

ISSN NO . 2676-1297

A Textual Study of inspirational autobiography

Wings of Fire of APJ Abdul Kalam

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Abstract

*This research paper aesthetically focuses on Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam's (Kalam was the 11th president of India, 2002 to 2007) early struggle for education, success and analyses how his autobiography *Wings of Fire* turns out to be a source of motivation for millions of people not only in India but also across the globe. The struggle of Kalam as a student and of success as a scientist is a remarkable story for millions of people. His autobiography is replete with many inspirational episodes and teachings for transforming nation and its people. The present study highlights Kalam's lessons for people to be humble, receptive, self-reliant, resourceful and above all a true heart in course of life.*

Keywords: Autobiography, struggle, motivation and success

1. Introduction

For a very simple reason, an autobiography cannot have the same definite and logical ending as it is always possible to give a biography. Thus, most autobiographies are brought to a close by their authors at points arbitrarily chosen by themselves. (Chaudhuri 547)

The book *Wings of Fire* is an autobiographical as well as motivational book by Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam in collaboration with Arun Tiwari. He wrote this book with the collaboration of Arun Tiwari who once had worked with Kalam in the field of military defence research. It was first published in 1999. It is an eye-opening book for readers. The purpose behind writing this book is to inspire the young generation. The contents of book are rich in motivation, patriotism and welfare of the nation. Structurally, this autobiography contains four main parts, excluding its Introduction and Epilogue. The four main parts of the book are entitled Orientation, Creation, Propitiation and Contemplation. They depict the chronological history and life of the 'missile man' of India, A.P.J. Kalam realistically and inspirationally. *Wings of Fire* is about journey of a common man who was born into a working-class Muslim family to becoming India's president. It is widely regarded as one the most inspirational autobiographies in English language. It is an outstanding story of an ordinary person with exceptional talents.

The book also relates a journey of a far-sighted leader whose actions are far louder than his words. He lived in a country where communal riots are ordinary, and bureaucrats paralyzed the system with corruption and greed. In spite of all, he gave his entire life to serve his nation.

This book is not only a biography but also a motivational story written to showcase patriotism and dedication for his country as well as its people. Autobiography is an account of a person's life by

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himself. As Samuel Johnson's opinion "no man was better qualified to write his life than himself" (Web).

The present study based on Kalam's autobiography realistically explores the life of the most humble, dedicated and innovative man, A.P.J. Kalam, a man of humble beginnings and simple life who carried an unusual mix of spiritual convictions with the true spirit of scientific enquiry and temperament in a lucid manner. His contributions in the field of science and humanity are colossal. Born in Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu (1931), this young Muslim boy changed his fortune to be called the 'Missile Man' of India. Kalam took the reins of Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) in 1965, the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) in 1969 and inspired generations through some of the most innovative, and breathtaking scientific feats of the independent India. His specialization in rocket science and space technology has boosted India's growth in the field of science and technology and put the country higher in this field gloriously. This autobiography beautifully contains details of the technological and political challenges faced in its aeronautical and space programme and also relates the success story of Kalam's participative management practices. Also, it gives an insight into the lives of Hindus and Muslims of India and their relationships among each other and among multi-religious communities in India.

According to the present study, *Wings of Fire* is an account of a young boy, Kalam, who tries to achieve his dreams beating all odds. The story emphasizes the importance of family, relatives, friends and teachers in helping him in achieving each other's goals and turning dreams to reality.

The autobiography *Wings of Fire* aesthetically commences with a great homage to Kalam's loving and generous parents and particularly his mother.

In an awe-inspiring way, the Introduction of the autobiography *Wings of Fire* of Kalam informs the readers his struggle in life as a learner, his gratitude to all the people who helped him during the course of his life, his gigantic personality as a scientist par excellence and his significant contributions to nation and above all his ray of hope that India will, one day, become a global leader in the field of science and technology. As a scientist, Kalam knows the significance of the science and technology for the development and welfare of a country like India. He gives the answer of the question, "Can India be a leader in the field of technology? My answer is an emphatic Yes" (A. P.J. Kalam xiv). This indicates his utmost hope and determination for the development and welfare of India and mankind by throwing light on the contributions of people and of science and of technology for the development of India in the following manner:

