

**Tribhuvan University**

**Running between the Wickets: Defining Self by Sports in Sachin Tendulkar's  
*Playing It My Way***

**A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences  
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Degree of Master of Arts in English**

**By**

**Amir Kumar Timsina**

**Roll No.: 00006002**

**T.U. Regd. No.: 6-2-0204-0092-2012**

**Central Department of English**

**Kirtipur, Kathmandu**

**March 2021**

## Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I credit the successful completion of this research to my respected supervisor Mr. Pradip Raj Giri for his unconditional and untiring endeavors in uplifting my spirit along with the academic materials that make up the perfect body of the research. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to him for his time, patience, friendly guidance and educational inspirations that prove to be a milestone in the entire construction of the thesis writing.

I am beholden to the Head of Central Department of English, Prof. Dr. Jib Lal Sapkota for his encouraging advices. Similarly, I would be delighted to extend my gratefulness to respected Lecturers, Raj Kumar Baral, Hemlal Pandey, Laxman Bhatta, and other lecturers as they contributed enormously to my understanding of the complex subjects. The knowledge on the related theories gained from their classes filled me with confidence which inspired me to do this thesis.

I am rejoiced to grab this occasion to record my immense gratitude to my father, mother, brother and sister-in-law for their constant encouragement, grandiose suggestions and profound dedication. I owe them a great deal for what they have done. Meanwhile, my friends Shankar Sanjel, Pujan Prasad Gyawali, Suman Kafle, Dev Prakash Rai, Purna Poudel, Ashok Kumar Thakur, Ashish Pokhrel, Kamal Rai and Bijay Poudel deserve a great share of thanks from the depth of my heart for their help.

March 2021

Amir Kumar Timsina

Running between the Wickets: Defining Self by Sports in Sachin Tendulkar's

*Playing It My Way*

Abstract

*Autobiography usually incorporates the inner self of the individual, and presents the mirror image of the self rarely known to others besides all the public exposure one has earned. But in contrast, Tendulkar's autobiography, Playing it My Way, is no more than a reiteration of all his accolades and glory he has earned as a cricketer. Grounded with all the textual evidence, the photos he has included, the accolades he has mentioned, and all those not-so-beautiful behind the scenes missed out; this research paper claims that this autobiography is nothing more than the appraisal of Tendulkar's self, an aggrandizement of the self. For this purpose, this research paper mainly brings the ideas of Linda Anderson, Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson and Patricia A. Adler and Peter Adler to analyze the text. Linda Anderson in her *Autobiography* raises the issues of credibility, authorship, selfhood, representation, identity, language, etc in an autobiography. She questions in the pervasiveness and slipperiness of autobiography. Patricia A. Adler and Peter Adler in "The Glorified Self: The Aggrandizement and the Constriction of Self" write how a person changes his/her self or glorifies it when he/she becomes a celebrity. And Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson in *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives* introduce autobiography comprehensively and critically.*

Key Words: Self, Aggrandizement, Confession, Narrating 'I', Identity

## Introduction

Sachin Tendulkar, who has been in spotlight for couple of decades for cricket fans, has not been into questions regarding his cricketing quality, as his autobiography has been. A large number of critics criticized his autobiography *Playing it My Way* for his exclusive presentation of statistics and public highlights. Thus, this research paper delves into his autobiography and examines why he presents the glorious public happenings and deliberately misses confessions and his not-so-public turns of life. Therefore, researching this text using the theories of autobiography and the ideological 'I', this paper claims that Tendulkar is deliberate in censoring those private affairs for retaining his figure of glory and further aggrandizing his self. This research paper mainly brings the ideas of Linda Anderson, Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson and Patricia A. Adler and Peter Adler to analyze the text. Linda Anderson in her *Autobiography* raises the issues of credibility, authorship, selfhood, representation, identity, language, etc in an autobiography. She questions in the pervasiveness and slipperiness of autobiography. Patricia A. Adler and Peter Adler in "The Glorified Self: The Aggrandizement and the Constriction of Self" write how a person changes his/her self or glorifies it when he/she becomes a celebrity. And Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson in *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives* introduce autobiography comprehensively and critically.

*Playing it My Way* deals with Tendulkar's experiences, the ups and downs and all the tough times he had gone through to become a cricketer. He has described his cricketing career that is full of struggles and his views and emotions regarding his games about which we were hardly acquaint before. He begins from the experiences of his childhood, the mischievous and the naughty little boy he had

been. The later part of the book talks about his Test debut in Pakistan at the age of 16 in 1989. He scored more runs and made more centuries than any other players in the history-in both Tests and ODIs. He made his first Test century at the age of 17, at the age of 36 he became the first player to make a one-day double century and in 2012 he scored his 100<sup>th</sup> international hundred. With India he won the World Cup in 2011 and reached the top of the world Test rankings in the same year. In 2013, he retired from the cricket after playing his 200<sup>th</sup> and final Test in front of his home crowd in Mumbai.

Autobiography is the written account of one's life. Since Tendulkar includes very less of his relationship with the people or his private selves, his autobiography seems to have been written by an outsider. His autobiography is no more than the recollections of the matches and series he played in his twenty-four years of cricketing journey. Tendulkar has not given such insights that the readers were craving for. This voluminous autobiography of Sachin Tendulkar is all about the recitation of facts and figures, of matches played and series won and lost, how he got out, etc which could easily be found in a good site. However, he has talked about his several injuries in the course of playing different matches and series which we were hardly acquaint before. Despite his injuries in toes, back, elbow, wrist, etc, he played cricket for more than two decades and became one of the top and famous cricketers in the world. He also has confessed his romantic meeting with Anjali, his wife. Despite these few confessions he has written the things which are all known by the true cricket fans. Except his childhood, Tendulkar only presents his public life, which is very bright and dignified. The controversies that had to be brought forth and discussed have been largely missing here. His sub-headings are insufficient as they do not speak more about the very topic. Similarly, the photographs inserted in his autobiography

are more about sports; photographs with coach, teammates, his batting, bowling, etc but he has very less photographs with his family. He could have put photographs of his children's birthday celebration, their travelling pictures, etc, but he has not done so. Similarly, he has not criticized or portrayed any Indian cricketer negatively but he showed the players from other countries in the negative light.

