words of Khalil Gibran as, ‘Bread baked without love is bitter bread that feeds but half a man’s hunger”.

Kalam’s explanation for the exposure of talent is different. He believed that talent could be revealed in how one handles his crisis. His (1999) best choice is the “renewal energy” His thirst for this renewal energy
is expressed when he said, “An inner voice told me that the time had come for a long felt, but ignored, need for renewal. Let me clean my slate and write new sums”. He also suggested the collective wisdom in order to avoid the setbacks and disappointments. Finally, he showed a key point to become a person. Personal willingness to use one’s own uniquely individual standpoint will make a person.

Kalam (1999) also illustrated some ways to think positively with spiritual and social views. He anticipated people to believe the basic thoughts that “Every child is born with some inherited characteristics, into a specific socio-economic and emotional-environment”. He spiritually utters the same idea as “everyone in this planet is set free by Him to cultivate all and to create potential within them”. He revealed the basic thought lead to success: “People are born with different energy reserves and the one who tries first and burns out easily will do well to reorganize his or her life at the earliest”. Kalam suggested the people to undergo difficulties in order to enjoy the real worth of success. Moreover, Kalam believes that the difficulties will provide a chance to show the “super-intelligence” which is within everybody and to stimulate or “to examine man’s deepest thoughts, desires and beliefs”. He believes that “difficulties and problems are given by God as an opportunity to grow”. Kalam (1999) explained the nature of positive thinking through the words “So when your hopes and dreams and goals are dashed, search among the wreckage, you may find a golden opportunity hidden in the ruins”. Thus, Kalam proves that one has to depend upon the great force of God with whom Kalam is said to maintain a working partnership. When Kalam was emotionally disturbed at the completion stage of SLV-3 Project, he remembered the words from the twenty-sixth chapter of Psalm, “Examine me, O Lord and prove me”. It shows that looking positively anything will give success at the same time, it will also reveal one’s real identity to the larger circle.
3.2.17 Spirituality

Paul Ricoeur suggested the autobiographer to search for a story that will answer to “Who am I?” The autobiographer should organize his life story in a suitable way. His story should convey his significant aspects and motifs (Zahavi 2005). In Wings of Fire, Kalam told the story of an innocent boy transformed into “a well” having knowledge and wisdom to serve for physical freedom and spiritual freedom. He said, “I am a well in this great land”. It implies that he acquired Spiritual knowledge and utilized it for benefit of the society. Kalam constructed Wings of Fire, as if the multiple aspects of his personality are rooted in his childhood days. He utilized them for noble purpose and for serving the humanity, when he was young. During his middle age and old age, he employed them for a broader benefit as well as he instilled the aspects of his personality in others too. For example, he started Wings of Fire, as the seeds of spirituality was rooted and ended it as if he attained spiritual fulfillment. Initially, Kalam narrated, as if he started to attain spiritual maturity with the companionship and observation of spiritually matured people like Jainulabdeen and Pakshi Lakshmana Sastry who explained the mystic spiritual concepts and thoughts in an easy understandable language. Kalam (1999) closed Wings of Fire with the words,

I am a well in this great land

Looking forward at its millions of boys and girls to draw from me

The inexhaustible divinity.

These words of wisdom clearly indicate Kalam’s attainment of spiritual fulfillment. In between spiritual birth and spiritual fulfillment, thoughts which motivated, protected and shaped him to become an engineer-cum-scientist, a good human being and a writer were instilled by his teachers, professors and legendary leaders. He conveyed the message that “the service mind” he holds for his people served to bring his multiple identities to the world. In the mean time, he did not fail to indicate the major thought that all the identities reach
finally towards the destination of spirituality. His spiritual interest is well documented in *Ignited Minds*.

Kalam’s multiple identities are constructed on his spiritual belief, which is based on the universal philosophies of major religions like Christianity, Hinduism and Islam. For example, “trials” are the basis for Christians, “Karma” is the basis for Hindus and “prayer” is the basis for Muslim religion. In the *Book of Peter*, Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, talked about trials. He compared trials of man’s faith with refining of gold in order to prove that man will become valuable after the trials. Karma is a belief which explains that a person’s actions cause certain effects in the current life and/or in future life positively or negatively depending upon the actions involved. Prayer is considered as one of the five pillars of Islam. Kalam’s narration proves that he overcame many trials with patience and dedication. He felt that he has a working partnership with God. In his early childhood, he learnt about the significance of prayer from his father. Kalam believed that “prayer would help one to tap and develop the power of his/her great potential strength and ability stored within his/her mind by the Creator” (Kalam 1999).