This story is an account, I hope, not just of my personal triumphs and tribulations but of the successes and setbacks of the science establishment in modern India, struggling to establish itself in the technological forefront. It is the story of national aspiration and of cooperative endeavour. And, as I see it, the saga of India's search for scientific self-sufficiency and technological competence is a parable for our times. (APJ Abdul Kalam xv)

Apart from a world class-scientist, Kalam is a spiritual person who believes in the benign grace of God on each human being and him. He strongly asserts the presence of "God in every individual and everywhere". His deep connection with God is indescribable in words or any statements:

Each individual creature on this beautiful planet is created by God to fulfil a particular role. Whatever I have achieved in life is through His help, and an

expression of His will. He showered His grace on me through some outstanding teachers and colleagues, and when I pay my tributes to these fine persons, I am merely praising His glory.... Our efforts should be to give wings to this fire and fill the world with the glow of its goodness.

(APJ Abdul Kalam xv-xvi)

Orientation (1931-1963)

The first part of the autobiography *Wings of Fire* is entitled "Orientation". It relates the life-incidents of A.P.J. Kalam from 1931 to 1963. This is the first segment of the book which depicts the early life of A.P.J. Kalam as an ordinary boy and his struggle for life. His vivid recollections of the early days are very suggestive of good old Magudi set up. In this phase of his life, he remembers his parents, relatives and teachers who are the most influential persons in his formative life. Adding color to the section, are pictures of that time. This segment covers all his early learning and travels artistically. The definition of autobiography, according to Helene Keller is, "The task of writing an autobiography is a difficult one. When I try to classify my earliest impressions. I find that fact and fancy look alike across the years that link the past with the present" (*TheStoryofMyLife* 7).

This part of book opens with the lines taken from the *Atharva Veda* which acknowledges God as an owner of this world and His infiniteness:

This earth is His, to Him belong those vast and boundless skies;

Both seas within Him rest, and yet in that small pool He lies" (qtd. in *Wings of Fire* 1).

This marks the greatness of God as a creator and owner which Kalam firmly believes in. Believing in the greatness and grace of God was ingrained in the mind of Kalam right from his early days. Born into a religious Muslim family, in the sacred island of Rameswaram, Kalam was found very humble and sensitive right from his childhood. He grew up in a warm spiritual environment and good cultured Muslim family. As Kalam says, "In fact, I would say mine was a very secure childhood, both materially and emotionally" (*W.O.F.* 4)

Living in the vicinity of a *Hindu*- temple Ramaswaram and a mosque offered him a very warm spiritual and harmonious environment for his holistic development. Therefore, he took a great interest in the matter of spirituality, prayer and God.

The study deeply shows the autobiography *Wings of Fire* reflects the spiritual development of the protagonist in his childhood. His father and mother were his first spiritual teachers. Kalam depicts the spiritual personality of his father from whom he learnt the importance of the Almighty, prayer and other human virtues in his childhood as follows:

I have throughout my life tried to emulate my father in my own world of science and technology. I have endeavoured to understand the fundamental truths revealed to me by my father, and feel convinced that there exists a divine power that can lift one up from confusion, misery, melancholy and failure, and guide one to one's true place. (*W.O.F.* 5)

The childhood of Kalam was like all ordinary children of India. Though he got good spiritual and warm environment at home yet he had to face many challenges in the outer world in his childhood. He did many odd jobs as a child. Kalam used to work as a newspaper vendor to earn money in his childhood. Once in his school days, Kalam was ill-treated by his teacher as he was sitting near a *Hindu*

classmate, but this incident did not distract him from becoming a good learner and learning human values. Later on, that teacher apologised to Kalam for his bad behaviour with him. This was the true, humble and reliable character of Kalam right from his childhood.

