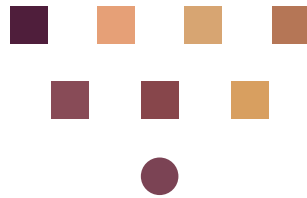


# IDEAL TEACHER

## THE ARCHITECTS OF HUMAN CAPITAL



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# **Ideal Teacher: The Architect of Human Capital**

Author: Zabed Mohammad *PhD*, Editor: James Alan Oloo *PhD*

Cover & Interior Design: Rakibul Islam Tomal

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## **Bangladesh Edition**

**Published by**



Academia Publishing House Limited (APL)  
253/254, Concord Emporium Shopping Complex  
Elephant Road, Kataban, Dhaka-1205, Bangladesh  
Cell: +88 01400 403 954, 01400 403 958, 02-58954256  
E-mail: aplbooks2017@gmail.com

**First Published** in February 2025

**Price:** BDT 600.00    US\$ 10

**ISBN:** 978-984-35-7410-7

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First Published in December 2024 by Kids Edu Care Inc./Teacher's Inspiration Press, Canada  
Website: <https://kidseducare.ca/>, Email: [info@kidseducare.ca](mailto:info@kidseducare.ca), Phone: +1 (306) 580-1030

## **Cataloging-in-Publication (CIP) Data**

### **Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication**

Mohammad, Zabed, PhD.

**Ideal Teacher: The Architect of Human Capital / Zabed Mohammad.**

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-998923-34-2 (Hardcover)

ISBN 978-1-998923-35-9 (Paperback)

ISBN 978-1-998923-36-6 (E-book)

1. Education—Philosophy.
2. Teachers—Professional Ethics.
3. Teachers—Professionalization
4. Leadership in Education.

**Library of Congress Control Number:** LCCN 2024912345

**Library and Archives Canada Control Number:** 202491234567

# Preface



The inspiration for this book, *Ideal Teacher: The Architect of Human Capital*, stems from my profound belief in the transformative power of teachers. Throughout history and across cultures, teachers have been the unsung heroes who shape not only individuals but also the very fabric of society. Teachers are the architects of human capital—nurturing and developing doctors, engineers, lawyers, scientists, and leaders who make lasting contributions to their communities and the world.

In my years as an educator, I have witnessed firsthand the dedication, passion, and tireless efforts of teachers striving to help students succeed in various fields. Beyond imparting knowledge, teachers instill values, nurture potential, and inspire students to serve society with honesty and integrity. The success of any nation is intrinsically linked to the quality of its teachers and the respect, value, and support they receive.

Every step of human progress can be traced back to the teachings of dedicated educators. It is through their inspiration and guidance that the seeds of greatness are planted in young minds. These seeds flourish over time, transforming learners into human capital that drives innovation, progress, and positive change.

This book explores the vital role of teachers in shaping human capital and presents a global perspective on their contributions. It underscores the necessity of recognizing and supporting educators—both through respect and adequate financial investment—to ensure they continue cultivating the minds and hearts that will lead the world toward a brighter future.

## Who Are We as Teachers?

As teachers, we must ask ourselves: *Who are we?*

We are not just speakers, motivators, poets, artists, or writers. We are developers of human capital. We believe that all human beings are the best creation of God/Allah (SWT), but they require care, guidance, and education to realize their full potential. As teachers, we are entrusted with this sacred duty, standing at the forefront of shaping future generations.

To us, teaching is not just a noble profession—it is a **Prophetic profession**. It is a divine calling that demands reflection and purpose. We must continuously ask:

- What do our students expect from us?
- What do parents, society, and the world expect from us?
- Am I just a teacher, or am I a builder of human capital?
- Am I shaping the leaders who will guide our nations?
- Am I nurturing the doctors who will heal us?
- Am I educating the lawyers who will defend justice?

- Am I inspiring the engineers who will build our future?
- Am I guiding the scientists who will drive innovation and change the world?