Kalam (1999) believed that “contact of God may come from an encounter with another person, from a word, a question, a gesture, or through a book, conversation, some phrases, even from a line from a poem, or the mere sight of a picture”. He realized it when he took the charge of the project leader for indigenous development of a device to help short run take-off by high performance military aircraft by reading a book kept on Sarabhai’s table. He narrated as if he had a quick look at the qualities of a Project Leader in the book kept on the receptionist table of Sarabhai and on that day itself “the news that India taking a mega project under the leadership of Kalam” was made public. In the Propitiation section, Kalam (1999) revealed the major quality to get God’s blessing through the idea of Schuller as “God can do tremendous things through the person who does not care about who gets the
credit”. Kalam did not have ego problem with anybody. He concentrated only on work and will not bother about personal benefits. Kalam narrated his life as if his spiritual belief helped him to overcome dilemma, failure and to contribute his best, which required more ability than he possessed. Kalam also showed another quality a man should possess in order to get the blessing of God. He said, “Before God trusts you with success, you have to prove yourself humble enough to handle the big”. Moreover, Kalam motivated his readers and the poor children living in an underprivileged setting as, “Irrespective of where they are right now, they should be aware that God is with them and when He is with them, who can be against them?”

3.3 AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ELEMENTS IN TURNING POINTS

_Turning Points: A Journey through Challenges_ is Kalam’s another inspiring autobiography depicting important incidents, events, sensitive political issues, in his life during 2002 to 2007, when he was the President of India. Kalam (2012) acknowledged that the motivation he got from the positive responses of millions of motivated readers of Kalam’s _Wings of Fire_ and other inspirational books stimulated him to write _Turning Points_. Kalam (2012) also believed that the second episode of his story presented in _Turning Points_ “would echo the concerns, anxieties and aspirants of many Indians”. As the President of India, Kalam (2012) understood the importance of a gesture as, “… even a small gesture can transform our lives in big ways”.

3.3.1 Selection and Incidents

Kalam created a perfect place in _Turning Points_ to pour out the inferno burning in his deep heart longing to see the developed India. The position of the President of India broadened the areas, where Kalam has to implement his ideas, innovative thinking, experience and visions. Kalam’s visits and observations in India and abroad kindled his mind to think about the unity of all nations. He narrated the roles he played as an academician, the
President of India and as a visionary. It served as a tool of recovery, motivations, love, trauma and success. He registered his courageous attempts like piloting Sukhoi-3-MKI fighter plane and visiting Siachen glacier—the highest battlefield of the world, rural villages of India and the places that were affected by riots and natural calamities. He expressed his deep concern for those who lost their lives in the Arakonam Aircrash of 2011. He narrated the complex issues that arose in the Office of the Profit Bill case and in the case of announcing the Prime Minister candidate of India, after the 2004 elections. He shared his valuable thoughts and leadership qualities with the intention to make the democracy alive. Kalam dealt with the problems and solution of the nation. Thus, the events in Turning Points reflect the events of the nation as well as his life. But, Kalam limited his recollections with the tool called vision for India 2020 and energy independence. In order to achieve his vision for India 2020, he insisted every Indian to work for it by asking himself “What can I give to my Nation?” His life history in Turning Points also proves that “age is not a constraint for achievement”.

3.3.2 Memory

For Smith & Watson (2001), memory is one of the important subjects of writing autobiography. According to Conway, autobiographical memory is “dynamically constructed on the basis of knowledge drawn from different memory structures” (Roberts 2002). The narrator can apply certain “stimuli for recollection” (Roberts 2002). Kalam has an astounding memory capacity that helped him even to store and fit a number of minutiae parts of the sensitive and mega scientific projects he undertook. Nair (2008) admired Kalam for his memory capacity. He said, Kalam’s “memory was amazing – photographic and with plenty of films to register information”. Kalam’s autobiographical and flashback memory served as the authenticate memory source to recollect the incidents that happened in his life for writing his
autobiographies. Dhanavel (2007) observed that Kalam utilized the assistance of Arun K Tiwari to edit and organize the materials to write *Wings of Fire*. Kalam acknowledged that he used the assistance of Ex. Major General R. Swaminathan who had association with Kalam for more than thirty years to write *Turning Points*. It shows that Kalam utilized the service of Tiwari and Swaminathan as a kind of stimuli to recollect the incidents and to edit the scripts. Moreover, Kalam’s schedules and programs published in the media, his diaries and creative writings also served as stimuli for recollecting the incidents of his life.

### 3.3.3 Gender

Thoughts can divert the emotions and emotions can disturb the thoughts. Emotions sometimes act as performance degrader and sometimes they stimulate the performance. Kalam used the emotions for the broader benefit of the society instead of utilizing it for his personal benefit. He was not inactive even though personal suffering hit him strongly. He generated more positive energy from the emotions that disturbed him. Kalam knew that a Muslim’s visit to Gujarat during the riots problem would create more complexity. But, he decided to risk in visiting Gujarat, a place filled with the problem by the riots. Kalam (2012) gave reasons for his visit as, “I decided that my mission was not to look at what had happened, not to look at what was happening, but to focus on what should be done”. Kalam’s focused intention and courage made his trip, a success.