Kalam proved himself as a good student as he joined Schwartz High School, Ramanathapuram, at the age of fifteen. He was liked by all his teachers. His thirst for learning was unquenchable. As a humble and good boy, Kalam expressed his gratitude and appreciation to all his teachers who taught him many valuable lessons of life. He lavishly admires one of his earlier ideal teachers-Iyadurai Solomon at Schwartz High School in the following manner:

My teacher, Iyadurai Solomon, was an ideal guide for an eager young mind that was yet uncertain of the possibilities and alternatives that lay before it. He made his students feel very comfortable in class with his warm and open-minded attitude. Iyadurai Solomon was a great teacher because he instilled in all the children a sense of their own worth. (*W.O.F.* 12)

Memory is a vehicle of exploring the past of the narrator. Kalam remembers the worthy words of his Maths teacher. His worthy words instilled confidence and courage in young Kalam. He regards his Maths teacher as his motivator. His enormous respects for his teachers have been expressed in the following manner:

Inadvertently, I wandered into that classroom and in the manner of an old-fashioned despot, Ramakrishna Iyer caught me by the neck and caned me in front of the whole class. Many months later, when I scored full marks in mathematics, he narrated the incident to the entire school at morning assembly. 'Whomsoever I cane becomes a great man! Take my word, this boy is going to bring glory to his school and to his teachers.' (*W.O.F.* 12)

Then, Kalam studied at St. Joseph's college. The thing which made Kalam a good student was his humble and submissive nature and he had huge reverence for teachers and learning. The remarkable thing in him was that he learnt the best things from all teachers.

Wings of Fire also deals with an account of the early tough days of Kalam as a learner. He was suffering from hardships when he wanted to join Madras Institute of Technology (MIT), the prestigious and expensive institute of nation for his engineering for his further studies. Admission fee was high at MIT and he was short of money. In this tough hour of Kalam's life, his elder sister stood by him and mortgaged her ornaments. This step initiated by Kalam's sister for him deeply moved Kalam to study diligently for a scholarship. At MIT, he dreamt about flying an aircraft. Thus, he chose aeronautical engineering for following his passion:

I managed to be on the list of selected candidates, but admission to this prestigious institution was an expensive affair. Around a thousand rupees was required, and my father could not spare that much money. At that time, my sister, Zohara, stood behind me, mortgaging her gold bangles and chain. I was deeply touched by her determination to see me educated and by her faith in my abilities. I vowed to release her bangles from mortgage with my own earnings. (*W.O. F.* 16)

He greatness of Kalam's character is that he deeply remains thankful to all those who helped him in his academic odyssey. This quality of Kalam makes him a cut above the others.

The great moment of Kalam's life at MIT is recorded in the autobiography as he revives his memory about his great and visionary teacher in the most inspirational way:

My most touching memory of MIT is related to Prof. Sponder. We were posing for a group photograph as part of a farewell ritual. All the graduating students had lined up in three rows with the professors seated in the front. Suddenly, Prof. Sponder got up and looked for me. I was standing in the third row. "Come and sit with me in the front," he said. (*W.O.F.* 21)

Apart from an inspirational autobiography, the book also seems to be a eulogy for Kalam's teachers who architected his destiny.

After completion of his education at MIT, Kalam began to search for his next high altitude of destination. For a while he remained in the state of dilemma, restlessness and helplessness. As it is said that there are many "ups and downs" in one's life. After an illustrious academic career, Kalam felt disturbed for a while and he was able to move ahead. In such a pathetic condition, he turned to Hindu religion and Swami Sivananda, the spiritual Guru, in order to seek the spiritual advice and moral boost. His spiritual journey and his love for Hindu religion started from that point. His deep urge for seeking guideline and internal peace from Hindu religion, Swami Sivananda and his spiritual experiences at Hindu holy site have been mentioned:

I bathed in the Ganga and revelled in the purity of its water. Then, I walked to the Sivananda Ashram situated a little way up the hill. I could feel intense vibrations when I entered. I saw a large number of sadhus seated all around in a state of trance. I had read that sadhus were psychic people—people who know things intuitively and, in my dejected mood, I sought answers to the doubts that troubled me. (*W.O.F.* 24)

The book vividly visualizes the meeting of Kalam with the true spiritual Hindu Guru Swami Sivananda who helped him to find his goal in life. He made Kalam clear about his life, actions and destiny in the following way:

When the student is ready, the teacher will appear—How true! Here was the teacher to show the way to a student who had nearly gone astray! "Accept your destiny and go ahead with your life. You are not destined to become an Air Force pilot. What you are destined to become is not revealed now but it is predetermined. Forget this failure, as it was essential to lead you to your destined path. (*W.O.F.* 24-25)

Kalam feels enlightened after meeting the charismatic person called Swami Sivananda and his blurred vision becomes clear after that.