## What Can You Find in This Book?

This book comprises 13 chapters, each addressing critical aspects of teaching as the foundation for human capital development:

1. **The Prime Source and Root of Education** – Examining the fundamental origins of education and its divine roots.
2. **The Power of Education** – Understanding the transformative role of education in individual and societal development.
3. **Understanding Human Capital** – Exploring how education transforms individuals into productive contributors to society and the economy.
4. **The Role of Teachers as Architects of Human Capital** – Highlighting teachers' roles in shaping minds and fostering development.
5. **The Concept of Developing Human Capital** – Analyzing how education contributes to human capital formation.
6. **Integrating STEM Education with Spiritual and Ethical Dimensions** – Exploring the interplay between science, ethics, and spirituality in education.
7. **Leadership in Education** – Defining the role of teachers as leaders in the educational landscape.
8. **Foundations of STEM Education** – Understanding the principles and impact of STEM education on human capital.
9. **Global Leadership through Education** – Discussing the role of education in preparing students for a globalized world.
10. **Innovations in Teaching and Learning** – Exploring emerging trends such as online education, gamification, and blended learning.
11. **Professional Development and Lifelong Learning** – Emphasizing the importance of continuous growth for teachers.
12. **Overcoming Challenges in Integrated Education** – Addressing barriers to a holistic and inclusive educational framework.
13. **Future Prospects in Education and Human Capital Development** – Forecasting the evolution of education and its impact on society.

This book serves as a reminder of who we are as educators, what our contribution to society entails, and how our role is essential in building humanity. It emphasizes that students are not born as burdens but as possibilities—resources with the potential to generate innovation, development, and progress.

## The Need for Recognition and Investment in Teachers

As teachers, we dedicate our lives to educating, nurturing, and guiding the next generation. Yet, society often undervalues our role. In Bangladesh, for example, teachers struggle

significantly, and, to some extent, exceptionally talented individuals are unwilling to enter the profession. In contrast, teachers in North America are valued and respected as extraordinary contributors to society.

Consider the example of Professor **Dr. Amit Chakma**, who served as the 10th president and vice-chancellor of the University of Western Ontario (2009–2019) and is currently the vice-chancellor of the University of Western Australia. In Canada, when he was a vice-chancellor, his salary exceeded that of Prime Minister **Justin Trudeau**—a reflection of the value placed on educational leadership in Canadian society. Today, the University of Western Ontario is recognized not only within Canada but also globally.

Meanwhile, in Bangladesh, many university professors prioritize political affiliations over educational leadership. This is not to say that Bangladeshi teachers seek wealth, but they deserve **recognition, respect, and the dignity befitting their role**. Teachers should not have to stand behind political leaders; rather, they should be **leaders in their own right**.

While we do not demand luxury, we do deserve respect, fair compensation, and acknowledgment for our contributions. A nation's commitment to education should be reflected in its investment in teachers.

## **Teachers as Educational Stakeholders and Leaders**

Teachers should not be reduced to partisan political figures. Instead, they should be **researchers, innovators, and policymakers** who actively contribute to shaping national education policies. An ideal teacher is also an educational administrator—developing strategies that enhance learning and shape the future of a nation's education system.

As teachers, we are not merely professionals. We are ambassadors of the **Prophetic Pedagogy and Andragogy (Universal tradition)**, embodying the highest values of humanity and carrying God/Allah (SWT)'s greatest advice—"Iqra" meaning **Study or knowledge**.

Through this book, I hope to illuminate the immense value of teachers and their unparalleled ability to mold students into human capital that drives global progress. Let us always remember:

**The future of our world rests in the hands of those who educate, inspire, and lead the next generation toward an enlightened and prosperous society.**

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## ***Editorial Note***

"Teachers," as - Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam reminds us, "are the backbone of any country, the pillar upon which all aspirations are converted to realities." *Ideal Teacher: The Architects of Human Capital*, written by Dr. Zabed Mohammad, is about teaching and learning. The book explores various themes in education, ranging from STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics and their application in real-world contexts) programs, human capital development, and educational leadership to professional development and lifelong learning. The book discusses 'The Power of Education' in today's knowledge-based systems. A common thread across the book's 13 chapters is the impact of ideal teachers, who centre their work around student success and well-being.

While there are many teachers and many approaches to teaching as influenced by such factors as a teacher's own experiences, beliefs, and educational background, among others, Dr. Mohammad, in *Ideal Teacher: The Architects of Human Capital*, shows that there are qualities that are common among effective teachers. These include engaging classroom presence; building healthy relationships with students and their families; patience and empathy; adaptability; and effective communication.