There were issues related to the Office of the Profit Bill, dissolution of the Bihar Assembly and affirming the capital punishment on a rape case. In order to give his decision, Kalam sent back the Office of the Profit Bill which was found, filled with anomalies and lack of systematic approach for reconsideration to the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC). He consulted the former Chief Justices of Supreme Court and others. Before he got the
answer from JPC, Kalam was pressurized by the higher level of political leaders. But, he waited till the JPC signed the Bill. In the case of dissolution of Bihar Assembly, he took the responsibility as the head of the Cabinet Ministry, as per the court’s judgement given by the Governor of Bihar. But, the people and media criticized him a lot as it happened in the case of SLV failure. It shows his righteousness and patience even, when he was psychologically pressurized and he never bothered about the person or party or anything.

Kalam registered his deep condolence for the officers who lost their life in the crash of the Airborne Surveillance Plottform on 11 January 1999. According to Nair (2008), the officers who lost their life in the crash were Sqn Ldr. P. Venkataraman, Instrumentation Engineer P. Ilango, Rader System Engineer K P Shaju, Radar Processing Scientist D. Narasimhaswamy, Signal Processing Scientist Jayakumar, Sqn Ldr N. V. Seshu, R. Bhatnagar and S. Ravi. Kalam felt deeply for the suffering others and took many steps to help them.

Kalam shared his thoughts for perfect energy distribution and for the agriculture, industrial and educational development and to find out the ways to have peaceful life in India and in the world. Based on this view, he started to share his learning throughout India. He talked about the issues and consequences of energy independence, faced by many states of India, due to the power cut for more than eight hours per day. Kalam gave suggestions to reduce India’s dependence on power plants based on coal, oil and gas “which are already needed more for meeting the regular needs of people” and to depend on the natural resources by using solar, wind, nuclear and hydro route. Kalam (2012) also suggested using, “solar power route during the day and bio-fuel during the night, so that energy is available continuously.” He also represented the problems of people’s migration, fasting moments and
Koodankulam power plant which are taking place in recent times. Kalam’s narrative of problems and solutions reveals his intention to be a source of knowledge throughout his career.

3.3.4 Visionary

Kalam is known for his visionary qualities. He planned India 2020 Vision even in the 20th century. He set visions for himself even in his earlier childhood days. In the same way, he set short term and long term visions before he took any job or work. He created visions as if it would consume the collective energy of a group or of a society for a broader purpose and greater benefit. Kalam presented the inner thoughts from his activate mind that showed the circumstance and built hope for the society to move forward. The work out that Kalam did even for a seminar presentation shows his efforts and the ways Kalam utilized the other sources to give shape for his thoughts. The first motto of Kalam’s presentation was to get the international picture on the subject. He identified a theme, sought information from various departments, set a questionnaire, collected answers for the questionnaire from his inner mind as well as from experts, analyzed the answers and filters the information based on the international stratum and prepared fair drafts. He wrote 31 drafting for his address to the European Parliament on 25th April 2007. He also addressed many conferences in India and foreign countries. He addressed the people during Independence Days. Kalam addressed on the subjects like translating vision to mission, what should be remembered for, education for dignity of human life, an action for employment generation, energy independence, one billion people, what can I give to my nation, etc.

3.3.5 Education

The peculiar characteristics, nature, attitudes, and motivation of others taught Kalam many strategies. He shared the outcome of his face-to-
face interactions, e-mail conversations with many leading scientists, technocrats, doctors, educationists, judges, politicians, teachers, policemen, soldiers, administrators, Panchayat presidents, lawyers, nurses, students, village people, and proficient professionals in *Turning Points*. This attitude of Kalam shows that even in his seventies, he kept his mind ready to learn and to share his learning for the betterment of the society. In *Turning Points*, Kalam wrote a separate chapter entitled “Learning from Others” in which he recollected, what he learned from his father, his brother, Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, writer Kushwant Singh, scientists, political leaders, and the Prime Ministers Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Dr. Manmohan Singh. For example, Kalam included a lesson taught by his father on “getting gifts” when his father was the President of a small village in Ramanathapuram. Kalam recollected the lesson, when he was the President of India. The position, “President” gave him a clear understanding about the lesson, he learned during his childhood days. Kalam (2012) expressed his understanding on getting gifts (bribe) through the words found in Manu Smriti, as,

“... by accepting gifts, the divine light in a person gets extinguished. Manu warns every individual against accepting gifts for the reason that it places the accepter under an obligation to the giver and ultimately results in making a person commit immoral or illegal acts.”

