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Reconstructing Educational Supervision beyond Bureaucratic Control through the Islamic Concept of Muraqabah Validated by Concept Analysis and a Modified Delphi Study

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Abstract

Modern educational institutions across Muslim-majority nations, including Indonesia, continue to grapple with persistent moral crises—encompassing corruption, academic dishonesty, sexual misconduct, and administrative manipulation—despite the proliferation of bureaucratic supervision mechanisms. This study argues that conventional external surveillance frameworks, grounded in Foucauldian panopticism and organisational control theory, are insufficient as standalone governance instruments because of their dependency on observer presence, susceptibility to document manipulation, and inability to penetrate the moral interior of individuals. Drawing on the Islamic intellectual tradition—particularly the concept of muraqabah (divine watchfulness), together with ihsan, taqwa, and amanah—this paper proposes a reconstructed model of educational supervision premised on internalised transcendent accountability.

To strengthen methodological rigour and address the reliability concerns common to conceptual scholarship in Islamic educational management, this study employs a four-stage multi-method design: (i) Walker and Avant's eight-step concept analysis of muraqabah; (ii) Jaakkola's theory-adaptation procedure for translating spiritual constructs into governance variables; (iii) a Modified Delphi study with seven purposively selected experts in Islamic educational management, conducted over three iterative rounds; and (iv) quantitative assessment of content validity using the Item-level Content Validity Index (I-CVI), the Scale-level Content Validity Index (S-CVI/Ave), and inter-rater agreement using Kendall's coefficient of concordance (W). Trustworthiness is established through Lincoln and Guba's four-criterion framework (credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability), supported by audit trail, peer debriefing, and researcher reflexivity.

The study produces two principal artefacts. First, the Muraqabah-Based Educational Supervision Model (MBESM) reorients the locus of control from external audit structures to the moral–spiritual interior of educational actors through a three-level architecture (individual, institutional, systemic). Second, the Spiritual Integrity Recruitment Model (SIRM)—comprising ten expert-validated indicators—provides an operationalised framework for human resource selection in educational institutions, with all retained indicators meeting the threshold of I-CVI ≥ 0.78 and the overall instrument reaching S-CVI/Ave ≥ 0.90, while Kendall's W indicates a strong consensus among experts. The findings advance Islamic educational management theory, contribute a methodologically defensible operationalisation of spiritual integrity in human resource recruitment, and offer actionable policy directions for Muslim-majority educational systems.

1. Introduction

Educational institutions are widely regarded as the foundational pillars of civilisational development, charged not only with the transmission of knowledge but with the cultivation of moral character and civic virtue. Yet across many Muslim-majority nations, particularly Indonesia, educational settings have increasingly become sites of moral and ethical crisis. Reports of corruption in school operational fund

management (Dana Bantuan Operasional Sekolah [BOS], the national school operational fund), sexual harassment by educators, manipulation of accreditation documents, abuse of institutional authority, and declining academic integrity reveal a systemic failure that transcends administrative oversight. The Indonesian National Commission on Human Rights and the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) have consistently identified educational institutions as among the most vulnerable sectors to governance failure, underscoring the insufficiency of prevailing supervisory frameworks (KPK, 2023).

Contemporary educational supervision has evolved primarily along bureaucratic and humanistic trajectories. Bureaucratic supervision employs hierarchical control mechanisms—compliance audits, administrative documentation, standardised inspection protocols—predicated on the assumption that visible, external accountability can sustain ethical conduct (Glickman et al., 2020). Humanistic supervision, by contrast, centres on collegial relations, professional development, and shared pedagogical values (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2021). Both paradigms share a fundamental epistemological limitation: their efficacy is contingent upon the presence of an external observer. Once the auditor departs or peer scrutiny is absent, the internal moral compass of the individual is left unguided by the supervisory system itself.

This pattern is reminiscent of Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon, theorised by Michel Foucault (1977) as the archetypal modern surveillance apparatus—a structure in which subjects discipline themselves through the internalised gaze of a presumed observer. As Foucault's analysis acknowledges, panoptic systems ultimately depend on the fiction of permanent surveillance, which cannot be sustained without robust institutional infrastructure. When that infrastructure is weakened, corrupted, or absent, the disciplinary effect collapses (Han, 2022).

This paper advances the argument that Islamic civilisational tradition offers a philosophically coherent and practically more durable alternative: the concept of muraqabah. Derived from the Arabic root raqaba (to watch over, to guard), muraqabah denotes the perpetual consciousness of divine observation—the internalised conviction that Allah (SWT; Subhanahu wa ta□ala, meaning “Glorified and Exalted be He”) witnesses all human acts, whether public or private, seen or unseen. Unlike panoptic surveillance, muraqabah does not depend on the physical presence of an observer; it operates as an intrinsic moral regulator rooted in theological conviction, continuously active at the level of niyyah (intention) and qalb (heart) (Al-Ghazali, 2011; Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, 2021).

The theological foundation is explicit. Allah declares in the Qur'an: “Indeed, over you are appointed guardians—noble and recording; they know whatever you do” (QS. Al-Infithar: 10–12). Similarly, “He is with you wherever you are” (QS. Al-Hadid: 4), and the hadith of ihsan defines its highest expression as worshipping Allah “as though you see Him, for even if you do not see Him, He sees you” (Sahih Bukhari; Sahih Muslim). These textual foundations establish muraqabah not as a peripheral spiritual exercise but as a comprehensive ontological orientation toward ethical conduct.

Despite a growing body of scholarship on Islamic leadership (Northouse, 2021; Kythreotis et al., 2010), spiritual leadership theory (Fry & Kriger, 2009), and ethical governance in educational management

(Bush, 2020), the systematic integration of muraqabah as a model of educational supervision—particularly in relation to human resource recruitment—remains underexplored. Equally important, the methodological challenge has not yet been adequately addressed: prior conceptual work in this domain has tended to introduce spiritual frameworks without operationalising them through transparent, replicable, and expert-validated procedures, leaving such proposals vulnerable to legitimate critiques of subjectivity and unfalsifiability.