Dr. Mohammad discusses the crucial role of teachers in developing human capital and shaping future leaders. In a sense, the book provides a framework for understanding teachers as the architects of the society whose role include building knowledge, values, and ethical leadership. The book highlights the importance of the teaching profession as a vehicle for developing character and social responsibility.

As well, Dr. Mohammad seems to heed the call by Richard Clarke Cabot that "Ethics and Science need to shake hands" by proposing an integration of STEM education with spiritual and ethical dimensions and positing that STEM and spirituality and ethics have shared praxis and are not mutually exclusive. The book looks ahead and imagines Future Prospects in Education and Human Capital Development in its final chapter.

The teaching profession and role of teachers in human development is not new. However, *Ideal Teacher: The Architects of Human Capital* presents fresh ideas and insights that many readers, including teachers, educational administrators, and those in teacher education programs, will find useful.

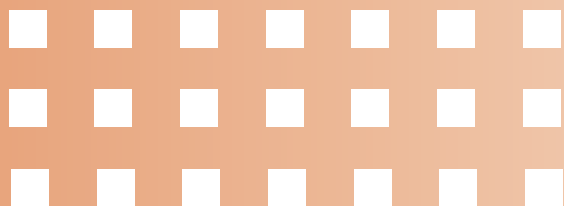
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# Purpose of the Book



The purpose of "Ideal Teacher: The Architects of Human Capital" is to provide a comprehensive framework that integrates STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) or STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) education with spiritual and ethical teachings to cultivate holistic human capital. This approach aims to nurture individuals who not only excel intellectually but also uphold moral values, fostering respect and human dignity. By promoting critical thinking, creativity, and ethical leadership, the book aspires to shape students into conscientious citizens who can meaningfully contribute to an increasingly complex and interconnected global society.

This book seeks to:

- Promote the understanding of the root or the prime source of education, connecting it to the core purpose of teaching, and emphasizing the accountability of teachers as builders of future leaders.
- Explore the qualities that define an ideal teacher, providing a clear explanation of what this ideal represents in both professional competence and ethical conduct.
- Motivate educators globally to view their profession as a sacred mission to impart knowledge. Teachers should guide students to grow as humans who understand their origins, comprehend the moral compass of life, and recognize their ultimate destiny.
- Advocate for a holistic approach to teaching by focusing on the foundational sources of education and Prophetic teaching strategies, ensuring that teachers can cater to the intellectual, emotional, and spiritual development of their students.
- Promote teaching methodologies that align with spiritual principles, showing how teachers can shape students to value humanity, embrace compassion, and submit humbly to the Creator in their daily lives.
- Highlight that teachers are not solely responsible for producing professionals like doctors, engineers, or professors but are also tasked with nurturing morally upright individuals who contribute positively to society and act in alignment with humanistic values.

Numerous studies have underscored the importance of integrating ethical teachings into modern education. For instance, the National Research Council's (2014) report, "STEM Integration in K-12 Education: Status, Prospects, and an Agenda for Research," advocates for interdisciplinary approaches to tackle complex, real-world problems. Additionally, spiritual scholars like Al-Ghazali (2001) have long emphasized the pursuit of knowledge as both a divine and social obligation, offering a strong historical foundation for integrating STEM with spiritual teachings. This blend of modern and traditional educational philosophies is vital for producing not only skilled professionals but also compassionate, ethical leaders.

# Overview of STEM/STEAM Education

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) or STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) education is an interdisciplinary approach that emphasizes the integration of these disciplines to foster holistic learning. Beyond simply mastering subject-specific content, STEM/STEAM education focuses on equipping students with critical skills, such as analytical thinking, creativity, and complex problem-solving, which are essential for innovation in the 21st century.

The Ideal Teacher serves as an architect of human capital by guiding students not only through technical knowledge but also through the ethical and moral application of these disciplines. This integrated approach nurtures the future leaders who will contribute to both economic growth and the betterment of society. By engaging students in hands-on learning experiences that reflect real-world challenges, STEM/STEAM education promotes a deeper understanding of how scientific and technological advancements can be leveraged responsibly and ethically.

As Bybee (2010) argues, STEM education should transcend traditional content-based learning and focus on cultivating the critical thinking and creativity necessary for future innovation. Likewise, Honey, Pearson, and Schweingruber (2014) highlight the importance of real-world applications in STEM, emphasizing that learning should be practical and hands-on to fully prepare students for real-world challenges.