Creation (1963 to 80)

This is the second part of autobiography which is entitled **Creation**. It revolves around Kalam's progress as a man of science and innovation during the years 1963 and 1980. This segment of book centres on his work in defence and space projects. He joined *Defense Research and Development Organization* after completing his education as he was given a project on Hovercrafts. After nearly four years with DRDO, he joined the *Indian Space Research Organization* (ISRO) where he was mentored by some of the brightest Indian minds of Science like Professor Vikram Sarabhai, Dr Werner Van Braun and Professor Satish Dhawan. He would go on to be part of several important satellite launches during his stint with DRDO with the crowning jewel being the Project Director of SLV-III,

India's first indigenous *Satellite Launch Vehicle* (1980). Here, Kalam took care of every detail of this project during his work and tried to establish his nerve into his world of science and innovation whole heartedly. Another noticeable thing in the book is his sound interactions with the common folks in such reputed organization and outside. His memory at *Langley Research Centre* at NASA is highlighted in this part of the autobiography. Kalam's memory at LRC completely indicates his dedication to science and technology for the development of nation and the welfare of the humanity. This elevates his scientific stature in the world. Kalam is a keen observer as he feels the importance of art and science while visiting America as a scientist and artist:

One of my most vivid memories of LRC is of a piece of sculpture depicting a charioteer driving two horses, one representing scientific research and the other technological development, metaphorically encapsulating the interconnection between research and development. (W.O.F. 37)

Kalam as a scientist also trained himself at LRC, NASA in the field of science and technology to give his best for the welfare of his nation with his sublime vision. His travelling and working experiences in America made him more confident and dedicated towards his works and his country. As a noted scientist Kalam analyses the minds of Americans for finding the solutions of their problems as follows:

My impression of the American people can be summarized by a quotation from Benjamin Franklin, "Those things that hurt instruct!" I realised that people in this part of the world meet their problems head on. They attempt to get out of them rather than suffer them. (W.O.F. 38)

He returned from NASA with flying colours. Then, the first rocket launch of India took place on 21 November 1963 under the capable leadership of Kalam. It was a sounding rocket, called *Nike-Apache*, made at NASA. As it is said, "The real journey of the Indian aerospace programme, however, had begun with the *Rohini Sounding Rocket* (RSR) Programme" (W.O.F. 40).

Kalam, as a champion of humanity and pioneer of Indian Science, follows a constructive daily routine to dedicate his life for the development of his nation and humanity. His simple life style and positive thinking can inspire many people to do their best for the development of nation. His working style and plans are solid, "I used to prepare a general schedule during my morning walk, and emphasize 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" (W.O.F. 69). Kalam as a spiritual and studious scientist believed in the power of human actions. He is a true *Karma-Yogi* in his intellectual efforts to build up the nation. For him, doing his karma is above all things. He remarkably acknowledges the true tasks done by people in the world in his following inspirational poetic lines:

*Beautiful hands are those that do
Work that is earnest and brave and true
Moment by moment*

The long day through. (W.O.F. 72-73)

Gracefully, this autobiography presents Kalam as an iconic team leader for his team and followers. He is a great leader-learner who learns from everybody. His positive attitude towards learning exalts him to a great height of success. The thing that sets him apart from others is that he has deep passion for

learning. As a true leader, the best leadership quality in him is that he regularly communicates with all his members of team in order to encourage them. He humbly accepts the fact he learns from everyone, “At the same time, I tried to be receptive to every constructive idea emanating from my subordinates and to relay it in an appropriate form for critical examination and implementation” (*W.O.F. 75-76*).

As a great builder of nation he tries to inspire millions of people in India and across the globe to work for the welfare of mankind:

If you want to leave your footprints

On the sands of time

Do not drag your feet. (W.O.F. 75-76)

Kalam widens his range of knowledge and experiences by working with different people. He always makes great endeavours to supply positive vibrations into the human beings to help them achieve their dreams. He strongly advises two things to people to become successful in life: one is ‘updating knowledge and the second is bearing personal responsibility’ as follows:

First, by building your own education and skills. Knowledge is a tangible asset, quite often the most important tool in your work. The more up-to-date the knowledge you possess, the freer you are. Knowledge cannot be taken away from anyone except by obsolescence. A leader can only be free to lead his team if he keeps abreast of all that is happening around him-in real time. The second way is to develop a passion for personal responsibility. The sovereign way to personal freedom is to help determine the forces that determine you. Be active! Take on responsibility!