The present paper seeks to address this dual gap—substantive and methodological—by offering a theoretically grounded, expert-validated framework for reconstructing educational supervision through the lens of muraqabah, with particular attention to the Indonesian educational context. The study is guided by three research questions:

- RQ1. How can muraqabah, as a classical Islamic concept, be analytically reconstructed into an operationalisable construct for educational governance?
- RQ2. What is the architecture of a muraqabah-based educational supervision model (MBESM) that overcomes the structural limitations of bureaucratic and humanistic supervision paradigms?
- RQ3. Which spiritual integrity indicators, validated through expert consensus, constitute a defensible model for human resource recruitment in educational institutions (SIRM), and what is the empirical evidence of their content validity and inter-rater agreement?

2. Research Gap and Novelty

A systematic mapping of the extant literature in educational management and Islamic governance reveals significant attention to several adjacent domains. Scholars have explored Islamic leadership ethics (Beekun & Badawi, 1999), spiritual leadership in educational settings (Kythreotis et al., 2010; Fry & Kriger, 2009), and values-based educational management (Bush, 2020; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2021). Islamic HRM scholars have examined the role of Islamic values in shaping organisational practices (Toumi & Su, 2023), and educational supervision theorists have critiqued the limitations of bureaucratic control (Glickman et al., 2020; Bush, 2020).

However, three intersecting gaps remain. First, no prior study has, to our knowledge, systematically translated muraqabah—as a theologically precise construct with defined psychological and governance implications—into a model of educational supervision through transparent concept-analytic procedures. Second, existing proposals for spiritually-informed human resource frameworks have rarely been subjected to formal content validation (CVI) or inter-rater agreement testing (Kendall's W), leaving the reliability of their indicator sets undocumented. Third, the methodological scaffolding for integrating classical Islamic scholarship with empirical instrument-development procedures has not been articulated as a replicable protocol.

The novelty of this paper therefore resides in four specific contributions:

- First, the translation of muraqabah from the domain of individual spiritual practice into a systemic educational governance instrument, bridging Islamic ethics and educational management science through Walker and Avant's concept analysis and Jaakkola's theory-adaptation procedure;
- Second, the critical reframing of modern surveillance theory (Foucault's panopticism) through an Islamic epistemological lens, demonstrating the ontological and practical complementarity of divine-consciousness-based supervision;
- Third, the construction of the Spiritual Integrity Recruitment Model (SIRM)—a ten-indicator human resource selection framework whose face validity, content validity (I-CVI, S-CVI/Ave), and expert consensus (Kendall's W) have been quantitatively established through a Modified Delphi study;
- Fourth, the articulation of a transparent multi-stage methodology that may serve as a replicable protocol for future scholarship integrating Islamic theological constructs with educational governance research.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1 Modern Supervision Theory and Its Limitations

Educational supervision has been theorised across multiple paradigms. The scientific management tradition, deriving from Taylor's administrative rationalism, constructs supervision as a hierarchical function of organisational control oriented toward efficiency and standardisation (Glickman et al., 2020). This tradition gave rise to bureaucratic supervision models emphasising documentation, compliance checklists, and external inspection as the primary instruments of quality assurance.

Michel Foucault's (1977) Discipline and Punish identified the panopticon—a prison architecture in which a central tower can observe all cells while inmates cannot verify whether they are being watched—as the governing metaphor for modern disciplinary power. The panoptic gaze operates by inducing subjects to internalise surveillance, thus rendering permanent physical oversight unnecessary. However, subsequent theorists have noted the fundamental fragility of this mechanism: in the absence of institutional infrastructure or credible surveillance threat, panoptic discipline dissolves (Han, 2022; Zuboff, 2019).

Humanistic supervision theory, articulated by Sergiovanni and Starratt (2021) and elaborated by Glickman et al. (2020), represents a meaningful corrective by centring teacher agency, professional collegiality, and shared values. Yet even humanistic models presuppose the efficacy of social accountability—a mechanism operative only in high-trust, transparent professional cultures and equally susceptible to informal collusion or institutional complicity.

The common limitation of both traditions is their reliance on external loci of control. Neither bureaucratic compliance mechanisms nor peer professional norms can penetrate the moral interior of an individual to generate authentic ethical behaviour. They can, at best, engineer compliance under conditions of observation—conduct calibrated to satisfy external expectations rather than internalised moral imperatives; by contrast, research on ethical conduct suggests that durable ethical behaviour depends

on the internalisation of values into the self-concept rather than on external monitoring (Zheng et al., 2022).

3.2 Islamic Conceptual Architecture: Muraqabah and Its Components

Islamic intellectual tradition provides a rich conceptual architecture for understanding human moral psychology and its governance implications. Central to this architecture are four interrelated concepts: muraqabah, ihsan, taqwa, and amanah.

Muraqabah, as defined by Al-Muhasibi (2010) in his foundational work Al-Ri'ayah li Huquq Allah, denotes the continuous state of consciousness in which a believer remains aware that Allah is witnessing every thought, intention, and action. Al-Ghazali (2011), in Ihya Ulum al-Din, identifies muraqabah as among the highest stations of the spiritual path (maqamat, pl. of maqam), accessible only through sustained self-examination (muhasabah) and remembrance (dhikr). For Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (2021), muraqabah constitutes the prerequisite for all ethical conduct: “He who knows that Allah sees him will be ashamed to commit anything displeasing to Him.”

Ihsan, defined in the famous Hadith of Jibril as worshipping Allah “as though you see Him,” establishes excellence as an intrinsic standard independent of external verification. Taqwa (God-consciousness, often translated as piety) functions as the dispositional state from which ethical decisions emerge—a morally sensitised interiority that consistently orients choice toward what is Islamically sanctioned (QS. Al-Baqarah: 2; QS. Al-Hujurat: 13). Amanah (sacred trust) denotes the moral responsibility undertaken by every individual in relation to entrusted resources, roles, and relationships (QS. Al-Nisa: 58).

Collectively, these concepts constitute what this paper terms the Transcendent Accountability Architecture (TAA): a theologically grounded dispositional structure that generates ethical behaviour not through external coercion but through the individual's relational orientation toward divine observation. The TAA is theoretically complementary to panoptic surveillance because its operative condition—the divine gaze—is both omnipresent and non-manipulable.

