
Attributes Towards Infusing Islamic Manners (Adab) in The Classrooms Among Muslim Teachers in Southern Thailand: Scale Validation

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Abstract

The study attempted to empirically test the validity of the 6-factor structure of teacher attributes in infusing Islamic manners (adab) in classroom (iMIC). The Islamic Teacher Attribute Scale (ITAS) was proposed which consists of six latent variables namely: self-efficacy, values, Islamic work ethic, organizational commitment and teachers' inculcation and their performance in reflection and internalization in iMIC. The samples of 561 Muslim teachers of public primary schools in six provinces of southern Thailand were selected by using simple random sampling. The survey instrument was administered. Principle Components Analysis (PCA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) were applied to arrive at the conclusions. The results of the study support the six-factor model generated by the data collected and the scales exhibit acceptable psychometric properties. Implications of the results are also discussed.

Keywords: Teacher, Attributes, Infusing, Islamic manners, Scale Validation

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Introduction

In the Islamic education process, teachers play important roles in educating the Muslim youths to behave ethically. To Quick (2004), teachers are also important as the living examples and the *murshid* (guide) to young students. He also believed that “a teacher is a cultural agent who exercises positive, healthy and constructive social control while using the school as an instrument of Islamically-oriented social change” (Quick, 2004, p. 64). Similarly, Ibn Miskawayh (Al-Din, 1994) in his book *tahdhib al-akhlaq* (Refinement of Character), considered teacher to be a guide who must impart desirable knowledge, moral values, customs, and behaviors to the youth and prepare them to be acceptable members of the *ummah* or Muslim community. Thus, Muslim teachers are considered as important agents for the internalization of *adab* among the students. However, it is a huge challenge for Muslim teachers to realize these roles especially when they are teaching in secular schools where religious values are neglected (Ashraf, 1987; Abdullah, 2007; Baba, 2000). Hence, the perception of how Muslim teachers are motivated towards a positive work behavior within the school structure will not only have an impact on their performance outcomes but will also have an impact as to what extent the school encourages an internal and external positive factors that influence one's ethical behavior for the benefit of the organization. This empirical study investigated the teacher variables.

This study attempts to investigate the nature of teachers' attributes in infusing Islamic manners (*adab*) in the classroom (iMIC) construct. Specifically, the study empirically tested the probability of the 6-factor structure of

teacher attributes in iMIC. The study sought to establish the extent which the conceptualized teacher attribute model reproduced data.

Theoretical Model

This study was constructed under the organizational behavior (OB) framework based upon *the cultural self-representation theory* (Erez and Earley, 1993). Derived from the metacognitive framework, this theory forms the linkage between the contextual level and the individual behavior in organizations. Individuals will behave according to four factors: (1) cultural values and norms which dominate the external and the internal work environment; (2) managerial practices and motivational technique operating within a particular work environment; (3) the self, modified by culture, as an interpreter of managerial practices and motivational techniques in light of cultural values and norms and in relation to self-generated needs; and (4) employees' work motivation and work behavior.

Therefore, the conceptual framework of the study was intended to examine the relationship between *individual-cultural influences* and *ethical behavior* in organization. This study expected that teachers who have strong belief in religion which were determined by value and self efficacy on infusing Islamic manners (*adab*), ethical code (Islamic work ethic and teachers' commitment), will behave ethically. The ethical behavior was represented as teacher's performance towards infusing Islamic manners (inculcation and refection of Islamic manners) even though they are under the non-Islamic environment (secular classroom). Figure 1 below exhibits the hypothesized model

which shows the causal relationship between stipulated variables.

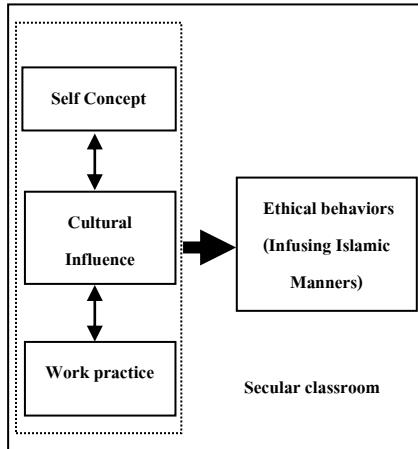


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework of the Study (adapted from Erez and Earley, 1993)