Menon, in the *Independent* writes, “Sachin Tendulkar has lived one of the exciting phases of Indian cricket” (1). In his era, the Indian team became number one in both formats and won the world cup. He was helped by Rahul Dravid, Sourav Ganguly, VVS Laxman, Virender Shewag, Anil Kumble, Harbhajan Singh, Zaheer Khan, etc. Instead of having a lot of things to confess, this book limits itself only by talking about matches and scores. Tendulkar was accused of match-fixing in his captainship. But he has not shown his anger and trauma that he had gone through during that time. However, Tendulkar played 200 Test matches and 463 one-day internationals despite having several injuries. Any of the injuries could have stopped his career but he bravely fought against it. Except this, he has not given many insights and thus Menon critiques that Sachin focused more on what, where, and when over why and how.

When it was heard Sachin was writing an autobiography there was an intense feeling of happiness among the people. They thought that they would get personal insights from the most popular cricketer ever. But after the book was received in the hands of the readers, they were dissatisfied. There were a lot of controversies in his long cricketing journey. For instance, Tendulkar has not discussed much about the issue of Chappell. And the interesting things that the book provides had already been told before the book released. Since the book seems to be a chronological recollection of the matches that he played, there is not much thing to get by a true cricket fan.

Every cricket fan knows his debut, scores, centuries and double centuries. As such, Pranav Joshi in *DNA* writes, “It would be fitting to describe the book as a chronological recollection of Tendulkar’s career rather than an insight into the genius of Sachin Tendulkar” (3). This book would be interesting only for the young ones who have not got chance to see his cricket. This book contained only the important matches and series played by Tendulkar.

Tendulkar fails to describe the mental and psychological turmoil that he had gone through in different phases of his life and in the matches and series he had played. Pranav Joshi in *DNA* critiques that, “The book does not attempt to scratch beneath the surface to reveal the mental and psychological aspects of that great innings, or of most other things” (4). There are very little things that can evoke interest in the readers. It is hard to get the scenes that are behind the curtain. For instance, the book does not bother to talk about the tumultuous times for Indian cricket in 1990 and 2000. Similarly, as a great batsman, he also does not give any insight in the science of batting. He also mentions very little about the captain-coach relationship, captain-teammate relationship, board-captain relationship, or any kind of relationship at all. He only revealed his secretive relationship with Anjali, his wife. In a simple term, the author did not try to make it insightful. Tendulkar kept himself back in this autobiography. He failed to meet his fans expectations. Furthermore, the sub-headings are insufficient since they do not speak more about the very topic. Since autobiography is meant to be revelation of the person behind the image, this book is not too much of revelation of Sachin Tendulkar.

Sachin's autobiography focuses only on his public image instead of giving insights that the people were craving for. A good autobiographer reveals his secrets or insights that were not known before. As he is a great batsman, he probably had a lot

of things to share. But he merely included the scores in this voluminous book. As such, Suresh Menon in *espncricinfo* critiques that Sachin Tendulkar attempts to strengthen his public self more than he does to advocate Indian cricket. He talks very less about match-fixing, chucking, player depression, sledging, etc. In such situation, Tendulkar probably had conversation with Dravid, Kumble, Ganguly, Laxman, etc but this is also utterly missing in his autobiography. Therefore, Menon argues that, “The things that one can get from this book is the recitation of facts and figures, of matches played and series won and lost, all from the perspective of Tendulkar's own performance” (5). Therefore, this autobiography seems to be written by an outsider. The issues of Chappell, disappointment with Rahul Dravid is also missing here. So Menon states that, “From a great player, an icon, a Bharat Ratna, this book is a disappointment” (6).

Ravi Krishnan, in the *Livemint* writes, "The cricket star's account of his own life is like a half-hearted prod outside the off stump" (1). It means that Tendulkar has revealed only the half part of his life. Of course, he has shown his struggles and hard work but he has not included many things in his autobiography. For instance, he does not talk on the issue of his Ferrari import or the relationship with his childhood friend and batting partner, Vinod Kambli. He has not taken single name of his childhood friends. Krishnan writes that the book fails to analyze the series, matches and even the players. Krishnan further writes that Sachin has not talked more about the issues like match-fixing, player depression, the debate on decision review system (DRS), etc. He had a kind of dissatisfaction with Rahul Dravid but he mentions it less. Thus, Krishnan also says that Sachin has presented only the half face in his autobiography.

Partha K., in *India Study Channel*, discusses the autobiography of Sachin Tendulkar. He writes that the book is important not only for the fans of cricket but for



all the people who are engaged in different profession. Sachin Tendulkar is the most popular cricketer of all time. He has made maximum runs and centuries than any other players in the both formats. He is the first player to score double century in the limited over of game (ODI). Partha also writes about the co-author Boria Majumdar who completed his doctorate on social history of Indian cricket from Oxford University. The book has been divided into twenty-eight chapters where he begins from his childhood, then his cricketing journey and to the last game he played against West Indies in his home crowd, Mumbai. It has also talked about other famous players like Brian Lara, Ricky Ponting, Shane Warne, etc. Since the language of the book is simple, it seems that the book has been written by targeting all kinds of readers in the world. Despite of several injuries he pushed himself to play cricket. His parents, brothers, wife and even the children helped and motivated a lot in his long cricketing journey. However, Partha argues that “Tendulkar has totally avoided or mentioned minimally about the various controversies during 1989 to 2013” (4). He also has not shown any Indian cricketer in negative light. Nevertheless, after reading a book the readers can understand that complete devotion and determination can lead one to a great success. Thus, Partha claims that the autobiography of Tendulkar is a motivational book.