By integrating spiritual and ethical dimensions with STEM/STEAM education, Ideal Teacher: The Architects of Human Capital encourages educators to develop students who are not only capable of innovation but are also guided by principles of humanity, responsibility, and moral integrity. These future leaders will be well-equipped to address the multifaceted challenges of a rapidly evolving global society while upholding the values of respect, compassion, and ethical leadership.

## Integration of Holistic Teachings Approaches

Holistic teaching emphasizes not only the pursuit of knowledge but also the cultivation of character, ethics, and moral responsibility. Throughout history, from the

revelations given to Prophets Adam (RA) to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), divine guidance has consistently provided a rich foundation for understanding education, ethical leadership, and the significance of nurturing the human spirit. In Islam, the pursuit of knowledge is viewed as a form of worship, highlighting the responsibility of educators to mold the intellectual and moral character of students. Integrating these spiritual teachings with modern STEM or STEAM education offers a comprehensive approach that nurtures both the intellectual and ethical dimensions of individuals, ultimately shaping them into responsible, moral citizens.

In the context of *Ideal Teacher: The Architects of Human Capital*, educators serve as guides who ensure that their students are not only proficient in science and technology but are also grounded in moral and ethical values. A holistic teaching approach recognizes that education should foster the development of the entire person — intellectually, spiritually, and socially. By synthesizing STEM with spiritual teachings, teachers can cultivate students who are both innovative thinkers and compassionate leaders.

Spiritual scholars such as Al-Ghazali (2001) and Seyyed Hossein Nasr (2006) emphasize the importance of integrating moral and spiritual dimensions into education. Al-Ghazali's works, in particular, stress that knowledge without ethical grounding can lead to misguidance. Nasr echoes this, advocating for an educational approach that harmonizes scientific advancement with spiritual wisdom. This balance is essential in producing individuals who are not only technically skilled but also capable of making ethical decisions for the betterment of society.

By incorporating these holistic teaching approaches, *Ideal Teacher: The Architects of Human Capital* promotes a vision where educators are not only building professionals such as doctors, engineers, and scientists but are also nurturing individuals with strong moral compasses. These students will, in turn, contribute positively to humanity, aligning their innovations and leadership with ethical and spiritual principles.

## **Importance of Developing Human Capital**

Human capital encompasses the skills, knowledge, and experiences that individuals possess, which are crucial to their value in organizations and society at large.



Investing in human capital is vital for fostering economic development and facilitating societal progress. Education serves as one of the primary avenues for enhancing human capital, driving improvements in productivity, innovation, and competitiveness.

In the context of *Ideal Teacher: The Architects of Human Capital*, it becomes evident that educators play a pivotal role in this investment. Teachers are not merely conveyors of information; they are architects who shape the knowledge and skills of future generations. By providing students with a robust educational foundation, teachers contribute significantly to enhancing the overall human capital within a society.

Schultz (1961) emphasized the significance of investing in human capital as a key driver of economic growth. He argued that education and training are crucial for enhancing individual capabilities, which, in turn, lead to greater productivity and economic prosperity. More recent studies, such as those by Heckman and Mosso (2014), highlight the long-term benefits of education and skill development on economic outcomes, illustrating that the returns on investing in human capital extend far beyond the individual, benefiting society as a whole.

Furthermore, an ideal teacher cultivates not only academic skills but also ethical and moral values, ensuring that students become well-rounded individuals ready to contribute positively to their communities. By nurturing critical thinking, creativity, and ethical leadership, educators can develop human capital that is aligned with the values and needs of society.

In summary, the importance of developing human capital lies in its potential to drive societal advancement and economic prosperity. Through the lens of *Ideal Teacher: The Architects of Human Capital*, the role of educators is framed as essential in fostering a skilled, knowledgeable, and ethically grounded populace capable of addressing the challenges of the future.