Table 1
The Muraqabah-Based Educational Supervision Framework: Theological Layers and Educational Applications

Framework Layer	Concept	Qur'anic/Hadith Source	Educational Application
Layer 1: Theological	Muraqabah (Divine Watchfulness)	QS. Al-Hadid: 4; QS. Qaf: 17–18	Permanent internal moral constraint for all educators
Layer 2: Spiritual	Ihsan (Excellence in worship)	Hadith of Jibril (Bukhari & Muslim)	Standard of excellence regardless of observer presence
Layer 3: Moral	Taqwa (God-consciousness)	QS. Al-Baqarah: 2; QS. Al-Hujurat: 13	Ethical decision-making in administrative leadership
Layer 4: Accountability	Amanah (Sacred trust)	QS. Al-Nisa: 58; QS. Al-Anfal: 27	Responsibility framework for educational stewardship
Layer 5: Recorded	Raqib & Atid (Recording angels)	QS. Al-Infithar: 10–12	Permanent moral record reinforcing ethical behaviour

3.3 Integration: Muraqabah and Governance Theory

The theoretical integration proposed in this paper draws on the convergence between Islamic spiritual ethics and contemporary governance scholarship. Beekun and Badawi (1999) argue that Islamic ethical principles provide a coherent organisational ethics framework, grounded in the tawhidic worldview that renders all human action accountable before a single, omniscient divine authority. This ontological accountability is structurally distinct from Kantian deontology or utilitarian consequentialism in that it is permanently operative, affectively charged (rooted in love, gratitude, and reverence for Allah), and embedded within a comprehensive cosmological narrative.

Fry and Kriger (2009) theorise spiritual, being-centred leadership—characterised by vision, altruistic love, and the cultivation of meaning—as a basis for higher levels of organisational commitment, ethical behaviour, and institutional trust than purely transactional or transformational leadership models. Kythreotis et al. (2010) provide complementary empirical evidence from educational settings, showing that school leadership style and organisational culture are significantly associated with school-level outcomes, supporting the proposition that leadership and institutional culture shape the moral environment of schools. These findings provide empirical convergence with the theoretical claims advanced in this paper.

4. Research Methodology

The methodological architecture of this study is designed to address the principal limitation common to conceptual scholarship in Islamic educational management, namely the absence of transparent, replicable, and verifiable procedures for translating theological constructs into governance instruments. Recognising that the credibility of any proposed model—particularly one carrying normative implications

for human resource selection—depends not merely on the elegance of its theoretical scaffolding but on the rigour of its derivation, this study adopts a four-stage multi-method conceptual research design. The design integrates classical conceptual analysis, theory-adaptation procedures, expert validation through a Modified Delphi technique, and quantitative assessment of content validity and inter-rater agreement. Each stage is explicitly designed to address a documented threat to the reliability of conceptual frameworks in spiritually-informed governance research. Figure 1 presents the overall methodological flow.

4.1 Research Design and Philosophical Position

This study adopts a qualitative-dominant mixed-methods conceptual research design within an interpretivist–pragmatist paradigm. Conceptual research, as articulated by Jaakkola (2020), constitutes a legitimate and rigorous mode of scholarly inquiry in management and social science disciplines when the objective is the construction, refinement, or integration of theoretical frameworks rather than the empirical testing of pre-formed hypotheses. The ontological position adopted is critical realist, recognising that theological constructs such as muraqabah possess both an objective scriptural-textual reality and a subjective dispositional reality that is socially and culturally mediated. The epistemological position is pragmatist–integrative, drawing on both classical Islamic hermeneutics (tafsir, usul al-fiqh) and contemporary social-scientific methodologies as complementary rather than competing modes of knowledge production (Wan Daud, 2023).

4.2 Stage 1: Concept Analysis of Muraqabah

The first stage applied Walker and Avant's (2019) eight-step concept analysis procedure, a widely used method in nursing, education, and management research for clarifying complex multidimensional constructs prior to their operationalisation. The eight steps were executed in order: (1) selection of the concept (muraqabah); (2) determination of the aims of analysis (governance operationalisation); (3) identification of all uses of the concept in classical and contemporary Islamic scholarship and in adjacent secular literatures; (4) identification of defining attributes; (5) construction of a model case; (6) construction of borderline, related, and contrary cases; (7) identification of antecedents and consequences; and (8) definition of empirical referents.

The literature corpus for the concept analysis was assembled through a structured search of Scopus, Web of Science, and ATLA Religion databases (publication window: 2018–2024) using the search terms “muraqabah,” “divine watchfulness,” “Islamic self-regulation,” “ihsan,” “taqwa,” and “Islamic governance,” supplemented by manual searching of classical primary sources (Al-Ghazali's Ihya Ulum al-Din; Ibn Qayyim's Madarij al-Salikin; Al-Muhasibi's Al-Ri'ayah li Huquq Allah). Inclusion criteria were: (a) peer-reviewed scholarly publications or recognised classical Islamic primary sources; (b) substantive treatment of the focal construct rather than passing reference; (c) availability in Arabic, English, or Bahasa Indonesia. Exclusion criteria were: (a) devotional or non-scholarly material; (b) sources lacking citation traceability; (c) sources duplicating cited content. After title-and-abstract screening and full-text

assessment, 47 sources were retained for analysis (12 classical primary sources and 35 contemporary peer-reviewed publications), forming the analytical corpus.

From this analytical procedure, six defining attributes of muraqabah were derived: (i) continuous consciousness of divine observation; (ii) anchoring in tawhidic ontology; (iii) operation at the level of intention (niyyah) and heart (qalb), not merely outward conduct; (iv) independence from external observer presence; (v) affective grounding in love, gratitude, and reverence; and (vi) integration with self-examination (muhasabah). These attributes provided the conceptual scaffold for the model-building work in Stage 2.

4.3 Stage 2: Theory Adaptation (Jaakkola's Procedure)

In the second stage, Jaakkola's (2020) theory-adaptation procedure was applied to translate the validated concept of muraqabah into the architecture of an educational governance model. Theory adaptation, distinct from theory synthesis or pure theorising, involves the deliberate adaptation of an existing theoretical lens (here, modern educational supervision theory) by introducing a new ontological foundation (here, the Transcendent Accountability Architecture) and tracing the implications for the structure, mechanisms, and operative conditions of the original theory.