Charu Pant, in *My India* writes that Sachin's autobiography is the most awaited autobiography in the history of Indian sports. He critiques Tendulkar's autobiography that “proved to be a book on Tendulkar's achievements and his life as a player rather than Tendulkar as a person” (3). The book includes everything like Ranji centuries, his maiden century, his tours, world cups, sixes, victories, etc. His autobiography would have been incomplete had he not talked about Achrekar sir. Achrekar sir was his first coach under whom he began practicing cricket. However, Tendulkar tried to

limit himself in his autobiography. For instance, he has not exposed much about the issue of Greg Chappell. Tendulkar very often talked about his captainship and his frustration and hardships he had gone through when he was the captain of Indian national team. He very little talks about his dissatisfaction with Dravid, Sourav Ganguly, and John Wright. However, Tendulkar through his autobiography showed that playing cricket at the international level is not an easy thing. Sachin was criticized many times when he got out in a low score but after reading his autobiography it is known that he played many matches for his country bearing several kinds of injuries. Charu Pant critiques that the book did not unfold the mystery behind match fixing issues and the bans on Mohammad Azharaddin and Ajay Jadeja as well as Tendulkar's strained relationship with Vinod Kambli. His devotion to family and friends and his belief in superstitions can be found in his autobiography.

The reviews on the book *Playing it My Way* are almost same though they are written by different writers. The common idea is that Sachin's autobiography is just the recollection of matches and series played by him. It has not given insights that the readers were craving for. He has not talked about the controversies like match-fixing, the issue of Chappell, the debate on decision review system (DRS), his dissatisfaction with Rahul Dravid, etc. He failed to reveal the psychological turmoil that he had gone through in different phases of his life. In other words, he has talked very less about his private selves. He has not talked about captain-coach relationship, captain-teammate relationship, board-captain relationship or any kind of relationship at all. In this way, all the reviews have shown the similar kind of lapses in this autobiography. However, nobody has talked why there are a lot of gaps. In other words, why he has not included the controversies, his private selves, his relationships, etc is not mentioned by any of the reviewers. Sachin has shown only the face which is very familiar to the

public. So, in this autobiography, the narrator 'I' has been eulogized. Tendulkar autobiography is no more than the recollection of his cricketing facts which a good site can inform one to a large extent. One usually looks for the behind the scenes of one's life when reading his/her autobiography, but the ideas that should have been at the spotlight are the things that are utterly missing here. This research paper marks a point of departure by bringing the issue of self-valorization. By not mentioning his private selves, his relationships, different controversies, etc, and focusing only on his public life which is bright and dignified, he is valorizing his self.

There are different constitutive processes of autobiographical subjectivity. They are memory, experience, identity, embodiment and agency. Any writers depend upon his/her memory to tell the story of the past. However, there can be the politics in remembering. Many writers hide their dark side and focus only on their positive aspects. As such, Smith and Watson state, "What is remembered and what is forgotten, and why, change over time. Thus remembering also has a politics" (18).

Sachin Tendulkar had a kind of friction with Mohammad Azharuddin. It is common in sports that there occur rivalries between the players. Sometimes the tension between the players emerges because of their attitude to each other and also for the fight over captaincy. Mohammad Azharuddin was the finest cricketer who had started playing cricket from an Indian national team before the entry of Sachin Tendulkar. They together could be famous with their battings but the tension mounted from the year 1996. Azharuddin who had been captaining India from 1990 was exited from the 1996 World Cup. He was also removed from the captain and his position was replaced by Sachin Tendulkar. There was the great tension between Sachin and Azharuddin but Sachin does not reveal any of the things in his autobiography. He only writes, "Soon after returning to India after a generally disappointing tour of

England on the field, I was made captain of India at the age of twenty-three, replacing Azhar, who had been captain since 1990” (116).

In the both subtopics, ‘World Cup 1996’ and ‘Captaincy – The First Stint’, Sachin has not disclosed the hostility between him and Azharuddin. He assumed Azharuddin to be involved in match-fixing. Furthermore, when Sachin was made captain the second time, he did not take Azharuddin in the team. When Azharuddin was brought back to team, he did not want to play with him and resigned ahead of the two match Test series against South Africa. In the *Sportskeeda* it is written that, “Tendulkar suspected Azhar of not putting in the effort while he batted and believed that he was trying to sabotage the team” (5). Tendulkar even denied to play with him when Azhar was brought back to team. S Samaddar in the *Sportskeeda* writes, “Although it is widely believed that he quit since Azhar had been brought back into the team, Tendulkar stated that he was taking ‘moral responsibility’ for the failure of team” (7). India faced a tumultuous time in the year 1999 and 2000. The match-fixing scandal had shattered the faith of the people and the players were really in the tough situation. Finally, the CBI started investigating the matter and, in the process, Sachin was enquired about the matter. He stated that he had a kind of suspect to Azharuddin for involving in match-fixing. In the *Sportskeeda*, Samaddan writes; “During his testimony to the CBI, Sachin stated that he believes that Azhar was in league with bookies and had not been putting in 100% effort during games at most times. The former Indian captain was banned by the BCCI and never played for India again” (7). Tendulkar, by not discussing the hostility between him and Azharuddin tries to show his character spotless and this can be felt as a politics of remembering. He has recollected the interesting bits and pieces and obscured the different controversies of his career. As such, Gusdorf states that, “Or it offers the possibility of alleviating the

dangers and anxieties of fragmentation: ‘Autobiography ... requires a man to take a distance with regard to himself in order to constitute himself in the focus of his special unity and identity across time’.” (5) The other face of Tendulkar cannot be seen in his autobiography. He has shown the same face which the media has shown to the public. He very cleverly expresses his thoughts by managing a good distance with the bitterness that he had with his acquaintants.