Teachers' Self-efficacy

Teachers' self-efficacy has been studied in the context of educational research and found to have a positive effect on teachers' attitudes and behavior (Hakverdi, GÜCÜM, and Korkmaz, 2007; Mathews et al., 2006; Rimm-Kaufman and Sawyer, 2004). The theory is based on the Bandura's self-efficacy: "It requires a strong sense of efficacy to remain task oriented in the face of pressing situational demands and failures that have social repercussions" (Bandura, 1993, p.120). Hence, it can be said that teachers' religious beliefs in their own efficacy regarding the tasks of infusing Islamic manners may affect their ethical code to perform the tasks. Therefore, the study expected that teachers' self-efficacy will be positively related to their ethical behavior.

Teachers' Values

In a secular classroom, teachers might have difficulties to infuse spirituality to students. Many research, especially in the Western countries, have shown that the rise up of spirituality for

children and adolescents is intensifying in the class room (Fraser and Grootenboer, 2004; McCreery, 2004; McKinney, 2004; Nesbitt and Arweck, 2003; Schweitzer and Boschki, 2004). Their findings also pointed out teachers are considered as the main agent to encourage students. However, it seems that teachers are still facing many problems such as receiving an inadequate training (Revell, 2005). Fraser & Grootenboer (2004) suggested that while teachers cannot plan and predict precisely what will foster spirituality in classrooms, teachers can cultivate a climate that enhances children's spirituality. In this sense, it shows that teachers must have their own values and beliefs lead to the assumption that one can define 'good' values and acts on the basis of whether they are living in non-Islamic environment or vice-versa.

Here, we can expect that teachers who have strong belief and value in religion will take an infusion of Islamic manner in classroom as their task and responsibility to have rewards from Allah, which will affect their ethical code accordingly. Thus, the study assumed that work ethics is inclined to affect the teachers' values dimensions on infusing Islamic manners (*adab*).

Islamic Work Ethic

The concept of Islamic work ethics is derived from the teachings of Islam. According to Rice (1999), Islam contains its own ethical system which offers specific guidelines for conducting business and work. These guidelines, in turn, relate to the noble concepts of unity, justice and trusteeship. Essentially, when one has a close relationship with God, one's attitudes and behaviors would tend to be consistent with the rules and stipulations of the religion. Hence, on this basis, a person's commitment to his or her work ethics would be expected to be

significantly related to his or her work ethical behavior.

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is believed to give rise to elements of self-induced satisfaction and motivation that are crucial for performing managerial and non-managerial functions (Bin Sayeed, 2001). Research using Islamic work ethics has been found to be directly affected by organizational commitment (Yousef, 2001; Abd Rahman, Muhamad and Othman, 2003; Hengpiya, 2006). Therefore, it is hypothesized that teachers will behave ethically with regard to their organizational commitment.

Teachers' Performance in iMIC

Values formation in education has different focuses. Custodio (2003) identified such as values inculcation, moral development, analysis, values clarification and learning geared to action. Abdul Kabir (2008) extracted the Quranic approach to moral inculcation known as *Qudwah* (modeling) or a system or thing to be emulated. The type of *Qudwah* the Quran recommends is the one that is based on good and virtuous conduct which appeals to one's heart and mind. Shah (2008) studied the Prophet Muhammad's methods of teaching and its relevance today. The results additionally revealed that the Prophet devoted a considerable time for teaching besides his busy schedule as the head of a state and used to lecture regularly his companions about religion and way of life, mostly after every prayer. This research work has identified 22 teaching methods of the Prophet which are classified under five broader topics such as "Developing Basic Skills," "Scientific Methods," "Psychological Approach," "Methods of 'Mass' Communication" and "Techniques of Teaching." From the *sufi* perspective, teacher in Sufism should educate him or

herself in the path of knowledge (Dali, 1996). At the same time, a teacher is supposed to be the role model and recognize that he/she is a partner in the learning process. In Thailand, Chaewae (2008) studied the teaching behaviors among 86 Islamic studies teachers of elementary schools in Narathiwat Educational Service, Region Two. Results showed that the moral cultivation of Islamic teachers was perceived in the highest level compared with instructional preparation, using teaching aids, and evaluation of learning and teaching.