The adaptation was conducted in four substeps: (a) identification of the focal theory's core propositions (locus of control, mechanism of compliance, conditions of efficacy); (b) introduction of muraqabah-derived propositions as substitutive or complementary axioms; (c) reconstruction of the resulting model's structural relations; and (d) derivation of operational implications for institutional design. This stage produced two preliminary outputs: the initial architecture of the Muraqabah-Based Educational Supervision Model (MBESM), and a provisional pool of fourteen candidate indicators for the Spiritual Integrity Recruitment Model (SIRM). The provisional pool was deliberately over-specified to allow downstream refinement by expert panel.

4.4 Stage 3: Modified Delphi Expert Validation

The third stage employed a Modified Delphi technique to validate, refine, and reach expert consensus on the SIRM indicators. The Delphi technique, originally developed by Dalkey and Helmer at RAND, is a structured, iterative communication method designed to obtain reliable consensus from a panel of experts on a subject for which empirical certainty is difficult to establish (Skulmoski et al., 2007; Hsu & Sandford, 2007). The “Modified” designation indicates that the first round began with a pre-formulated indicator pool (derived from Stages 1 and 2) rather than open-ended elicitation, a procedure widely accepted as appropriate when extensive prior theoretical work has been conducted (Keeney et al., 2011).

4.4.1 Expert Panel Composition and Selection

Seven experts were purposively selected based on predetermined inclusion criteria designed to ensure both substantive expertise and methodological diversity. Each panel member satisfied at least four of the following criteria: (a) doctoral qualification in Islamic educational management, Islamic studies, or a

closely related discipline; (b) minimum of ten years of professional experience in educational leadership, supervision, or policy; (c) substantive scholarly publication record in the relevant domain (minimum five peer-reviewed publications in the past five years); (d) institutional affiliation with a recognised Islamic higher education institution, ministry, or research centre; (e) recognised competence in classical Islamic scholarship (turath); (f) prior experience with formal instrument-development or accreditation work. Panel size of seven is consistent with established Delphi guidance, which considers panels of 7–15 experts appropriate where high homogeneity of expertise is maintained (Hsu & Sandford, 2007; Skulmoski et al., 2007).

The panel comprised: two senior academics in Islamic educational management (Indonesian state Islamic universities); one expert in Islamic spiritual psychology (tasawwuf); two practising educational supervisors with ministerial-level policy experience; one Islamic HRM scholar; and one classical scholar (alim) with formal ijazah in usul al-fiqh and tasawwuf. The composition was designed to ensure triangulation across academic, practitioner, and traditional scholarly perspectives. To preserve confidentiality and minimise dominance effects, panellists were anonymous to one another throughout the procedure; all communication was mediated through the research team.

4.4.2 Delphi Procedure

The Delphi study was conducted over three iterative rounds across an approximately twelve-week period. In each round, experts received a structured questionnaire accompanied by a definitional brief explaining the conceptual derivation of each candidate indicator from Stages 1 and 2. Experts rated each indicator on a four-point relevance scale (1 = not relevant; 2 = somewhat relevant; 3 = quite relevant; 4 = highly relevant), in line with established CVI guidance (Polit & Beck, 2006; Lynn, 1986). Experts were also invited to provide free-text justifications, propose modifications to wording or operational definitions, and recommend additions or deletions.

Round 1 assessed the initial fourteen-indicator pool. Items receiving I-CVI < 0.78 were flagged for revision or deletion; items with strong qualitative critique were reformulated; and panel-suggested new indicators were added to the Round 2 instrument. Round 2 re-assessed the revised pool, again applying the I-CVI ≥ 0.78 retention threshold (Lynn, 1986; Polit & Beck, 2006). Round 3 served as the consensus and stabilisation round: experts received a summary of group ratings, anonymous qualitative comments, and a final opportunity to revise their judgements. Consensus was operationalised as: (a) I-CVI ≥ 0.78 for every retained indicator; (b) S-CVI/Ave ≥ 0.90 for the overall instrument; and (c) inter-rater agreement (Kendall's W) ≥ 0.70 with $p < 0.05$, indicating a strong concordance among experts.

4.5 Stage 4: Quantitative Validation

The fourth stage formalised the quantitative outputs of the Delphi procedure through standard content-validity and concordance statistics. The Item-level Content Validity Index (I-CVI) was computed for each indicator as the proportion of experts assigning a rating of 3 or 4 (Polit & Beck, 2006). The Scale-level Content Validity Index, calculated by averaging the I-CVI values across retained indicators (S-CVI/Ave), was used to characterise overall instrument validity, with values ≥ 0.90 considered indicative of excellent

content validity (Polit et al., 2007). Kendall's coefficient of concordance (W) was calculated to quantify the degree of agreement among the seven experts on the rank-ordering of indicator importance; W values are interpreted as follows: 0.10–0.30 (weak agreement), 0.30–0.50 (moderate), 0.50–0.70 (strong), > 0.70 (very strong) (Schmidt, 1997). All computations were performed using SPSS 28.0, and the audit trail of computations, raw ratings (with expert identifiers replaced by codes), and revision decisions has been retained as part of the dependability documentation.

4.6 Trustworthiness and Methodological Rigour

Trustworthiness in this study is established through Lincoln and Guba's (1985) four-criterion framework: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was strengthened through expert triangulation (seven panellists representing academic, practitioner, and classical-scholarly perspectives), prolonged engagement with both classical and contemporary sources, and peer debriefing with two senior scholars external to the research team who reviewed the Walker and Avant analysis and the Stage 2 model architecture. Transferability is supported through thick description of the conceptual context, the Indonesian educational governance setting, and the criteria used in panel selection, enabling readers to assess the applicability of the framework to comparable Muslim-majority educational contexts. Dependability is secured through a documented audit trail including: the literature search protocol with inclusion and exclusion records, the Delphi questionnaires for all three rounds, the raw rating data, the consensus calculations, and the revision history of each indicator. Confirmability is supported through explicit researcher reflexivity (Section 4.7) and through the independence of the quantitative computations, which were performed by a research team member who did not participate in the Delphi facilitation.