Sachin has not discussed much about his childhood friend, Vinod Kambli in his autobiography. They were friends from the period when they used to play local matches in India. They even have a world record partnership of 664 runs in the Harris Shield tournament. They came into recognition because of this partnership and also paved their way to international cricket. They used to enjoy batting together and would often find themselves singing songs in the middle of the pitch. However, Sachin has not discussed any of the event or incident with Vinod Kambli after the Harris Shield tournament. It is widely believed that they do not have good relationship with each other though Sachin states that they still have the same kind of relationship. Sachin in his autobiography writes; “It was at Hemant’s initiative that Anil Joshi, Vijay Shirke and Sanju Khamkar of Sungrace Mafatlal, a well-known Indian company, came forward to support both Vinod and me with cricket equipment. I am glad that our friendship, which was close to three decades old, continued” (27). Sachin here states that he still has good relationship with Vinod Kambli but Kambli says that they even do not communicate with each other. (1) Vinod has a lot of dissatisfactions with Sachin. The first dissatisfaction was that he was not helped by Sachin when he was in great trouble. Kambli also mentions that it was not him who cut their friendship but it was Sachin who broke their long friendship. They did not talk to each other for eight years. Tendulkar even did not invite him in his farewell

speech whom he regards as his close friend. In the *Hindustan Times* it is written that, “Tendulkar was upset with the comments made by Kambli, and did not invite him to his final Test at Mumbai in late 2013. The Little Master also had no mention of Kambli in his long farewell speech after the conclusion of the Test at Wankhede stadium” (3). Of course, Sachin has included the name of so many people but he indeed has not taken the name of Vinod Kambli. When Kambli was not invited in the farewell speech of Sachin, he was sad but even when his name was not taken by Tendulkar, he felt really hurt. The saddened Kambli in the *Headlines Today* says;

I am deeply hurt. I was expecting my name to be part of the farewell speech. If anything for our famous partnership. Its that world record partnership that was the turning point of our careers. That’s when everyone came to know who is Vinod and Sachin. I had a hand in that and our careers started from there. I thought he could have mentioned that part at least. (6)

With this too, it is clear that Sachin has really maintained the distance in his autobiography by not bringing the controversies and hostility with his acquaintances. He kept himself back from all the kinds of controversies and tried to define his self by sports.

Sachin Tendulkar does not talk much about his friends and their contributions. He mostly talks about his contributions and it seems that it is only because of his scores India has been able to win many matches. He writes,

In the Harris Shield that season I scored a record 1,025 runs in five matches and was out only once. It now seems extraordinary, but my scores in the quarter-final, semi-final and final read 207 not out and 346 not out. What's more, after scoring 326 not out in the semi-final of the Harris Shield, I walked right across the Azad Maidan (a sports and recreating ground in South

Mumbai) to play in a Giles Shield match, in which I made 178 not out, winning us the game. (23)

Here he talks about his scores but hardly talks about the contribution of his teammates. He does not take any single name of his teammates. In other words, he recollected his beautiful innings and highlighted it but at the same time obscured the contributions of others. The writer must have a kind of 'intention' before writing an autobiography. The intention however must be honest so that the readers can trust the text. As such, Roy Pascal, an early critic of the genre states that, "autobiography depends on 'the seriousness of the author, the seriousness of his personality and his intention in writing'." (3) Instead of showing the contributions of the players and the depression that they have gone through in different phases, the ban of the players, match-fixing scandal, etc, Tendulkar only portrays his scores which shows his intention of seeking more popularity and fame.

Sachin was selected to play for India when he was sixteen years old. He had to play his first international match against Pakistan. But after going through his sub heading "My First Tour", the conversation between him and his parents is not found. It is a matter of astonishment that a sixteen years old boy is going to Pakistan to play matches without having conversation with his family. Tendulkar includes all the series he played and divided it into different sub headings. His sub headings are like, "First Test, Karachi, 15-20 November 1989", "Second Test, Faisalabad, 23-28 November 1989" etc. In the sub heading, "The Abdul Qadir over", Tendulkar has shown Abdul Qadir in a negative light. The description below shows his attitude towards Abdul Qadir. He writes:

Mushtaq Ahmed, an up-and-coming Pakistani leg-spinner at that stage, was bowling and I hit him for a couple of sixes and a boundary in the first over I

faced. While both sixes were hit over long on, the second went a fair distance and hit the dressing-room window, breaking the glass. The Pakistani hadn't expected me to hit so far and Abdul Qadir, an old hand at the time, walked up to me and Said, '*Bachhe ko kyon maar rahe ho? Dum hai to mujhe maar ke dikhao.*' (What's the point of hitting sixes off a newcomer? If you have what it takes, try and hit me six.) (45-46)

Partha K, in "*India Study Channel*", critiques that "He has not shown any Indian cricketer in negative light" (4). So, here, by bringing such lines of Abdul Qadir, he tried to portray him negatively. There could have been much dissatisfaction with his teammates but he indeed has not brought such issues forth. For instance, he had dissatisfaction with Rahul Dravid but he mentions it less. He did not reveal the series of events or his communication with Dravid after the game was declared by Dravid when he was playing in 194 runs. He not only showed Abdul Qadir in the negative light but he also showed another Pakistani batsman, Aamer Sohail, in the same zone. He writes; "Sohail had hit Venky for a boundary towards point and suggested rather aggressively that that was where he wanted to keep Venky all day. He waved his bat towards the boundary and said a number of rather rude things" (113).

In this way, he has shown Abdul Qadir, Aamer Sohail in the negative light. Furthermore, he also showed Allan Donald, a South African batsman, in the same zone. He dug out the negative parts of other players but never tried to show any bad aspects of his teammates. As such, Nishad Pai Vaidya writes in *Cricketcountry*; "If you are expecting the Little Master to bare his heart on the controversial matters that surrounded Indian Cricket during his playing days, this isn't your book" (1).

Tendulkar has written that he changed two schools in his school life. His first school was New English School and the latter one is Shradashram Vidyamandir. But



he has not talked his views and emotions regarding his schools, his teachers, batch mates and his education. The only thing he writes about his education is that, "I was a reasonable student and though I was never a class-topper, I did not languish at the bottom either" (6). However, he showed his struggle and hard work in cricket in his early days. He would start practicing batting at 7:30 am in net and practice for two hours. After the morning session, he would go into the practice match which would end at 4:30 pm. Then his evening session would start from 5:00 pm only by getting chance to rest for thirty minutes which would end at 7:00 pm. Along with his struggles in cricket he could have shown his friendships, his education, his views towards people in his young age but it is largely missing here.