(W.O. F. 77)

It is studied that *Wings of Fire* emphasizes the concept of “right choices” in human life in order to get what makes life valuable, happy and healthy. Taking a right choice in one’s life is an important step. The right choice gives all things to human being:

Happiness, satisfaction, and success in life depend on making the right choices, the winning choices. There are forces in life working for you and against you. One must distinguish the beneficial forces from the malevolent ones and choose correctly between them. (*W.O.F. 106*)

Thus, one can say that Kalam as a scientist and champion of humanity follows the right path in his life by rendering his inestimable services to the development of nation and the welfare of humanity in this planet.

Propitiation (1981 -91)

The third part of book is entitled **Propitiation** which depicts Kalam as Director of DRDO and his numerous feats in the field of Indian science and technology due to his innovative and creative mind and dynamic leadership. He goes on to give a firsthand account of some of the most incredible scientific innovations of the country like *Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV)*, the Integrated Guided Missile Programme of India and its constituent missiles like *Akaash, Naga, Trishul, Agni, the Indian Intercontinental Ballistic Missile* series, etc. He even produced healthcare products using the same missile technology. Then, he earned his moniker of “Missile-man of India” for his achievement in this phase of his life. His insistence on a “participative model of management” was

based on bringing the best out of every person. It made him a scientist with a soul and vision. The section also pays tribute to the greatest scientific minds in the Indian Space journey. Also, one can again get to see his real-life work through many black and white snapshots. Kalam received the *Padma Bhushanin* 1981 after SLV-3 was successfully launched. He, then, moved to rocketry at the *Defence Research and Development Organization* and successfully introduced the *Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme* for the development of five missiles namely: *Prithvi, Trishul, Akash, Nag and Agni*. On the successful launch of India's missile program, Kalam received the *Padma Vibhushamin* 1990. Despite repeated failures faced by Kalam, he always maintained that "failures are the seeds of further learning" and emphatically believed that India can be a super power in the technology or technological leader of the world. Here, this segment of the autobiography begins with the inspirational lines of the poet, Lewis Carroll, such as:

*Let craft, ambition, spite,
Be quenched in Reason's night,
Till weakness turn to might,
Till what is dark be light,
Till what is wrong be right!* (qtd. in *Wings of Fire* 107)

The autobiography clearly states the leadership quality of Kalam which makes the missions of Indian science, technology and defence successful. Kalam delivers a great message to all his fellows who were facing the tough challenges in their respective fields. He advocates them (people) to renew and refine their skills in order to learn the valuable things. The following is his message to all fellows:

The message was loud and clear to my new associates—do not make anything which you cannot sell later and do not spend your life on making one thing only. Missile development is a multi-dimensional business—if you remain in any one dimension for a long time, you will get stuck. (*W.O.F.* 111-112)

As a leader, Kalam was putting all his worthy efforts to lead the whole team and people on the path of progress with his determination.

The real moment of examination hit Kalam when the experiment of *Agni* failed two times. This put Kalam in the state of pain and frustration for a while but he did not give up. Soon, Kalam was motivated and appreciated by a sketch made by the artist Laxman in the following manner: "Nothing to be discouraged! We have postponed it again because we want to be absolutely certain!" (*W.O.F.*).

Apart from a great scientist, Kalam was an exemplary scientific innovator and social thinker. He puts emphasis on the clarity of vision and destination of people for the development of nation, "Know where you are going" (*W.O.F.* 113).

The huge success of *Prithvi, Trishul, Agni*, etc. came from the brilliant efforts of Kalam and his entire committed team.

The present research shows Kalam has become a true source of inspiration to all by his great sacrifices for the development of nation. *Agni, Prithvi, Trishul, Nag* and *Akash*(all these are great scientific and defense projects of India led and guided by Kalam)are the gifts of Indian science and technology under the worthy efforts and innovations of Kalam and his team for

nation and its development. In this grand way, Kalam inspires the young minds across the world to work hard for the advancement and all round development of nation.