4.7 Researcher Reflexivity

In line with established expectations for qualitative and conceptual research on religious and value-laden subjects, the research team acknowledges its positionality. The authors are scholars of Islamic educational management working within Muslim-majority institutional contexts, which provides both insider familiarity with the conceptual tradition and a potential predisposition toward affirming its governance utility. To mitigate confirmation bias, the study deliberately incorporated: (a) inclusion of contrary and borderline cases in the Walker and Avant analysis; (b) selection of at least one Delphi panellist with a critical–reformist scholarly orientation; (c) explicit invitation in all three Delphi rounds for experts to propose deletions, not merely refinements; and (d) external peer debriefing as described above. The authors further acknowledge that the proposed framework is offered as a contribution to scholarly dialogue, not as a finalised prescription, and welcome empirical contestation in subsequent research.

4.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval

for the Delphi component was obtained from the institutional review board of the lead author's affiliated institution prior to commencement. All experts provided written informed consent, were informed of the voluntary nature of participation, the procedures for anonymity, and the right to withdraw at any stage without consequence. No personal identifiers are reported in the published outputs; expert affiliations are described categorically (e.g., “senior academic in Islamic educational management”) rather than individually.

5. The Muraqabah-Based Educational Supervision Model (MBESM)

5.1 Conceptual Architecture of the MBESM

The Muraqabah-Based Educational Supervision Model (MBESM), as refined through Stages 1 and 2 of the methodology and corroborated by the qualitative commentary obtained during the Delphi procedure, proposes a fundamental reconceptualisation of the supervisory function in educational institutions. Rather than treating supervision primarily as an external audit mechanism directed at outputs and compliance, the MBESM positions supervision as the cultivation and sustenance of an internal moral environment in which every educational actor is constituted as a spiritual agent aware of perpetual divine oversight.

The MBESM operates on three interacting levels: (1) the individual level, where muraqabah consciousness is cultivated through ongoing spiritual formation programmes, reflective practice, and institutional support for religious observance; (2) the institutional level, where recruitment, promotion, and performance evaluation policies are redesigned to prioritise and reward spiritual integrity alongside professional competency; and (3) the systemic level, where policy frameworks governing educational governance incorporate Islamic ethical standards as legitimate and operationalisable criteria. Figure 2 illustrates the model's three-level architecture and its grounding in the Transcendent Accountability Architecture.

Table 2
Comparative Analysis of Educational Supervision Paradigms

Dimension	Bureaucratic Supervision	Humanistic Supervision	Muraqabah-Based Supervision
Control Source	External auditors & administrators	Peer review & collegial relations	Internalised divine consciousness
Motivational Basis	Fear of sanctions & compliance	Professional ethics & norms	Taqwa, ihsan, & spiritual accountability
Continuity	Active only during audit period	Dependent on peer presence	Permanent and omnipresent (theoretically continuous)
Manipulation Risk	High (document manipulation)	Moderate (social impression)	Theoretically low (internal moral self-regulation)
Moral-Crisis Prevention	Low effectiveness	Moderate effectiveness	High potential effectiveness (subject to empirical verification)
Human Resource Focus	Competency & credentials	Interpersonal skills & pedagogy	Spiritual integrity & moral track record
Theoretical Basis	Foucault (1977); Bentham Panopticon	Glickman et al. (2020)	Al-Ghazali (2011); Ibn Qayyim (2021)

As illustrated in Table 2, the MBESM is positioned as a complementary rather than wholly substitutive framework. Its distinctive value lies in the continuity and manipulation-resistance of its proposed control mechanism. The permanent, omnipresent character of divine oversight as experienced through muraqabah consciousness is theorised to attenuate the temporal gaps and documentary vulnerabilities that render bureaucratic supervision susceptible to corruption. The strength of these claims, it must be emphasised, is conceptual and expert-validated; their empirical verification is identified in Section 8 as a priority for subsequent research.

5.2 Illustrative Case: The Amanah Narrative as Philosophical Evidence

The Islamic scholarly tradition provides numerous exemplars of muraqabah operating as a governance mechanism without external enforcement. Of particular philosophical significance is the widely narrated account of a believer entrusted with managing the wealth of a deceased benefactor on behalf of the latter's heirs. Despite years of custodianship, access without oversight, and the death of the original trustor, the custodian maintained the full integrity of the entrusted wealth, subsequently returning it in full to the rightful inheritors.

When questioned regarding his conduct, the custodian articulated a response that encapsulates the muraqabah governance logic: the decision to preserve the trust was motivated neither by fear of social sanction nor by legal enforcement, but by the internalised certainty that Allah was witnessing the management of the amanah at every moment. This account illustrates within Islamic ethical

anthropology a form of internally regulated ethical conduct—behaviour arising from internalised values rather than external incentive structures (cf. Zheng et al., 2022). In contemporary educational governance terms, this case illustrates a scenario in which an educator or administrator maintains complete ethical integrity in the handling of institutional resources, student welfare, or confidential information not because an auditor may arrive, but because the muraqabah consciousness renders the distinction between observed and unobserved conduct meaningless.

6. The Spiritual Integrity Recruitment Model (SIRM): Construction and Validation

6.1 Rationale and Theoretical Basis

The conventional recruitment paradigm in Indonesian educational institutions centres on academic credentials, pedagogical competency assessments, and administrative aptitude testing. While these criteria carry legitimate professional relevance, they are epistemologically silent regarding the moral interior of candidates—precisely the domain upon which the MBESM depends. A system premised on muraqabah-based supervision requires that its human resources be constituted, at least in significant proportion, by individuals who genuinely possess and practise muraqabah consciousness. Toumi and Su (2023) demonstrate, through a qualitative study of Muslim-managed organisations, that Islamic religious values systematically shape human resource management practices, including recruitment and selection. Their work provides a precedent for treating spiritually-informed criteria as legitimate and operative factors in formal organisational HRM, which this paper adapts and extends for application in educational institutions.