Ruth A. Banes in "The Exemplary Self: Autobiography in Eighteenth Century America" writes "Etymologically, "autobiography" is said to include public as well as private experiences, a combination of "Memoir", an individual's public record, and "confession", a private record of private experiences"(226). Sachin throughout his autobiography kept himself back. He has shown himself as a player but not as a person. Sachin has almost written all about his public experiences but talked very less about his private experiences and controversies. Apart from his childhood he has not talked about his sister, Savita. His views and emotions towards his sister after being a celebrity are not found. He writes that his brother Ajit helped him a lot to achieve his potential but he has not discussed much about him after being an international figure. He went through different psychological turmoil especially in the time of his captainship but no any discussion is found between him and Ajit whom he regards more than a brother. So and so, his mother reactions and views towards him after being a celebrity is totally avoided. His discussion and conversation with his family before heading to tours is hardly found in any of the sub-headings.

Confession is hardly found in his autobiography. The Indian cricketers were banned by BCCI because of involvement in a few unsanctioned matches but he has not confessed the name of the players and further details about the incident. He writes;

There was tension within the squad, however, as a result of a dispute that had blown up before the tour between the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and the players over the United States on the way back from the West Indies tour in 1989. The matter had gone right up to the Indian Supreme Court and was eventually settled when the court lifted a ban imposed on the players by the BCCI. (35)

He has given information in a surface level. He could have clarified it by giving complete details. Many of the Indians and cricket fans are still unknown about the ban of players in 1989. He could have unfolded the mystery but did not attempt to do so. Throughout his autobiography he has not mentioned any Indian players and himself in the negative zone. In fact, he did not want to be involved in any kind of controversies by bringing the issues of past. He was already a hero in India and almost all over the world. Along with his batting skills, media too is responsible to create a height which he has attained in the present. As such, Prashant Kidambi in “Hero, celebrity and icon: Sachin Tendulkar and Indian public culture” writes; “Tendulkar’s larger than life image was carefully nurtured and ceaselessly celebrated by these new sports channels. The sense of visual intimacy engendered in viewers by the new technologies, and the modes of presentation that they deployed, consolidated his star state” (16). Thus, in this voluminous book, he has only presented his bright stats and remained totally away from the issues which he thought will be the reason of his downfall. He has not shown his image which is also not shown by the media.

Sachin is a celebrity in India and almost all over the world. He is regarded as the God of cricket in India. Besides, he is awarded the Bharat Ratna, the ultimate honour because of which he reached the top of the height. Celebrities often hide their dark side because of the fear of the downfall from the height they achieved by a lot of hard work and sacrifices. And it is often the case in autobiography. As such, Patricia A. Adler and Peter Adler in "The Glorified self: The Aggrandizement and the Constriction of Self" write, "The development of the glorified self is an outgrowth of individuals' imbued with celebrity" (299). Here, they express how athletes go through the process of self-aggrandizement by giving more focus on some dimensions and keeping other things in periphery. They act and speak in the way they are supposed to speak by the media and the public. They try to maintain their standard by remaining aloof from their private self. At the age of twenty-three, Sachin was made the captain of India. India lost many matches and series under his captaincy. At such critical condition he probably had conversation with the selection committee, coaches and teammates but it is not found in his sub heading "CAPTAINCY-THE FIRST STINT". His conversation and discussion to the board members is not found while changing the batting order for Ganguly and Dravid. He only writes, "There were occasions when I wasn't given the team of my choice and did not get particular players I asked for" (119). He very less mentions his dissatisfaction with coaches and selection committee and focuses on the strategies that he had used in the games in which they had got the sweet victories. By not mentioning his hostility and dissatisfaction with the board members, he has tried to show his character good and intact. Furthermore, he was criticized a lot when India lost many matches and even was sacked from captaincy but the psychological turmoil that he had gone through and the anger cannot be found explicitly in his autobiography. His anger and the response and reactions of

his wife, family and his relatives are totally avoided when he was sacked from the captain.

Before 1950, autobiography was viewed as the genre that would narrate the story of a 'great man' and which was also thought to represent the society of the then period. The life narratives of women, formerly enslaved, and colonized people would not be published. Georg Mish in his multivolume *History of Autobiography in America* argues that; "The progressive unfolding of Western history can be read in the representative lives of the leaders who participated in this achievement of civilization; and he discovered particular types of Western man in the self-representational strategies of each generation of autobiographers" (113). However, this concept of representation was challenged by different critics since it does not actually represent the lives of all people living in a particular period.

Sachin, in his autobiography follows the notion of first wave. He is the public figure and is also regarded as the 'God' in cricket. Along with his personal life he tries to represent the life of the players but fails to do so. His representation is fragmented as he omits a lot of controversies and the confession and apology are hardly found in his autobiography. Sachin was again appointed as a captain in 1999. As before the Indian team won few games under his captaincy but faced the same fate as in his first stint as a captain. India faced many humiliating collapses against Australia and Pakistan. During his second stint as a captain, they had Kapil Dev as their coach. Kapil Dev is one of the finest cricketers of India. They had great expectations from him to improve their games and strategies. But Sachin, as a captain of Indian national team could not take his team to the expected height and thus resigned from captaincy and never accepted the job since then. After his resignation Sourav Ganguly was appointed as the next captain. Under his captainship India has

been able to win many matches. Because of these incidents, the Indian fans and some players accused Kapil Dev for involving in match-fixing. The issue of match-fixing has not been clarified yet. Through the autobiography of Sachin Tendulkar people had expected to know the reality of the very incident but he too has not disclosed it clearly. He only writes;

India started well under Sourav, winning the ODI series 3-2 against South Africa in March 2000. But soon afterwards cricket plummeted to a low in the wake of match-fixing scandal. The credibility of the game had been compromised and I found the revelations about matches being thrown for money distasteful and disgusting. The whole thing was repulsive and what was seriously worrying was that fans had started to lose faith and the integrity of our sport was in doubt. (186)