Contemplation(1991-)

This is the final part of book which is entitled **Contemplation**. This part of autobiography begins with the power of creation in human beings as the holy book *Quran* prescribes:

We create and destroy

And again recreate

In forms of which no one knows. (AL-WAQUIAH Quran 56-61)

This part of autobiography presents Kalam becoming the great Scientific Advisor to India's Defence Minister in 1992. In this phase of life, he immensely contributed to the nation in becoming a nuclear power and reaching its nuclear destiny with the successful nuclear tests at Pokhran, Rajasthan in 1998. As ex-officio chairman of the Scientific Advisory Committee to the Cabinet (SAC-C), he went to chart out a vision of India 2020 as the World welcomed the new millennium. This segment of book is also connected with the later years where Kalam is conferred upon with series of awards (three civilian awards): *Padma Bhushan* (1981), *Padma Vibhushan* (1990) and *Bharat Ratna* (1997). The book also depicts Kalam's dream of India for the year 2020. Overall, he boasted an astonishing haul of honorary degrees from 30+ universities from across the planet. The section also highlights his powerful vision, his contemplations and advice for the future of India culminating into Kalam's-Vision 2020. A flag post of India attaining of self-sufficiency in innovation and technology vision. After the success of Kalam in his missile mission, he received the *Padma Vibhushan*.

Kalam is the epitome of perseverance, simplicity, wisdom and human virtues. Throughout his life, he remains like a saint and works like a true champion of nation and of humanity. His simplicity and greatness of life can be summed up in the following statement:

Memories of the *Padma Bhushan* awarded a decade ago came alive. I still lived more or less as I had lived then—in a room ten feet wide and twelve feet long, furnished mainly with books, papers and a few pieces of hired furniture. The only difference was at that time, my room was in Trivandrum and now it was in Hyderabad. (*W.O.F.* 159)

Kalam strengthened his inner self by doing meditation and *karma*. While sitting alone, he graciously remembers all his teachers and persons who transformed him from an ordinary man to extraordinary person with great feats. He feels overwhelmed while remembering all his great mentors:

I sat alone for a while in silent contemplation. The sand and shells of Rameswaram, the care of Iyadurai Solomon in Ramanathapuram, the guidance of Rev. Father Sequeira in Trichi and Prof. Pandalai in Madras, the encouragement of Dr Mediratta in Bangalore, the hovercraft ride with Prof. Menon, the pre-dawn visit to the Tilpat Range with Prof. Sarabhai, the healing touch of Dr Brahm Prakash on the day of the SLV-3 failure, the national jubilation on the SLV-3 launch, Madam Gandhi's appreciative smile, the post-SLV-3 simmering at VSSC, Dr Ramanna's faith in inviting me to DRDO, the IGMDP, the creation of RCI, Prithvi, Agni...a flood of memories swept over me. Where were all these men now? My father, Prof. Sarabhai, Dr Brahm Prakash? I wished I could meet them and share my joy with them. I felt the

paternal forces of heaven and the maternal and cosmic forces of nature embrace me
as parents would hug their long-lost child. (W.O.F. 159)

Kalam as a writer he writes something in which he expresses his precious thoughts, memories and dreams which give him indomitable spirit to stand and work for nation:

Away! fond thoughts, and vex my soul no more!

Work claimed my wakeful nights, my busy days

Albeit brought memories of Rameswaram shore

Yet haunt my dreaming gaze! (W.O.F. 159)

The autobiography majestically shows Kalam as a great social thinker. The problems of nation and the youth were his prime concerns. He made every possible effort to sort out the problems of the nation and the youth. He became a true source of inspiration for the youth of India by offering his valuable suggestions to handle the problems of nation:

The biggest problem Indian youth faced, I felt, was a lack of clarity of vision, a lack of direction. It was then that I decided to write about the circumstances and people who made me what I am today; the idea was not merely to pay tribute to some individuals or highlight certain aspects of my life. What I wanted to say was that no one, however poor, underprivileged or small, need feel disheartened about life. Problems are a part of life. Suffering is the essence of success. (W.O.F. 166-167)