The main focus of Kalam’s autobiographies and his addresses to the people of India is based on improving the literacy rate and economic condition of India. In *Turning Points*, Kalam introduced himself as an academician, enjoying and keeping him busy with motivating and creating awareness about the technological development and future India among the students of Anna University through his presentations. Kalam sent special invitation to his teachers, when he assumed the charge as the President of
India. Even after he became the President of India, he used to meet his old teachers. He arranged special meetings for the teachers and vice-chancellors of various universities and discussed the ways to solve the problems in educational institutions. These show his interest in teaching field and his respect for the teaching profession. Even, during his meeting with the business people and students, Kalam tried to convince them to help the rural poor children’s education career. Kalam (2012) was little worried about the education system introduced by Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). CBSE introduced the grade system “to prevent students from getting overanxious about marks” as he believes that “the older system led to healthy competition”.

### 3.3.6 Responsibility

Kalam understood the value of responsibility. He felt proud that India is the “world’s largest parliamentary democracy”. He understood democracy as it provides equal opportunity to everyone and urges every individual to use it in a better way. He said that “working for the protection of the rights of every individual is the foundation of the democracy”. Kalam examined the forces which disturb the unity of the minds, stimulate communal riots among the innocent and destroy the individual’s dignity. He called them as the endangering forces of democracy. He insisted that everyone, particularly parliamentarians should follow a system to make democracy alive in reality.

In order to have a “trust-based system” in India, Kalam suggested the parliamentarians to concentrate on developing five key areas. They are agriculture, education and health care, infrastructure, information and communication technology and self-reliance. One of the major missions of Kalam is the development of infrastructure for bringing rural prosperity through Providing Urban Amenities in Rural Areas (PURA) by connecting
physical, electronic and knowledge leading to economic connectivity. Kalam visited many villages, learned about their status and took efforts for their development.

Kalam took many steps to convert Rashtrapati Bhavan to People Bhavan. He engaged the place with many activities. He made the Moghul Garden in the Rashtrapati Bhavan garden as a place combining knowledge and beauty. Kalam enjoyed a sense of peace with nature. He formed two huts Thinking Hut and Immortal Hut. In the Thinking Hut, Kalam wrote the book *Indomitable Spirit*. Kalam & Tiwari wrote *Guiding Souls* in the Immortal Hut. With the help of Dr. Brahma Singh, the architect of Moghul Garden and National Botanical Research Institute (NBRI), Kalam formed twelve gardens, a tactile garden and Biodiversity Park in Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Kalam (2012) said that “complex new initiatives require combined thinking of many specialists” and “different opinions and a collective effort” that would help to execute “missions and actions”. He has arranged virtual conferences and virtual meetings and brainstorming sessions with experts from different organizations in Rashtrapati Bhavan. For example, Kalam introduced three unique events in Rashtrapati Bhavan. They are conference on nanotechnology, on e-governance and on bio-diesel. Kalam along with C N R Rao, honorary president of the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR) Bangalore, and many other specialists in India and abroad had discussions for developing research and development on nano-science technology and its potential applications in the areas like agriculture, medicine, space and energy.

3.3.7 Freedom

Kalam urged every politician to contribute his best to make India free from poverty, illiteracy and unemployment and to make India as a
peaceful place to live in. In *Turning Points* also, Kalam called for the support of the leaders, authorities, and people of different departments of public and private sectors, experienced personalities and youth to transform India as a developed nation. Kalam believes that this effort would create great wonders and miracles. His main aim is to set a notable place for India in the Global Innovation Report. India was in 66th place according to the 2013 report and earlier, it was in the 64th place among the 142 nations. India was in the 25th position among 107 nations in 2008. Kalam took efforts to implement growth in technology utilization and to develop the rural villages of India. Kalam shared his views on energy distribution, agriculture, industrial and educational development to lead a peaceful life in India and in the world. For example, Kalam and Prof. P V Indiresan developed Providing Urban Amenities in Rural Areas (PURA) by uniting the efforts of the private and public sectors to develop 60000 villages and to extend services through PURA. They started educational institutions, healthcare centres, laid roads and built houses and provided communication links in the rural area”. Even Kalam’s visit to the villages brought many changes. His visit to a village in Bhopal, in 2002 stimulated the state government authorities “to initiate a number of actions”. Kalam (2012) believes that the involvement of Member of Parliamentarians (MPs) would get freedom for India. He encouraged the MPs as “our moment to true freedom and independence is still incomplete; our story is still unfolding …” in the 150th anniversary of Indian Independent movement in the year 2007.