Thus, from the reviewed literatures, the researcher considers the role of the teacher in infusing Islamic manners (*adab*) in the classroom as the characteristics and duties of an Islamic teacher. To measure their performance in infusing Islamic manners (*adab*) in the classroom, teachers were asked to evaluate their abilities in the: (1) Teachers' Inculcation of Islamic Manners and (2) Teachers' Reflection/Internalization of Islamic Manners.

Hypothesized Model

The hypothesized model of the study intended to study the influencing factors related to teachers' personal variables. Generally, the study hypothesized that teachers are influenced by six factors namely self-efficacy, values, work ethic, organizational commitment, teachers' performance in inculcation and their reflection and internalization in infusing Islamic manners in the classroom. The hypothesized model is shown in Figure 2.

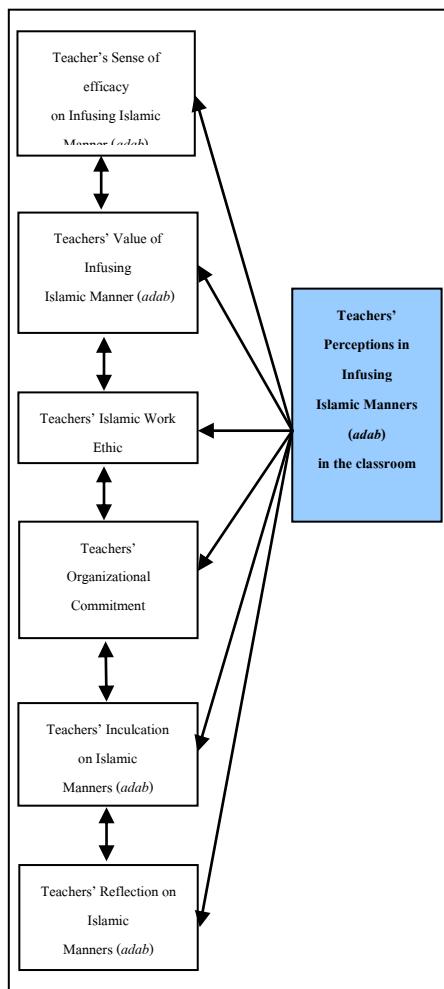


Figure 2. Hypothesized Model of the Study

Methods

Research design

The study employed a survey. The questionnaires were partly adapted from previous studies (Ali, 1988; Hashim, 1988; Hashim and Hussien, 2003; Sa-u, Nik Abd Rahman and Nordin, 2008) (see Appendix 1). The population identified was all Muslim teachers of public primary schools in six

provinces from southern Thailand (Narathiwat, Yala, Pattani, Satun, Songkhla, and Phatthalung), which a stratified sampling technique was conducted. Out of 657 returned questionnaires, only 561 (85.39%) were considered acceptable and hence used for analysis.

Validity and Reliability

To establish construct validity of the instrument, the opinions of two experts in education were sought especially on the design and items used for the various dimension. Using the method of back-translation (Brislin, 1970), the questionnaires were translated into Thai language. The instrument was pilot tested on 31 teachers from a school in Narathiwat province that was not on the list of the selected schools. Internal consistency analysis was performed to verify the reliability of the instrument.

Data analysis

For the demographic data, descriptive statistics were employed. To answer the research questions, Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), were utilized

Results and Discussion

Demographic Data

The respondents of the study were Muslim teachers working in public primary schools in southern Thailand. The majority of the teachers involved were female (306 or 64.2%), compared to males (201 of 38.8%). Most of them (83.7%) were teaching in Muslim majority provinces: Narathiwat (25%), Yala (21.4%), Pattani (19.8%), and Satun (17.5), while 16.4 % were from Muslim minority provinces: Phatthalung (14.6%), and Songkhla (1.8%). The mean age was 36.3 years ($SD = 9.9$), with a range of 22

to 60 years. The average years of teaching experience were 17.8 years ($SD = 4.37$), with a range of 1 to 28 year.

Principal Component Analysis (PCA)

Table 1 summarizes the result of the analysis, in which the Varimax with Kaiser normalization rotation was used to produce the final solution. The result of the exploratory factor analysis revealed that first factor was *Organizational Commitment*, followed by teachers' performance in reflection and internalization, teachers' value, teacher' inculcation, self-efficacy, and Islamic work ethics respectively. These were the six latent variables measured by the data. The solution, extracted positive statistically significant loadings, free from factorial complexity, interpretability and variable-specific factor with three factors loading = 65.31%.