In 2000, Kapil Dev, the coach of Indian national team, was accused of match-fixing. India had to go through this tumultuous time and the faith of fans was shattered by the particular incident. But Sachin has not even disclosed who was accused of match-fixing. He has not taken the name of Kapil Dev. The issue of match-fixing in 2000 is still a mystery and Sachin, in his autobiography; by not clarifying the particular issue has become more mysterious. Besides, some of the players were banned from cricket and their names were never listed in the squad from the particular incident. For instance, the ban of Mohammad Azharuddin and Ajay Jadeja is not discussed in his autobiography. Why were they banned from the cricket is not clarified yet. So and so, Manoj Prabhakar, the former Indian player also accused Kapil Dev for involving in match-fixing and the involvement of the then South African's captain Hansie Cronje is included nowhere in his autobiography. He tried to hide the big issue of his nation or his players but disclosed even the petty things of the players

from other countries. For instance, he has brought the controversy between Symonds and Harbhajan Singh. In the sub-topic "Bad Language", he writes that Harbhajan has said "Teri ma ki..." to Symonds but he considers it all part of the game. But Symonds listened it as "monkey" and complained at the end of the day's play. Here, he indirectly shows Harbhajan as an innocent person but shows Symonds as a revengeful person even in a trifle thing.

Sachin was accused of ball tampering in 2001 while playing against South Africa. It is one of the shocking and humiliating allegations a cricketer ever faces. But Sachin does not seem moved and hurt by this accusation. He writes, "Soon after the end of the day's play we were informed that the match referee had called six Indian players for a hearing and that I had been accused of ball tampering. I was shocked because I had always played cricket with integrity and honesty and would never do such a thing" (202). After being accused of ball tampering too, his anger and the psychological turmoil that he had gone through cannot be found in his autobiography. Confession is one of the elements of autobiography. Karl Weintraub, the early critic of autobiography states that he is in search of "that proper form of autobiography in which a self-reflective person asks 'Who am I?' and 'how did I become what I am?', the confession also hold a special position" (19). After reading the entire text, one does not find any errors committed by Sachin Tendulkar throughout his life. However, it is recorded that Sachin was scratching the ball at the intensity of game. But Sachin denies the accusation saying that he was just trying to clean the seam of the ball. Besides, Captain Sourav Ganguly was suspended one match for failing to control the players and Virender Sehwag too was suspended and charged for over-appealing. But Sachin has not shown the depression of the players when they had to face the severe accusation. Patricia A. Adler and Peter Adler in "The Glorified

Self: The Aggrandizement and the Constriction of Self" write, "Characteristically, the glorified self is a greedy self, seeking to ascend in importance and to cast aside other self-dimensions as it grows" (299). As such, since Sachin has already reached the top of the height, he does not bring different controversies that may arise question in his character. He casts aside these dimensions to keep his character intact. In other words, in his autobiography, he has shown himself what the media has shown him in the public. Confessions and the secrets about his life are hardly found in his autobiography.

Matthew Taylor in the article "From Source to Subject: Sport, History, and Autobiography" shows the strong side of autobiography and its lapses. He studies autobiography in a deep way and considered it a vast genre and also questions whether autobiography should be trusted in a full manner. Some critics support autobiography since it represents society, culture, politics, economy, etc of the then period. In other words, autobiography is to some extent similar to history. Unlike fiction, it gives many information and data of the past. In contrast, Matthew Taylor claims, "But in its disregard for chronology, its selections, omissions, enhancements, and silences, its lack of confidentiality, its literary construction, and its very subjectivity, autobiography has also come to be regarded as an imperfect source" (475). As such, in the autobiography, *Playing it My Way*, Sachin has omitted many controversies and private experiences. He has omitted many scenes in the issue of Greg Chappell. The major controversy was between Greg Chappell and Sourav Ganguly. This dispute resulted in the removal of Ganguly as captain and his position was replaced by Rahul Dravid in 2005. But Sachin has not brought such incident that was occurred in 2005. So and so, Ganguly was dropped from ODI in the same year and later dropped from Test cricket too in 2006. However, Ganguly was recalled to

the team in both forms of cricket in late 2006. Tendulkar has not brought these all issues and he only writes;

In my opinion, Indian cricket benefited significantly when the BCCI decided to end Chappell's tenure in April 2007. Several of our senior players were relieved to see him go, which was hardly surprising because, for reasons hard to comprehend, he had not treated them particularly fairly. His attitude towards Sourav, for example, was astonishing. (269)

The senior players were affected a lot under the tenure of Chappell. The players like Sourav Ganguly and VVS Laxman were tormented a lot but their tension is not shown anywhere in this autobiography. In other words, he fails to reveal the players' depression and Menon in *espncricinfo* critiques that "The things that one can get from this book is the recitation of facts and figures, of matches played and series won and lost, all from the perspective of Tendulkar's own performance" (4). In a simple term, Tendulkar attempts to strengthen his public self more than he does to advocate Indian cricket.

Sometimes an autobiographer adds the details which had never occurred in his/her life just to make the personalities better. In other words, they exaggerate the incidents that they think will help to add positive marks in their personality. As such, Roy Pascal argues that "Autobiography arose "from vanity or showmanship, and satisfy the much stimulated craze for 'personalities'."(qtd. in Taylor, 473) It means that autobiographers often want to show how great they are through their autobiographies. Tendulkar in his autobiography writes that Chappell had asked him to be the captain of India before the World Cup. Before that he already had captained the Indian team twice and vowed himself that he would not take the responsibility again. He writes, "Just months before the World Cup, Chappell had come to see me at



home and, to my dismay, suggested that I should take over the captaincy from Rahul Dravid". (270) But this statement of Tendulkar is controversial because Chappell claims that he had never proposed Tendulkar to be the captain of India. Chappell tells to the cricket.com.au that;

The claims made in Sachin's new book were brought to my attention earlier today. Whilst I don't propose to get into a war of words, I can state quite clearly that during my time as Indian coach I never contemplated Sachin replacing Rahul Dravid as captain. We enjoyed a pleasant afternoon together but the subject of captaincy was never raised. (9)

Sachin claims that he was proposed to be a captain by Chappell but Chappell says that he had never raised the issue of captaincy. After the response of Chappell on the statements of Sachin, Sachin has not discussed much on the very topic. It is still not sure whether the incident had taken place as claimed by Tendulkar.