3.3.8 Spirituality

“Confession” is the major aspect of “spiritual autobiography” and Christain autobiography. According to Aikman (2001), “Muslim autobiography” is constructed on the basis of “pilgrimage” and ‘Hindu autobiography’ is centred on “leading a life as an ascetic”. Nietzsche said,
“little by little, it has become clear to me that every great philosophy has been confessions of its maker” (Hasebe-Ludt et al. 2009) This statement proves that Kalam registered his confessions in *Wings of Fire* and *Turning Points* as he shared many of his philosophies on life. Kalam, being a Muslim and a firm spiritualist, did not talk about pilgrimage in his earlier autobiography, but he depicted the journey of his life as a pilgrimage to attain spiritual maturity. In *Turning Points*, he also gave information about “pilgrimage” through picturing the experience of his brother’s trip to Haj. Kalam also used this incident to show his gratitude to his brother’s grandson who helped in the trip. Relationship with God is an important object of spiritual life writing. Kalam wrote *Turning Points* in the ninth decade of his life. He still leads his life as a bachelor and hardly, he earned possessions. Apart from using basic philosophies of major religions, Kalam revealed that how his working partnership with God uplifted him in the society and made him as a useful creature. It is Kalam who called and asked the spiritual leaders of various religions to pray for the India’s goodness. Moreover, it is Kalam who arranged meetings for the spiritual leaders to unite all the religions. He went to all the holy places and got blessing from the spiritual gurus of the shrine. Such an open-minded is truly a secularist.

### 3.3.9 Science and Religion

Kalam’s major identity is formed from a collaboration of spirituality and science. His life history revealed this peculiar combination. Kushwant Singh wrote an article entitled *President and the pen-pusher* which was published in the February 24, 2007 issue of *Hindustan Times*. In that article, Singh talked about Kalam’s presidential period besides discussing Kalam’s interest in science and religion and presented the image of Kalam as a good human being. He expressed his evaluation on Kalam’s outlook on science and religion as “Kalam sees no conflict between science and
religion”. Kalam quoted these words in *Turning Points*. It shows his acknowledgement that he is a man who combines religion and science for a noble purpose.

### 3.3.10 Tradition and Modernism

Kalam also conveyed a powerful message on traditional values that he learned from his elder brother. He recollected his brother negotiating the proposal of Kalam’s Indian friend from the United States to make arrangements to transform the house which has more than “a century year old” to be a museum and a library. His brother’s response was,

> I would like to live in the house where I have grown up and lived for ninety -five -years. I would like to build a new house in the same place through the earning of my kith and kin. I would not like to have any other arrangements (Kalam 2012).

This reflects Kalam’s intention to live in a new developed India built on the base of its tradition. Building a new India on the foundation of tradition with the knowledge and wisdom of the modern keeps the history of India alive as well as it provides new energy, safety and comfort to the people who live in this new house. Perhaps, Kalam did not seek any job in foreign countries precisely, because of his love for his country.

Kalam used the Presidential Saloon, consisting of a pair of coaches that are reserved for the exclusive use of the head of state after 23 years. The coaches were comprised of dining room that doubles as a visiting room, a lounge room or conference room and the president’s bedroom. According to Kalam, the last president to use the coaches in this way was Neelam Sanjiva Reddy in 1977. Kalam made a trip from Harnaut to Patna on 30 May 2003. During this trip, he invited fifteen vice chancellors of the universities in Bihar.
to travel with him and discussed the problems pertaining to the universities in the state. Kalam also made trips from Chandigarh to Delhi in 2004 and Delhi to Dehra Dun in 2006 in this coach. He went to Chandigarh to inaugurate the Children’s Science Congress and to Dehra Dun to take the presidential salute at the “passing out parade at the Indian Military Academy”. It shows Kalam’s attachment with traditional usage too.

3.3.11 Turning Points

According to Brockmeir (2001), it is essential for the autobiographer to reward the turning points of his life to constitute his identity. In Turning Points, Kalam revealed the turning points of his life, under the title Seven Turning Points of My Life. They are Kalam’s first appointment as a Senior Scientific Assistant at ADE, in 1961, his entry into India’s missile program in 1982 in Defence Institute of Work Study (DIWS, (now Institute of Technology Management), in Mussoorie, taking charge as the Scientific Adviser to the Defence Minister and Secretary, in DRDO, in July 1992, conducting the nuclear tests in 1998, becoming the Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government of India, in the rank of Cabinet Minister in 1999, taking the assignment as a Professor in Technology for Social Transformation at Anna University, Chennai, and assuming the charge as the President of India. In all these positions, Kalam created a separate identity for himself by applying his sportive nature and hard work.