Table 1 shows the correlations among the 25 items supported the use of principal component analysis. The principal component analysis yielded a six -factor solution, representing 65.31% of the variance of the respondents' scores on the 25-variable scale. The Eigenvalues, ranging from 1.14 to 8.44 (which is greater than 1 as required), satisfied the standards of important factors as prescribed by Hair et al. (2006). The solution, extracted positive statistically significant loadings, free from factorial complexity, interpretability and variable-specific factor with four factors loading = 65.31% %.

The first rotated factor that reflects on teachers' *organizational commitment*, has significant loadings, ranging between .71 and .85 on the same four items (CO13, CO14, CO15, and CO16) with Alpha Cronbach reliability of .78.

The second rotated factor comprised four items (RI21, RI22, RI23 and RI24), ranging between .60 and .73 and with Alpha Cronbach reliability of .84. This factor can be described as *the teachers' reflection on Islamic Manners (adab)*.

The third rotated factor that reflects on teachers' *values of iMIC*, has significant loadings, ranging between .74 and .79 on the same four items (VA5, VA6, VA7 and VA8) with Alpha Cronbach reliability of .71.

The fourth rotated factor comprised four items (IN17, IN18, IN19 and IN20), ranging between .64 and .81 and with Alpha Cronbach reliability of .89. This factor can be described as *the teachers' inculcation on Islamic Manners (adab)*.

The fifth rotated factor comprised four items (EF1, EF2, EF3 and EF4), ranging between .61 and .76 and with Alpha Cronbach reliability of .83. This factor can be described as the *teachers' self-efficacy in iMIC*.

The sixth rotated factor includes five items (ET9, ET10, ET11 and ET12), ranging between .52 and .80, and with Alpha Cronbach reliability of .83. The teachers' scores on this factor reflect their *Islamic work ethic*.

Table 1
Varimax with Kaiser Normalization Rotated of Principal Component Analysis
Factor Matrix (6 iterations)

Items	Factors	1	2	3	4	5	6	Communality
EF1	Self-efficacy					.61		.51
EF2						.76		.68
EF3						.76		.72
EF4						.68		.65
VA5	Values			.74				.63
VA6				.79				.70
VA7				.78				.71
VA8				.74				.67
ET9	Islamic Work					.69		.55
ET10	Ethic					.52		.45
ET11						.80		.68
ET12						.75		.58
CO13	Organizational	.71						.65
CO14	Commitment	.85						.81
CO15		.84						.80
CO16		.80						.75
IN17	Inculcation				.64			.64
IN18					.67			.68
IN19					.81			.76
IN20					.77			.71
RI21	Reflection &		.69					.62
RI22	Internalization		.73					.68
RI23			.66					.56
RI24			.68					.59
RI25			.60					.57
Rotation Eigenvalues		8.44	2.11	1.93	1.45	1.25	1.14	
% Variance Explained		12.15	12.14	11.78	10.58	9.62	9.04	
Cumulative Variance Explained		12.15	24.30	36.07	46.65	56.27	65.31	
Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha		.78	.84	.71	.89	.83	.83	

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Figure 2 presents the estimated six-common factor model for the Thai Muslim primary school teachers' attributes towards iMIC. The items for each scale are assumed to load only in their respective dimensions. Therefore, all 25 items were analyzed in this part.

The summary of six-common factor model Confirmatory Analysis results are shown in Figure 3. The p-Value of .000 is lower than the expected limits ($\geq .05$), the higher the better. However, the adjusted Chi-Square statistic, ratio derived by dividing the Chi-square amount by the degree of freedom, suggested the model was a good fit at 3.022, (the lower the better). The fit of the six-factor oblique model was adequate (Hair et al., 2006) as both TLI and CFI (.907 and .920, respectively) met or exceeded the recommended criterion of .90. The RMSEA was .060, less than .08, which was acceptable; the smaller the RMSEA value the better. A RMSEA value of zero indicates a perfect model-fit. These results confirmed that the six-common factor model was a suitable measurement model for this study.