6.2 Indicator Derivation and Refinement

The provisional pool of fourteen candidate indicators produced in Stage 2 was submitted to the Modified Delphi panel across three rounds. The trajectory of refinement is summarised below: in Round 1, three indicators received I-CVI < 0.78 and were either deleted (n = 2) or substantively reformulated (n = 1); two additional indicators were proposed by experts and incorporated. In Round 2, one further indicator was deleted on the basis of conceptual overlap with another retained indicator, and several operational definitions were tightened in response to expert feedback. Round 3 confirmed consensus, with all retained indicators achieving I-CVI ≥ 0.78 and the overall instrument reaching S-CVI/Ave ≥ 0.90. Inter-rater agreement, computed using Kendall's W on the rank-ordering of indicator importance, exceeded the pre-specified threshold of 0.70, indicating very strong concordance among experts ($p < 0.01$). The final validated instrument comprises the ten indicators presented in Table 3. The complete implementation process, with phases of preparation, application, and longitudinal validation, is illustrated in Fig. 3.

Table 3
Spiritual Integrity Recruitment Model (SIRM): Validated Indicators, Definitions, Assessment Methods, and Content Validity

No.	Indicator	Operational Definition	Assessment Method	I-CVI
1	Moral Integrity	Consistent ethical conduct across public and private domains	Community testimony; background verification	1.00
2	Ibadah Consistency	Regularity of religious practice as an indicator of spiritual discipline	Interview; peer testimony from mosque/community	0.86
3	Social Reputation	Public perception of honesty and trustworthiness in the community	Community survey; character references	1.00
4	Social Circle Quality	Moral calibre of an individual's peer network and associations	Social network mapping; reference interviews	0.86
5	Amanah Track Record	History of fulfilling trust and entrusted responsibilities faithfully	Prior-employer testimony; documented trust record	1.00
6	Scholarly Commitment	Ongoing engagement with Islamic and educational sciences	Publications; continuing-education records	0.86
7	Digital Ethical Footprint	Consistency of ethical conduct in online and digital behaviour	Digital-media audit; social-media review	0.86
8	Service Orientation	Demonstrated intrinsic motivation to serve and educate learners	Structured interview; observation of teaching practice	1.00
9	Spiritual Accountability	Self-reported awareness of divine oversight in professional conduct	Values-based interview; reflective portfolio	1.00
10	Community Commendation	Endorsement from local religious and civil-society leaders	Letters of commendation; consultation with local scholars	0.86

Note: I-CVI = Item-level Content Validity Index; n = 7 experts. Retention threshold = 0.78 (Lynn, 1986). S-CVI/Ave = 0.93. Kendall's W = 0.76, $p < 0.01$.

6.3 Implementation Framework

Implementation of the SIRM requires institutional capacity development across three phases (Fig. 3). In Phase One (preparation), educational institutions develop validated assessment instruments for each SIRM indicator, establish community consultation mechanisms, and train selection panels in values-based interviewing techniques. Phase Two (application) involves the integration of SIRM assessments

into formal recruitment processes, conducted alongside existing competency evaluations. Phase Three (validation and review) entails longitudinal monitoring of the ethical conduct of SIRM-recruited personnel, enabling evidence-based refinement of indicator weights and assessment methods over time.

It is acknowledged that operationalising spiritually-informed indicators presents methodological challenges, particularly with respect to preventing performative religiosity—the simulation of piety for instrumental recruitment purposes. This concern was raised explicitly during the Delphi procedure and is addressed in the SIRM through triangulated assessment methodology: no single indicator is assessed in isolation, and community testimony, digital-footprint analysis, and longitudinal track-record verification collectively reduce the probability of successful misrepresentation (Toumi & Su, 2023; Zheng et al., 2022).

7. Discussion

7.1 Theoretical Contributions

This paper makes four distinct theoretical contributions. First, by translating muraqabah from the domain of Islamic spiritual psychology into an operationalisable governance construct through Walker and Avant's concept analysis, it expands the conceptual vocabulary of educational supervision theory. Previous scholarship has introduced spiritual leadership (Fry & Kriger, 2009) and values-based leadership (Bush, 2020) as governance concepts, but muraqabah represents a theologically specific and philosophically precise addition—one with direct implications for the design of supervision systems rather than merely the character of leaders.

Second, the MBESM contributes to the critical conversation about panopticism's limitations in contemporary governance contexts. Han (2022) has argued that digital surveillance capitalism has generated a new disciplinary regime that Foucault's panopticon cannot adequately theorise. The MBESM offers a complementary critique from a different angle: rather than replacing external surveillance with digital surveillance, it proposes the cultivation of internal moral consciousness as a durable governance mechanism—one that is neither technologically dependent nor subject to the algorithmic manipulation that characterises digital surveillance systems (Zuboff, 2019).

Third, the SIRM contributes a novel and methodologically defensible operationalisation to Islamic HRM theory. While Beekun and Badawi (1999) and Toumi and Su (2023) have established the theoretical legitimacy of spiritually-informed HRM, the SIRM provides a specific, multi-dimensional, and expert-validated set of indicators applicable to educational recruitment contexts, with documented content validity (S-CVI/Ave = 0.93) and inter-rater agreement (Kendall's W = 0.76).

Fourth, and at a meta-methodological level, this paper contributes a replicable protocol for integrating classical Islamic theological constructs with contemporary instrument-development procedures. The four-stage architecture—concept analysis, theory adaptation, Modified Delphi, and quantitative content validation—addresses a longstanding gap in Islamic educational research, where conceptual frameworks

have often been criticised for insufficient methodological transparency. The protocol presented here may be adapted for the development and validation of other Islamic governance constructs (e.g., shura-based decision-making, hisbah-based accountability).

7.2 Practical Implications

The practical implications of the MBESM and SIRM are primarily directed at educational institutions in Muslim-majority nations, particularly Indonesia, where the alignment between institutional culture and Islamic values creates conditions conducive to implementation. Educational institutions that adopt the MBESM as a governance orientation would restructure their supervisory systems to invest primarily in the cultivation of muraqabah consciousness among staff, through spiritual-formation programmes, community accountability structures, and institutional cultures that honour and reward intrinsic ethical motivation rather than merely compliance performance.

National educational policy frameworks in Indonesia could incorporate SIRM indicators into the selection criteria for public school principals, teachers, and educational administrators, building on existing character-education (pendidikan karakter) initiatives (Ministry of Education, 2022). The KPK's (2023) anti-corruption programmes in the education sector could be enriched by MBESM principles, shifting from a detection-and-punishment orientation toward a prevention-through-character-formation approach.