3.3.12 Strategies

It is Kalam’s nature that he attempts to implement “innovative methods” in all his positions. This strategy can be called as “first time strategy” which brought out many successes for Kalam and his nation and got remarkable name to him throughout the world. Kalam discussed some of his initiatives that were done for the first time by India in Turning Points too. For
example, he wrote about the effect of Providing Urban Amenities in Rural Areas (PU
RA) scheme. He implemented it to generate more employment opportunities and to build more educational institutions and health care centres in Indian villages. Moreover, he hopes that it would help to develop physical and electronic connectivity and marketing in India as well as to develop the village peoples’ skills in various fields. He talked about the Chitrakoot PURA in Madya Pradesh, Periyar PURA in Vallam, Tamil Nadu, and Loni PURA in Maharashtra and others. He expressed his belief that “developing the villages by providing adequate opportunity for earning and improving amenities can change the face of India…” He concentrated to solve the issues like providing safe water, electricity, health care and shelter for every citizen of India. He also initiated many steps to improve “communication and computer penetration and national security” with the belief that it will help to transform India as a developed nation.

Kalam is the first president who addressed the Indian parliament through video conference and the first Indian president who delivered a lecture in Mauritius Parliamentarians. He also addressed Pan-African Parliament in Johannesburg, on September 2004, and in European Parliament on 25th April 2006. His lectures covered various topics related to the unity of minds of the world. He also addressed the two houses of India many times. He urged the parliamentarians to serve “beyond the party ideologies”.

Kalam is very much interested in visiting the places constructed in memory of great leaders of the world. Kalam made a special trip to “Socrates Cave” in Greece, where people rarely go and Cape Town, in South Africa, where Mandela was imprisoned for “twenty six years for fighting against apartheid”. He also met Dr. Nelson Mandela. Mandela conveyed his leadership qualities and simplicity through his autobiography (Michael 1995). The self-construction strategy used in the autobiography of Mandela projected
the status of ‘Africa’ in the international forum. Kalam also visited Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich, where Einstein studied. Foreign nations also received Kalam with respect and honored him. For example, the government of Switzerland gave a surprise to Kalam by declaring 26th May 2005 as a Science Day to commemorate his visit. He also visited more than 275 villages throughout India. All these prove that Kalam applied the “thinking and working beyond” strategy in his presidency too.

The main idea Kalam believes for the development of the nation is interconnection. He not only stressed this idea in Wings of Fire but also in all of his writings. He has been using his words and deeds to make every citizen of India to feel him/her as a part of his/her nation’s growth. Even in Turning Points, he talked about the interconnection in many places. His position, the President of India showed a broad space for Kalam to initiate many steps to connect the people. It helped him to make Rashtrapati Bhavan much more accessible to the people. In order to attain this motto, Kalam used many strategies. He implemented interaction, face-to-face conversation with all groups of people like Prime Ministers, scientists, legal luminaries and technocrats. In fact, he introduced the technique “one to one” interaction in his presidential period too. He learned this sort of technique from Bhram Prakash and Sathish Dhawan. This technique created a space for other experts to share their opinions and suggestions which helped Kalam and others in many ways in taking decisions on important political issues.

Kalam also initiated e-governance for successful and fast communication among the authorities to redress any kinds of problems at once. As a result, the presidential office responded to the files within five hours, whereas the old system took seven days to respond. Of course, he had many interactions with the members of the parliament by inviting them for
breakfast to get first hand knowledge about their constituency. It shows that Kalam used his breakfast time purposefully.

Kalam also introduced the system of MPs’ presentations based on the three important aspects like “the vision for developed India, the heritage of the particular state or union territory and their core competencies for the development of the nation”. Through these meetings, Kalam was able to know about the needs of each region. In Wings of Fire, Kalam elaborately talked about the effect of presentations by scientists. Presentations became a fruitful and result oriented aspect of success besides maintain good relationship among colleagues. He also met students and village people and created awareness. These meetings on oneside interconnected the people of India and another side, it helped him to bring out key points for his address to the professionals, business leaders and researchers.

3.3.13 Optimism

Kalam used his optimistic nature to encourage the performance promoters and to deal with performance degraders. It made him a successful leader. Kalam was unreserved in praising the positive nature of the people, but he was slow to touch upon the negative aspects of a person or of the nation. For example, Kalam’s autobiographies prove that Kalam is good at remembering the names of the people. In Wings of Fire, he called the teacher who inserted the communal partiality inside the educational institution as a “new teacher”. Kalam called the colleagues who discouraged him badly at ADE as “envious senior colleagues”. This attitude of Kalam proves that he didn’t target people but brought the problems to light through his works. He also did not express how much it hurt him, instead, he narrated, how he took the comments positively as fuel added in the fire of a youth’s heart. In Turning Points also, Kalam registered his dissatisfaction with the misuse of democracy and followed a unique strategy to point out the mistakes of the
parliamentarians. He created a sense that he is one among them through his words and unveiled the political system corrupted by them. Kalam (2012) said, “… there are some bare truths which we all know but refuse to acknowledge. I have no hesitation in talking to you about them, I said because I am part of you”. He said, “the issue of the arithmetical compulsions of incremental numbers and the alleged tradability of certain legislative seats creates degradation of the system of democracy”. He also revealed the negative effect of “the walkouts of parliamentarians’ and “the fasting movements”, as they made colonial waste in their economy.