Kalam was much concerned about the sufferings of the common people in India. The autobiography points out the sufferings of people. Kalam, the social thinker, thinks about the common people and their problems deeply in the story:

It has been my observation that most Indians suffer unnecessary misery all their lives because they do not know how to manage their emotions. They are paralysed by some sort of a psychological inertia. Phrases like 'the next best alternative', 'the only feasible option or solution', and 'till things take a turn for the better' are commonplace in our business conversations. (W.O.F. 167)

Kalam is also considered to be a great pioneer in the oeuvre of "Technology Management". This fact has been confirmed by his autobiography. It reveals his great strengths of guiding people, "When you work as a project team, you need to develop a complex view of the success criteria. There are always multiple and often conflicting sets of expectations that exist about a team's performance" (W.O.F. 170). The autobiography marks the great qualities of leadership in Kalam to lead people on the path of the progress as follows:

At another level, the relationship between the project teams and the work centres should be encouraged and developed by the project leader.

Both parties must be very clear in their minds about their mutual interdependence and the fact that both of them have a stake in the project.

(W.O.F. 171)

Kalam inspires the youth to achieve great things in life through following the simple rules of life and of this world:

To successfully pursue these goals, they have to learn elaborate rules of etiquette and familiarize themselves with customs, traditions, protocols and so on. The youth of today must unlearn this self-defeating way of life. The culture of working only for material possessions and rewards must be discarded. (*W.O.F. 175*)

The story of Kalam's karma inspires people to do good action for the betterment themselves. The autobiography artistically projects Kalam as a liberated body and enlightened soul because he abandons all his earthly desires. The concern of nation's development is significant in the life of Kalam he use the terms used in literature like "negative capability", "and preserving what is described aesthetic distance" (Cuddon 874) and Kalam maintains the aesthetic distance:

This story will end with me, for I have no belongings in the worldly sense. I have acquired nothing, built nothing, possess nothing-no family, sons, daughters.

I am a well in this great land

Looking at its millions of boys and girls

To draw from me

The inexhaustible divinity

And spread His grace everywhere

As does the water drawn from a well. (W.O.F. 177)

Thus, one can say that Kalam is a driving force in the lives of millions in this globe who want to fulfill their dreams and expectations of this world. His sole aim in life is to help mankind.

As an enlightened soul, Kalam does not want any "name and fame" in his life. He remains grateful to his ancestors and the Almighty for their blessings and grace upon him. As he says:

I do not wish to set myself up as an example to others, but I believe that a few readers may draw inspiration and come to experience that ultimate satisfaction which can only be found in the life of the spirit. God's providence is your inheritance. The bloodline of my great grandfather Avul, my grandfather Pakir, and my father Jainulabdeen may end with Abdul Kalam, but His grace will never cease, for it is Eternal. (*W. O. F. 177-178*)

2.To sum up:

His autobiography *Wings of Fire* is a real account of Kalam's life which is a great source of inspiration for all those who want to do some great works in their lives for nation. The research paper minutely depicts two versions of the personality of APJ Abdul Kalam, in the beginning, as a struggling boy and a towering scientist, later on. This study shows, indeed, the true account of the protagonist in an inspirational mode. It is proved that Kalam has a multifaceted or versatile personality who has the power or aura in within him to inspire all

Indians to do their best in their lives. His contributions in the fields of science and technology, humanity and philosophy show his greatness and his love for learning and humanity. The greatness and inspirational personality of Kalam is confirmed when he sees the infinite potentials in people to transform their lives and nation, “Let the latent fire in the heart of every Indian acquire wings, and the glory of this great country light up the sky” (*W.O.F.* 168). He is a true symbol of patriotism, humanity, unity, peace, knowledge and dedication.

The study marks Kalam as a great torch bearer for the entire humanity and his magnetic personality will inspire many coming generations on this planet. His life story may give strong wings to the curious and aspiring minds of the young to achieve what they wish for.

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Appendices:

A list of abbreviations used in the present research paper are as follows:

W.O. F.: *Wings of Fire*.

NASA: National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

MLA 8th edition (Modern Language Association) is used for citation in the present research paper.

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