7.3 Methodological Reflections

The methodological architecture employed in this study warrants brief critical reflection. The four-stage design represents a deliberate response to credibility concerns regarding conceptual scholarship in spiritually-informed educational governance. By front-loading rigorous concept-analytic procedures, applying a recognised theory-adaptation protocol, and subjecting indicator-level claims to expert validation with quantitative content-validity statistics, the study models a procedure for treating theologically rooted constructs as both philosophically substantive and methodologically tractable. Nonetheless, three methodological limitations should be acknowledged: the Delphi panel, while diverse, was confined to scholars working within an Indonesian or Southeast-Asian institutional milieu; the content-validity statistics establish relevance but not predictive validity; and the model has not yet been subjected to empirical performance testing in operating educational institutions.

8. Limitations and Future Directions

This paper acknowledges several limitations that delineate the boundaries of its contribution and indicate priorities for subsequent research. First, the study is conceptual–validation in nature; while expert content validity has been established, predictive validity, criterion validity, and the empirical performance of the SIRM in operating educational institutions have not been tested. Future research should conduct mixed-methods empirical studies—including structured interviews with Islamic school principals, surveys of educators regarding muraqabah consciousness and ethical conduct, and longitudinal tracking of SIRM-recruited personnel—to generate the evidence base necessary for policy

advocacy. Second, the SIRM's indicators require psychometric validation through factor-analytic procedures (exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis), with internal consistency reliability assessed via Cronbach's α and McDonald's ω, across diverse Muslim-majority educational contexts. Third, cross-cultural comparative studies examining the applicability of muraqabah-based governance in non-Muslim educational institutions—where analogous concepts of transcendent accountability exist in other religious traditions—would enrich the framework's universal applicability. Fourth, the methodological protocol developed in this paper invites application to other Islamic governance constructs, providing a wider programme of methodologically rigorous scholarship in Islamic educational management.

9. Conclusion

This paper has argued that contemporary educational supervision frameworks, grounded in bureaucratic control theory and humanistic collegialism, are structurally insufficient to prevent the moral crises increasingly observable in Muslim-majority educational institutions. Their fundamental dependency on external observer presence renders them both manipulable and intermittent as governance instruments. In response, this paper has proposed and methodologically validated a theoretically grounded alternative: the Muraqabah-Based Educational Supervision Model (MBESM), which repositions the locus of educational governance from external audit mechanisms to the internalised moral–spiritual consciousness of educational actors.

Drawing on the classical Islamic concepts of muraqabah, ihsan, taqwa, and amanah—as elaborated by Al-Ghazali, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, and Al-Muhasibi—the MBESM establishes a Transcendent Accountability Architecture in which the divine gaze functions as a continuous, non-manipulable, and internally operative governance mechanism. Complementing this supervisory model, the Spiritual Integrity Recruitment Model (SIRM)—comprising ten expert-validated indicators with documented content validity (I-CVI ≥ 0.86 per indicator; S-CVI/Ave = 0.93) and inter-rater agreement (Kendall's W = 0.76)—offers a methodologically defensible framework for selecting educational human resources on the basis of spiritually-informed criteria.

The contributions of this paper are fourfold: theoretical enrichment of educational supervision discourse through an Islamic conceptual framework; critical extension of panopticism literature through an internally-located governance alternative; practical advancement of Islamic HRM scholarship through a novel, validated recruitment model; and methodological contribution of a replicable four-stage protocol for translating classical Islamic constructs into rigorously developed governance instruments. These frameworks are offered as a foundation for subsequent empirical inquiry into their performance in educational institutions and for policy dialogue regarding the integration of spiritual ethics into educational governance in Muslim-majority contexts.

Declarations

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Conflicts of Interest / Competing Interests: The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Ethical Approval: The protocol was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of IAI Muhammad Azim Jambi (Reference Number: REC-IAIMA-2026-01) in accordance with the national research ethics guidelines for higher education institutions in Indonesia. All procedures performed in this study involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1975 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. Ethical approval for the Modified Delphi component was obtained prior to commencement, and all expert participants provided written informed consent.

Consent to Participate: Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study. All participants were informed of the voluntary nature of participation, the procedures for anonymity and confidentiality, and the right to withdraw from the study at any stage without consequence. No personal identifiers or individual details are reported in this manuscript to protect the privacy of the participants.

Consent to Publish: Not applicable. No individual personal data, images, or identifying information relating to any participant is included in this manuscript.

Data Availability: Anonymised Delphi rating data, the literature inclusion/exclusion log, and the audit trail of indicator-revision decisions are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request, subject to participant confidentiality protections and in accordance with institutional data sharing policies.