Sachin in his autobiography does not disclose the issue of Ferrari which he had received as a gift from FIAT Group. There was a kind of controversy when the government had exempted the tax of Rs. 1.13 crore for Tendulkar to import the car. FIAT decided to handover the keys of the car to Tendulkar by Michael Schumacher in 2003 for breaking Bradman's record of 29 Test Centuries. Tendulkar was not only the player but also the ambassador of India at that time. This resulted a huge controversy and in *IndiaToday.in* it is written that: "The cricketer's goodwill has gone the way the car's speed does when it brakes from 60 kmph to somewhere close to zero in very little time" (1). Kapil Dev too commented that the duty waiver should treat everybody equally. He writes;

While I am happy about Sachin getting a car, it (the duty waiver) should apply to every sportsperson. That is more important." He further writes; "Why can

we not have the same system for everybody... because everybody sweats for his country. I think they (Finance Ministry) should have given a discount, as it was in their hands... a change of policy totally, I don't think it's a good point. You can't change a policy for one person. If you change the policy, you change it for everybody. (7)

The issue of Ferrari has not been included nowhere in his autobiography. His autobiography seems like a biography since it does not disclose any controversies. Lejeune in 1982 defines autobiography as, "A retrospective prose narrative produced by a real person concerning his own existence, focusing on his individual life, in particular on the development of his personality." (2) But later on, he was dissatisfied with his own definition and expresses that 'autobiography does not provide sufficient boundary between autobiography and the adjacent genres of biography and fiction.' (2) This can be seen in Sachin's autobiography as he has omitted a lot of issues. His autobiography seems to have been written by the outsider as there are hardly any confession and private selves.

Besides the controversy of Ferrari, Tendulkar was in controversy with other issues which he has not highlighted in his autobiography. Tendulkar tried to save his friends resort which had allegedly breached a 50-foot no-construction zone. In the *economictimes*, it is written that; "According to ET report, the Little Master, who is a Rajya Sabha member, had reached out to Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar to save a friend's resort from a security dispute with DRDO" (2) Tendulkar's friend Sanjay Narang owned a holiday retreat in Londour, Mussoorie. This resort is said to have allegedly breached a 50-foot no-construction zone next to the Institute of Technology Management, a sensitive DRDO establishment. This incident hit spotlight after a CBI complaint by a DRDO official on the alleged breach. However, Tendulkar has denied

any economic interest in the property.

Tendulkar who was born in Maharashtrian family spent his childhood in Sahitya Sahawas colony. He was a mischievous boy when he was a child. He has fascinating memories of living in the Sahitya Sahawas. He along with his friends would throw water to the passer-by from his fourth floor. After living there for many years, he along with his family moved to a new apartment in Bandra West. He writes;

A few months before the Australia series my family had relocated from Sahitya Sahawas to our new haven, an apartment at La Mer Residency in Mumbai's Bandra West, a move to which I contributed very little, I have to confess. It was Anjali who organized everything and all I did was walk into a sprawling apartment with all my things set up for me. (214)

Here, he has discussed how he had moved from Sahitya Sahawas to his new apartment in Bandra West. But he has not discussed his move in new bungalow in Bandra. He has not discussed this issue because he was charged 4.35 lakh penalty for illegally occupying his new bungalow in Bandra. In *India Today*, it is written that, "Cricket icon Sachin Tendulkar has paid fine of Rs. 4.35 lakh to the Mumbai civic body for performing 'Vaastu puja' at his new five-storey mansion without having the occupancy certificate" (5). It is also written that the guardian minister for Mumbai suburb, Mohammed Arif Naseem Khan requested the mayor to waive the penalty saying that Sachin is an icon who has taken their country to the great height. However, Sachin paid the fine 4.35 lakh to obtain occupancy certificate at the last. This thing is included nowhere in his autobiography. The politics of memory is clearly seen with these issues.

The sub-headings in Tendulkar's autobiography are insufficient since they do not speak more about the very topic. For instance, in his sub-heading "A Four-Month

Honeymoon", he has not talked about his honeymoon but describes the games played against Australia. As such, Helene Cixous states that, "All biographies like all autobiographies like all narratives tell one story in place of another." (1) Similarly, he speaks less in many of his sub-headings. In the sub-heading, 'The Final', he has included so many things but he has not discussed about the coach, Gary, who had a great role to make them win the World Cup final in 2011. However, he remembers the World Cup first semi-final of 1996 where they were defeated against Sri Lanka and he blames Greg Chappell for losing the game. He was made captain for two times and in the heading, 'CAPTAINCY- THE FIRST STINT' and the sub heading, 'An unexpected appointment' he has not discussed about captain-coach relationship, captain-teammate relationship, board-captain relationship or any kind of relationship at all. In other words, we hardly get any newness in any of the headings and sub-headings.

Tendulkar even has not kept photos of his private life and his family. There is not any single photo of his children's birthday celebration or their travelogue. But he has kept many photos of cricket and his public life. He writes that, Ajit, his brother helped and encouraged him to be a cricketer. He writes, "My brothers Nitin and Ajit, have always backed me in my endeavours and, on the cricket side, I owe a lot to Ajit, who is ten years older than me and was a good club cricketer himself but decided to sacrifice his own career to help me achieve my potential." (4) Though he writes these beautiful lines about Ajit, he has not kept his photo too. His another brother, Nitin and his sister Savita have not become the part of his any sub-headings and their pictures are also nowhere to be seen. Thus, even with the selection and omission of photos it is seen that he has depicted less about his private life and focused more on his public life.