## Vision for Global Leadership

The ultimate vision of *Ideal Teacher: The Architects of Human Capital* is to cultivate individuals who can lead with intellect and integrity in an increasingly interconnected world. Global leadership necessitates a profound understanding of complex global issues, coupled with the ability to think critically and act ethically. Effective leaders are those who can inspire and motivate others, building inclusive environments where every individual feels valued and heard, regardless of differ-



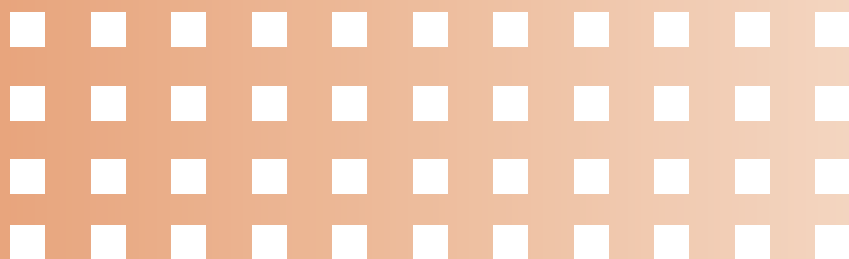
ing opinions.

In this context, teachers are positioned as architects of human capital, playing a crucial role in shaping the leaders of tomorrow. By integrating STEM education with spiritual teachings, educators can foster a new generation of leaders who are not only knowledgeable and skilled but also compassionate and principled. This holistic approach emphasizes the importance of ethical leadership, as highlighted by Northouse (2019), who discusses various leadership theories and practices while underscoring the need for integrity and moral values in leadership.

The integration of ethical principles within the educational framework equips students to navigate the challenges of a globalized society effectively. By nurturing critical thinking, creativity, and ethical decision-making, teachers can empower students to lead with a shared vision while upholding high ethical standards. This approach ensures that future leaders are prepared to address pressing global issues with empathy and a commitment to positive change.

Ultimately, the vision outlined in this book seeks to develop individuals who can contribute meaningfully to society, embodying the values of inclusivity, respect, and ethical responsibility. Through the guidance of ideal teachers, these future leaders will be equipped to foster collaboration and drive collective progress in an ever-evolving world.

# Acknowledgments



The creation of the first edition of "Ideal Teacher: The Architects of Human Capital" has been an immensely rewarding journey, one that would not have been possible without the divine guidance, support, and encouragement of many individuals and institutions.

First and foremost, I am profoundly grateful to the Almighty for granting me the strength, wisdom, and perseverance to complete this work. This book draws inspiration from the last and final divine book (Al-Quran) and the teachings of the Prophets, especially Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), whose prophetic pedagogy has served as a timeless guide in shaping human character and wisdom. The divine teachings have been a source of light in understanding the essence of education, reminding us that the ultimate purpose of teaching is to elevate the mind and soul towards justice, morality, and compassion.

My deepest thanks go to my family for their unwavering support, patience, and belief in my vision, which has been my constant source of motivation. Their encouragement has allowed me to pursue this journey with passion and dedication.

I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor, Schulich School of Education at Nipissing University, and the Faculty of Education at the University of Regina. These institutions have provided an enriching environment that fosters academic growth and excellence. My colleagues and students have been a continuous source of inspiration, and their insights have significantly enriched the content of this book.

A special thanks to the educators, mentors, and peers who have shaped my understanding of what it means to be an ideal teacher. An ideal teacher, inspired by divine teachings, goes beyond imparting knowledge—they transform the spirit of humanity within their students, nurturing them to become human capital capable of contributing to the betterment of society. This passion for teaching, rooted in the Prophetic pedagogy and commitment to human capital development, has been instrumental in shaping the perspectives presented in this book.