3.3.14 Nationalism

According to Baxter, autobiography should deal with the subject, whose mind should reveal “the largest view from his heart which is filled with love for his fellow man” (Sutherland 1969). Kalam understood himself as a simple human being as well as a person who can take pleasure in serving his nation with all his potentials, thoughts and hard work. Kalam (2012) expressed his nationalism thus: “the nation is bigger than that of any individual”. Kalam (2012) concentrated on “how to present the core competencies of our countries for our benefit”, when he received the foreign heads or when he visited foreign countries. It created a Work Knowledge Platform. Each of his visits abroad became very important. Perhaps, his Sudan visit resulted in bringing oil from Sudan to India.

Kalam gave a note about the successful launching of Agni V missile on 19 April 2012 at Wheeler Island and India’s first Radar Imaging Satellite (RISAT), on 26 April 2012, from Sathish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota, though he did not take part directly in designing, organizing and developing these projects. He appreciated both the DRDO team for Agni V and the ISRO team for RISAT in Turning Points. This proves that Kalam is not only highlighted his own achievements but also appreciated the
personalities who contribute for the nation’s development in his works. This nature pictures his nationalism.

3.3.15 Humanism

One of the notable qualities of Kalam is his humanism. For instance, Kalam’s experience with S. H. F. J. Sam Manekshaw, Ex-Field Marshal of Indian Army, revealed Kalam’s fundamental nature as a good human being. At the same time, it also showed his respect and honor for the defence force and the soldiers. Kalam did two favors to Manekshaw. Between the two, one became honor to this Field Marshal and another became a benefit to other Ex-Field Marshals. Kalam personally met Manekshaw at Coimbatore hospital, when Shaw was in sick bed. During his meeting, Shaw requested Kalam to revise the pay scale of field Marshals. Kalam recollected the demand of Shaw, recommended the Prime Minister to revise the pay scale of Field Marshals considering their contribution to the nation. His demand was accepted by the Government which immediately revised the pay scale.

3.3.16 Courage

Kalam showed his identity as a linking source for uniting India, a courageous leader and an energetic thinker. Kalam (2012) wrote,

Courage to think different
Courage to invent
Courage to travel on an unexplored path
Courage to discover the impossible
Courage to combat the problems and succeed
Are the unique qualities of youth.
As a youth of my nation

I will work and work with courage to achieve success …

He took decisions wholeheartedly, after having clarified with ‘others’. For example, Kalam got suggestion from many political and scientific leaders and his close circle, before he assumed as the President of India and to solve some political issues arose during his tenure. It vividly shows how much Kalam is careful before he took decision on various issues and steps.

This apart, Kalam took many steps to convert the human resource as the sources of knowledge. He motivated his colleagues to read and publish articles and books. He initiated specialists to share their views and knowledge, organized conferences in DRDL and also in Rashtrapati Bhavan, introduced special schemes for the young scientists to attend conferences in foreign countries as well as in India, took steps to strengthen the library facilities and also arranged review meetings in order to make the directors and others to work and to build a strong mind with knowledge.

Kalam listed out the result he got from his approaches. For example, scientists from Banaras Hindu University “devised a simple method to produce carbon nano-tube filters that efficiently remove micro-to-nano scale contaminants from water and heavy hydrocarbons from petroleum”. The scientists and technologists of Delhi University successfully developed a “drug delivery system that directly targets tumor cells” in partnership with a private company, Dabur. Many states started to implement the learning from the conferences. Bihar introduced ten missions based on the development of “education and entrepreneurship, human resource, flood water management infrastructure, e-governance”, etc. As a result of this implementation, there was a gradual increase in the per-capita income and decrease in the unemployment rate. Kalam also addressed the vice-chancellors of the
universities of the state and the chambers of commerce. He tried to involve all citizens including elected representatives of Parliament, administrators, artists, writers, and the youth of the country to achieve his vision 2020. The presidency provided Kalam, the opportunity to communicate directly with people across the social spectrum, particularly the youth and the political leaders regarding the importance of having a vision for the nation that should be translated into an action.