Confined within the limitations of the study, the present results confirm and add new information to current understanding on iMIC. And it is clear that teachers' perceptions are a multidimensional construct. This study examined the factor influencing on iMIC and found that six factors were detected as the influencing factors in iMIC which were identified as self-efficacy, values, work ethics, and organizational commitment, teachers' performance in inculcation and their reflection and internalization in infusing Islamic manners in the classroom.

Further, the researchers had performed series of confirmatory factor analysis and the hypothesis that related to the measurement model was tested. It was

found that the model with six inter-correlated factors had provided reasonable explanation for the correlations among the observed variables. The self-efficacy factor was represented by the items related to teachers' self-efficacy in iMIC. The factor value was represented by the items related to their value of Islamic manners (*adab*) in the development of students. The Islamic work ethics factor constituted Islamic expectations with respect to one's behavior at work which includes one's effort, dedication, cooperation, responsibility, social relations and creativity. The organizational commitment was explained by teachers' identification. Finally, teacher' performance in iMIC was explained by their inculcation and their performance in reflection and internalization

As expected, the result (Table 1, Figure 3) shows that the proposed teacher attributes in iMIC can be explained by 6 latent factors as described above. There were moderate correlations between 6 constructs ranging from .33 to .67. The finding implies that the teachers who have at least one character among 6 constructs tend to portray other characteristics as well. These six factors, to some extent, are the characteristics of an Islamic teacher as studied earlier (Sau, Nik Abd Rahman and Nordin, 2008).