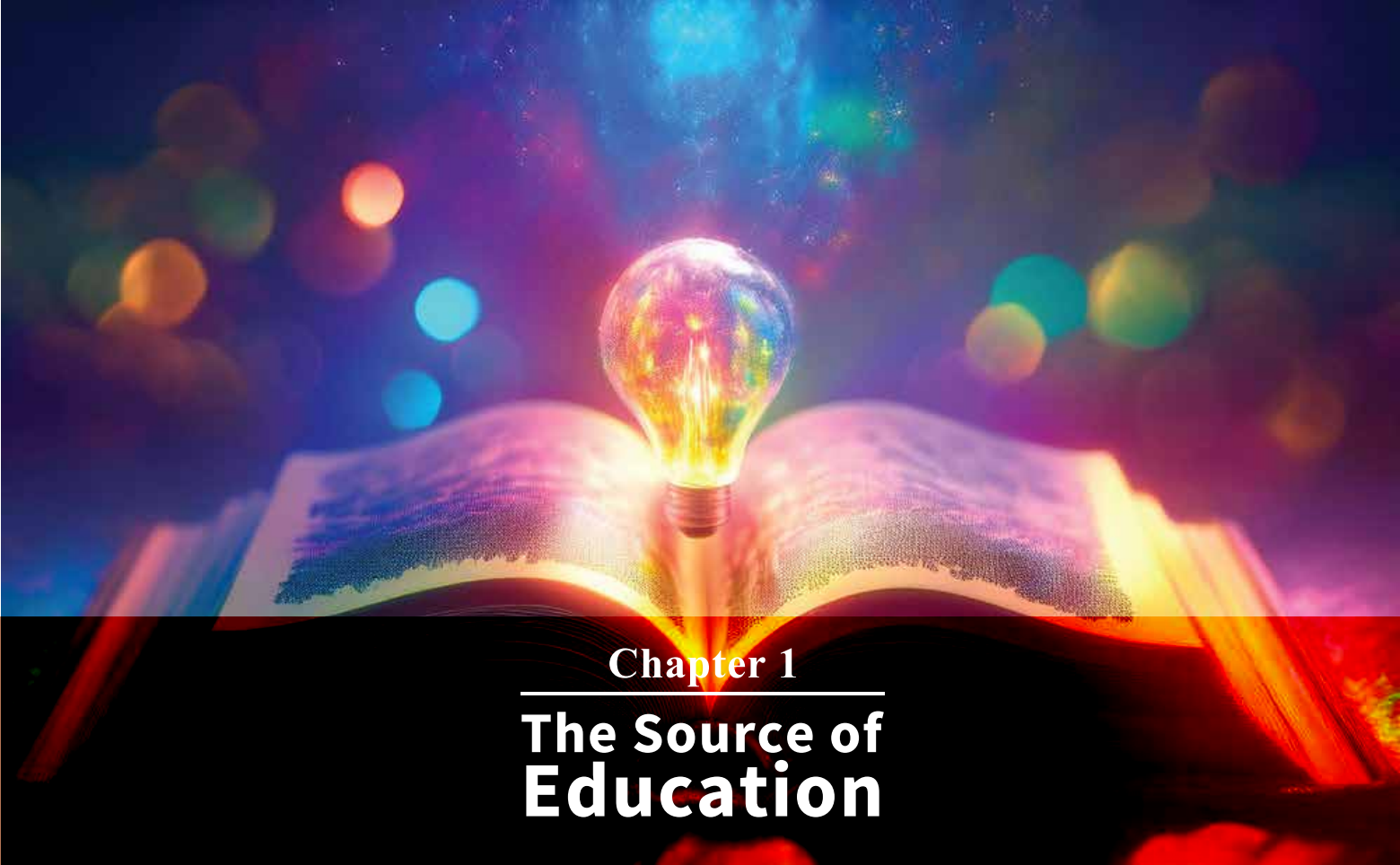
I must also acknowledge the worldwide student movements, including the recent 2024 student movement in Bangladesh. The courage and unity demonstrated by these students in their fight

against authoritarianism, injustice, and inequality reflect the enduring legacy of the ideal teacher's influence. Their actions reaffirm the vital role teachers play in shaping minds that stand for justice and humanity, as taught by the Prophets. This movement has proven that "Ideal Teacher: The Architects of Human Capital" is more than just a title; it is a reality that resonates across generations, reminding us of the moral responsibilities' teachers hold.

To the countless teachers and educational leaders around the world who work tirelessly to nurture and develop the minds and hearts of future generations—this book is dedicated to you. Your unwavering dedication to the noble profession of teaching is the cornerstone of our society's growth and progress.

**Zabed Mohammad, PhD.**

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## Chapter 1

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# The Source of Education

### Chapter Objectives

Gain insight into how divine books, particularly the Holy Quran, serve as foundational texts for educational principles and practices.

Explore the educational teachings and methods of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and their relevance in contemporary education.

Comprehend the historical development of educational systems influenced by religious texts and prophetic teachings.

Grasp the philosophical underpinnings of education as derived from divine books and prophetic traditions.

Identify the moral and ethical values promoted through religious teachings and their

importance in education.

Understand the emphasis on seeking knowledge and wisdom in divine books and how it translates to modern educational goals.

Appreciate the concept of holistic education that integrates spiritual, moral, and intellectual development.

Learn about the specific methods and approaches used by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) to impart knowledge and wisdom.

Recognize the significance of character building in education as emphasized in religious teachings.