3.3.17 Miraculous Escape

Kalam also included the incidents which describe his miraculous escapes from the terrible accidents in both of his autobiographies. In Wings of Fire, Kalam recalled how Professor Sudhakar saved him from a violent explosion happened in payload room at Thumba. In Turning Points, he recollected how he escaped from the accident at Bokaro, Jharkhand, on 30 September, 2001. He took only limited time for recovery. He proceeded to attend the programs even after the incident. He addressed officials, engineers and staff of the steel plant and students in Bokaro. It shows his persistent nature and dedication to his commitment for the society.

3.3.18 Technology Utilization

Kalam has always been giving voice for Indian’s freedom from technological domination of developed countries. He felt that India is not so strong in technological innovation and utilization. He wrote in Wings of Fire that India struggled a lot due to the lack of technological facility and experts. Kalam (1999) called the Avionics Laboratory as an ill-equipped one by evaluating the availability of technology there. In Turning Points, he expressed the status of technology utilization in India as, “it would take a decade of time to have the latest technologies in India from the developed countries”. So, Kalam took all the necessary steps to strengthen technological
adeptness in India. For example, he introduced the system of initiating the e-governance and the bar coding system for maintaining files, documents and letters that arrived at parliament. He also made the systems digitized to send the files electronically to various officers, directors, scientists and others through a secured network.

### 3.3.19 Messenger of Peace

The writings of and on Kalam and his addresses prove that Kalam is a messenger who also gives voice for the peace of the world. He met the legendary leader Nelson Mandela and appreciated him for following the philosophy of “love thy enemy” in his life. There are many evidences which prove that Kalam converted the revenge taking nature to build a good relationship. He utilized this nature as a highlighter of his success. Kalam (2012) expressed his belief that “for those who do ill to you, the best punishment is to return good to them”. Acharya Mahapragya blessed Kalam as “I command you and you only with all the divine blessing at my disposal to evolve a system of peace, where in these very nuclear weapons will become ineffective, insignificant and politically inconsequential” (Kalam 2012).

Kalam’s life portrayed in *Turning Points* and *Wings of Fire* prove that he used the agents that served for Kalam’s success in the scientific field and in the political field too. A few of the agents that Kalam used to serve the nation are nationalism, socialism, utilizing collaboration for a great goal, individualism, humanism, hard work, etc. He included the comment given on him at the end of his presidential tenure by *Outlook* magazine as “Kalam is a peripatetic president who has already visited 21 states in the 10 months he has been in office. This is possibly more than what most Presidents manage to do in five years”. Thus, Kalam’s life proves that it is man’s intention, dream, taking risk beyond the capability etc, give identity to a person and to the nation through him.
COLLABORATIVE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ELEMENTS IN WINGS OF FIRE AND TURNING POINTS

A study of Wings of Fire and Turning Points demonstrated that there are many elements that connect Wings of Fire and Turning Points. He portrayed an account of his life in both the autobiographies. Kalam handled memory, experience, identity, agent and authority well in his autobiographies. Kalam used his memory as the material provider. He made use of the assistance of Tiwari and Swaminathan to write his autobiographies. He recorded his multiple roles. His interest in developing the life of rural village people proves that Kalam (2012) followed Gandhi’s principle that “the real India lies in its villages”. He reflected the status of his mind at the time of facing failures, loss, negative criticism, the birth of the desires and achievements. He also registered his intellectual application, sensitiveness and emotional outburst for his nation and his longings. He employed a strong analytical and observing mind in his autobiographies with broad views. He presented an urge, quest for curiosity, fallen state and individualizing moment which are the elements of philosophical autobiography. He registered his own understanding of life, work strategies and the ways to utilize the thinking and creative skills positively for the success as well as for strengthening his understanding on science, religion, technology, politics and democracy. Many of the issues revealed by Kalam in his autobiographies show his concern for the society. In Wings of Fire, he talked about his achievements in scientific field in India. In the second autobiography, Kalam discussed his involvement to upgrade Indian political system. He also employed the basic beliefs of a few major religions and their connection. Thus, his autobiographies combine the elements of psychological, philosophical, literary, scientific, political and spiritual autobiographies which prove that Kalam used the collaboration with a noble purpose. In Wings of Fire, he presented his self and destiny as if it is
shaped by others and in *Turning Points*, he presented his self as a shaping force of others’ as good human beings.

### 3.5 SUMMARY

This chapter examined the autobiographical elements in *Wings of Fire* and *Turning Points*. It also discussed the major aspects of Kalam’s personality that helped him to overcome the educational, financial, professional and other barriers besides helped him to create a specific identity for him in the international arena. Self-awareness, vision, capability to take multiple tasks, nature of attempting beyond capabilities, longing for freedom, nationalism, courage, motivation, certain philosophies of life and intention to utilize technology for the development of the nation and for the benefit of humanity are a few major aspects of Kalam’s personality.

The next chapter will deal with the conversational strategies and auto/biographical elements in *Guiding Souls* and autobiographical elements in *You are Born to Blossom*. 