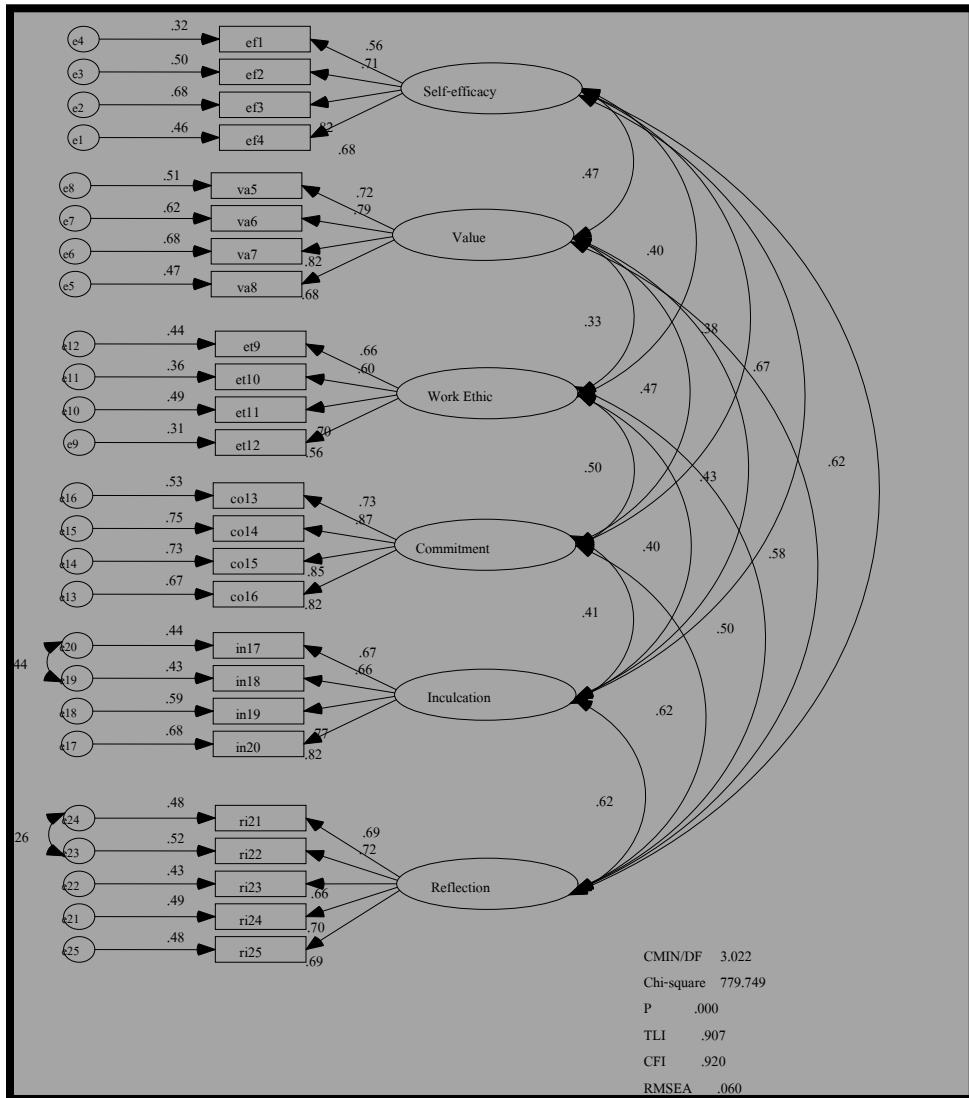


Figure 3 Thai Muslim Teachers' Attribute towards iMIC Model (Standardized Estimates)

Conclusion

According to the findings, all six teacher attributes studied might partially reflect the characteristics of an Islamic teacher since all characteristics are significantly inter-correlated. For example, teachers who have high self-efficacy in iMIC might also have a high level of iMIC values, Islamic work ethics and organizational commitment. Thus, it is believed that these attributes drive the likelihood of teachers' performance in iMIC. These results are consistent with the previous findings (Phuwirom, 1997; Sekmeti, 2007; Suri, 1993) on the expected roles and actual characteristics of teachers in southern Thailand especially among Muslims. Furthermore, the results are also in line with the ethical model of Islamic studies of the primary school teachers in Narathiwat province (Chewae, 2008).

This study therefore suggests that teachers who have certain characteristics in iMIC may also hold particular personality traits, which may make them more or less likely to engage in iMIC.

Implications

The proposed instrument used namely Islamic Teacher Attribute Scale (iTAS) was adapted from several sources and the results of the analysis indicated that the scales exhibit acceptable psychometric properties. Therefore, the scales are useful for those who are interested in studying these construct' relationship.

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Appendix 1

Constructs and Measurement-items of The Islamic Teacher Attribute Scale (iTAS)

Codes	Constructs and Measurement-items	Sources
	Construct 1 : Teachers' Self-efficacy (4items)	Hashim & Hussien (2003)
EF1	1. I have adequate skills to develop students' Islamic manners such as giving <i>salam</i> , cleanliness, table manners.	
EF2	2. I have adequate knowledge about infusing Islamic manners.	
EF3	3. I feel competent in infusing my students how to behave Islamically.	
EF4	4. Through my teaching, I have attained the objectives of developing my students' Islamic manners as intended.	
	Construct 2 : Teachers' Value (4items)	Hashim & Hussien (2003)
VA5	1. Islamic manners are useful for students' success in activities outside of school.	
VA6	2. Islamic manners are important to help improve students' achievement.	
VA7	3. Islamic manners are relevant for work success.	
VA8	4. Developing students' manners based on Islamic value helps to improve their moral reasoning.	
	Construct 3 : Islamic Work Ethic (4 items)	Ali (1988)
ET9	1. Any man who works is more likely to get ahead in life.	
ET10	2. Work gives one the chance to be independent.	
ET11	3. A successful man is the one who meets deadlines at work.	
ET12	4. One should constantly work hard to meet responsibilities.	
	Construct 4 : Organizational Commitment (4items)	Sa-u, Nik Abd Rahman and Nordin, (2008)
CO13	1. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this school.	
CO14	2. I am extremely glad to choose this school over others.	
CO15	3. This school has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	
CO16	4. I feel a sense of pride in working for this school.	
	Construct 5 : Inculcation(4items)	Hashim (1998)
IN17	I have a reasonable repertoire of Islamic moral stories for moral inculcation.	
IN18	I use very possible opportunities to instill Islamic manners.	
IN19	I reflect perfection/excellence in instruction as enjoined in the <i>hadith</i> .	
IN20	My lecturers reflect excellence in the use of educational resources.	

Construct 6 : Reflection and internalization(5items) Hashim (1998)

- RI21 I shoulder teaching responsibilities with dedication.
- RI22 I uphold Islamic ethics in my work and action.
- RI23 I am punctual for class and observe all appointments.
- RI24 I perform what I teach and do what I preach.
- RI25 I often remind my students of their roles as students and Muslims.