The entire book is all about the matches and series played by Tendulkar. He has completed describing his childhood days just in thirty-five pages and the rest of the book talks about the matches and series he played from 1989 to 2013. Unlike biography, autobiography includes both the public and private selves and confession is one of the elements of this genre. Since autobiography of Tendulkar limits itself only on the matches and scores, it is hard to find the confession and his private self.

He has described the struggles that he had gone through to become a cricketer. However, along with the story of his struggles he could have shown the different controversies that had hit Indian cricket. But the things that had to be brought forth are utterly missing here. As such, by focusing only in the sports and his scores and blurring the different controversies, his private self, private matters, he is valorizing the self.

## Works Cited

- A. Adler, Patricia and Peter Adler. "The Gloried Self: The Aggrandizement and the constriction of Self." *American Sociological Association*, vol. 52, no. 4, 1989, pp. 299-310. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/2786993](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2786993).
- Anderson, Linda. *Autobiography*. Routledge, 2001.
- Banes, Ruth A. "The Exemplary Self: Autobiography in Eighteenth Century America." *Biography*, vol. 5, no. 3, 1982, pp. 226–239. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/23539239](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23539239). Accessed 11 Mar. 2021.
- Joshi, Pranav. "Book Review : Sachin Tendulkar's autobiography 'Playing it My Way' fails to reveal the man behind the spotlight." 12 Nov 2014. *DNA*, <https://www.dnaindia.com/sports/comment-book-review-sachin-tendulkar-s-autobiography-playing-it-my-way-fails-to-reveal-the-man-behind-the-spotlight-2034656>.
- K, Partha. "Book Review: 'Playing it My Way' by Sachin Tendulkar with Boria Majumdar." *India Study Channel*. 25 Jan. 2021, <https://www.indiastudychannel.com/resources/168602-Book-Review-Playing-It-My-Way-by-Sachin-Tendulkar-with-Boria-Majumdar.aspx>.
- Krishnan, Ravi. "Book Review- Playing it My Way: My Autobiography" *Mint*. 22 Dec, 2020, <https://www.livemint.com/Leisure/HKIWlnRncSE8Y5TpjbcDPP/Book-Review--Playing-It-My-Way-My-Autobiography.html>.
- Kidambi, Prashant. "Hero, Celebrity and Icon: Sachin Tendulkar and Indian Public Culture." *The Cambridge Companion to Cricket*, edited by Anthony Bateman and Jeffrey Hill, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2011, pp. 187–202.
- "Little master on the back foot: 3 major controversies around Sachin Tendulkar in the past." 20 July 2016. *The Economic Times*, <https://economictimes.indiatimes>.

com/news/sports/little-master-on-the-back-foot-3-major-controversies-around-sachin-tendulkar-in-the-past/articleshow/53298572.cms.

Menon, Suresh. "Playing it My Way: My Autobiography by Sachin Tendulkar-book review." *Independent*. 25 Jan. 2021, <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/reviews/playing-it-my-way-my-autobiography-sachin-tendulkar-book-review-one-all-time-batting-greats-plays-it-too-safe-9911242.html>.

Menon, Suresh. "The mask behind Tendulkar's mask." *ESPN crickinfo*. 22 Feb. 2021, [https://www.espn.in/cricket/story/\\_/id/21359152/playing-my-way](https://www.espn.in/cricket/story/_/id/21359152/playing-my-way).

Mandani, Rasesh. "Sachin Tendulkar has forgotten me, says Vinod Kambli." 22 Nov 2013. *INDIATODAY*, <https://www.indiatoday.in/sports/cricket/story/sachin-tendulkar-vinod-kambli-friendship-shardashram-team-sach-ka-saamna-218291-2013-11-22>.

Pant, Charu. "Book Review: Tendulkar Limits it to Himself in Playing it My Way." *My India*. 20 Feb. 2021, <https://www.mapsofindia.com/my-india/cricket/book-review-tendulkar-limits-it-to-himself-in-playing-it-my-way>.

Smith, Sidonie and Julia Watson. *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2010. <https://www.upress.umn.edu/book-division/books/reading-autobiography>.

Samaddar, S. "5 biggest rifts in India cricket team history till date." 07 May 2020. *Sportskeeda*, <https://www.sportskeeda.com/cricket/5-biggest-rifts-indian-cricket-team-history-till-date>.

"Sachin Tendulkar receives tax-exemption for importing his Ferrari." 25 Aug 2003. *INDIA TODAY*, <https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/indiascope/story/20030825-sachin-tendulkar-receives-tax-exemption-for-importing-his-ferrari-791920-2003-08-25>.



Taylor, Matthew. "From Source to Subject: Sport, History, and Autobiography."

*University of Illinois Press*, vol. 35, no. 3, 2008, pp. 469-91. *JSTOR*,

[www.jstor.org/stable/26405133](http://www.jstor.org/stable/26405133).

Tendulkar, Sachin. *Playing it My Way My Autobiography*. Hodder & Stoughton Ltd, 2014.

"The Hindustan Times." *Sachin Tendulkar, Vinod Kambli back to old terms; say 'they are back'*. 25 Oct 2017. *HT Correspondent*.<https://www.hindustantimes.com/cricket/sachin-tendulkar-vinod-kambli-back-to-old-terms-say-they-are-back/story-u8Y5WKvCOL4UzXfRLGbtH.html>.

"The Hindustan Times." Chappell answers Sachin's bouncer, says he never wanted to oust Dravid, 4 Nov 2014. *HT Correspondent*,<https://www.hindustantimes.com/cricket/chappell-answers-sachin-s-bouncer-says-he-never-wanted-to-oust-dravid/story-wLHK2ICphUHLeX59wjJDIM.html>.

Vaidya, Nishad Pai. "Sachin Tendulkar's 'Playing it My Way' is largely uncontroversial and gripping in patches." 8 Nov 2014. *CRICKET COUNTRY* <https://www.cricketcountry.com/articles/sachin-tendulkars-playing-it-my-way-is-largely-uncontroversial-and-gripping-in-patches-207692>.