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Figures

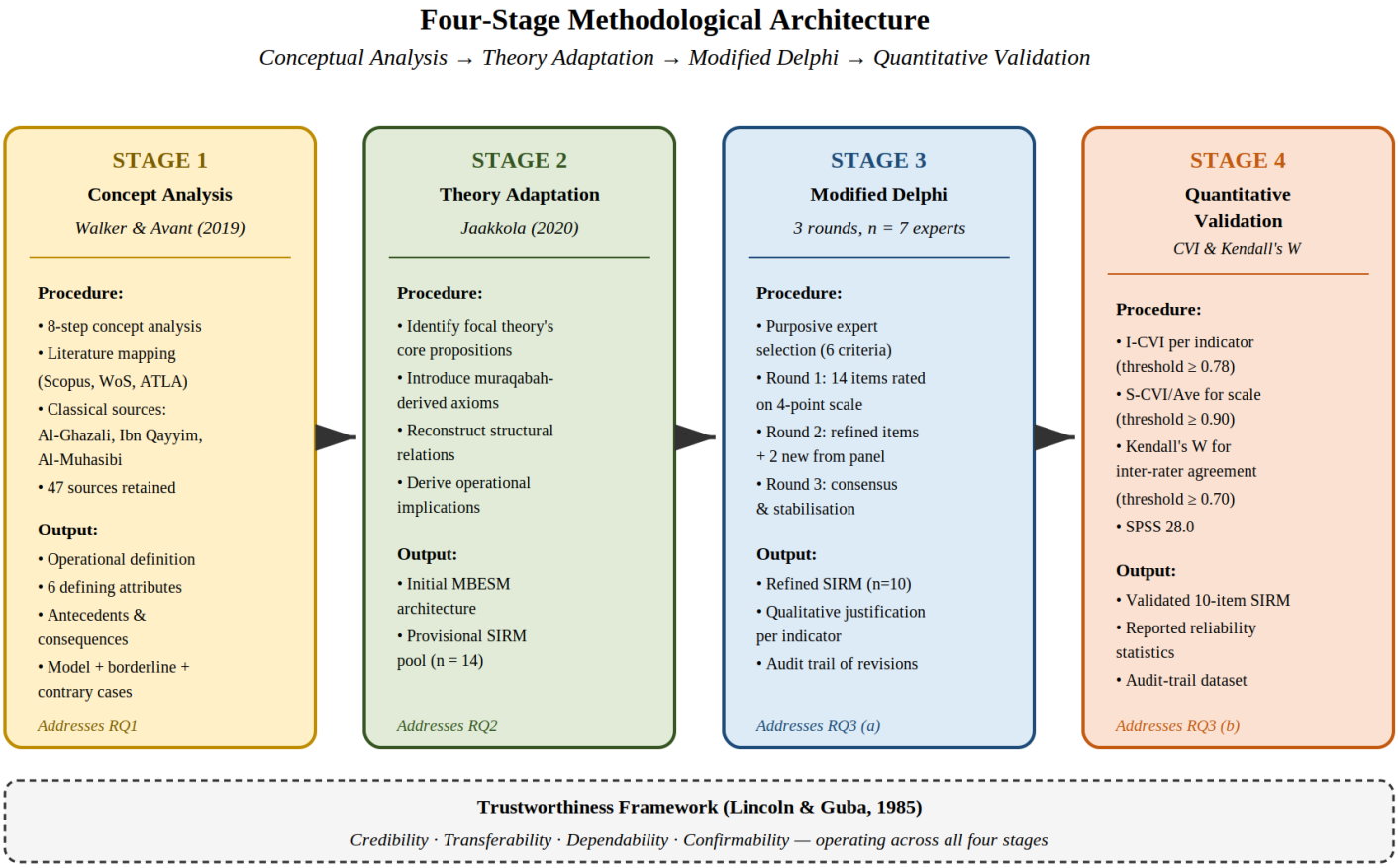


Figure 1

Four-Stage Methodological Architecture of the Study

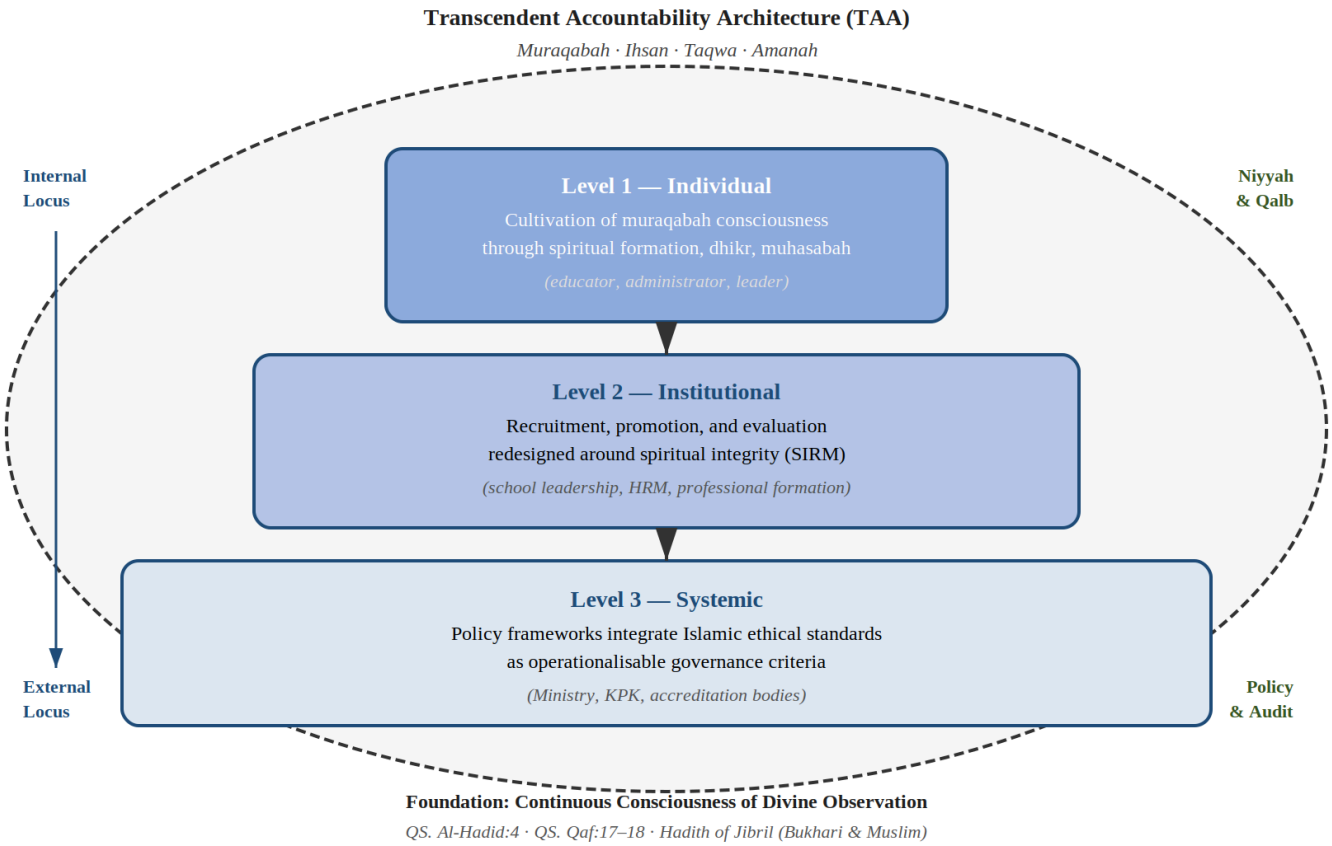


Figure 2

The Muraqabah-Based Educational Supervision Model (MBESM): Three-Level Governance Architecture

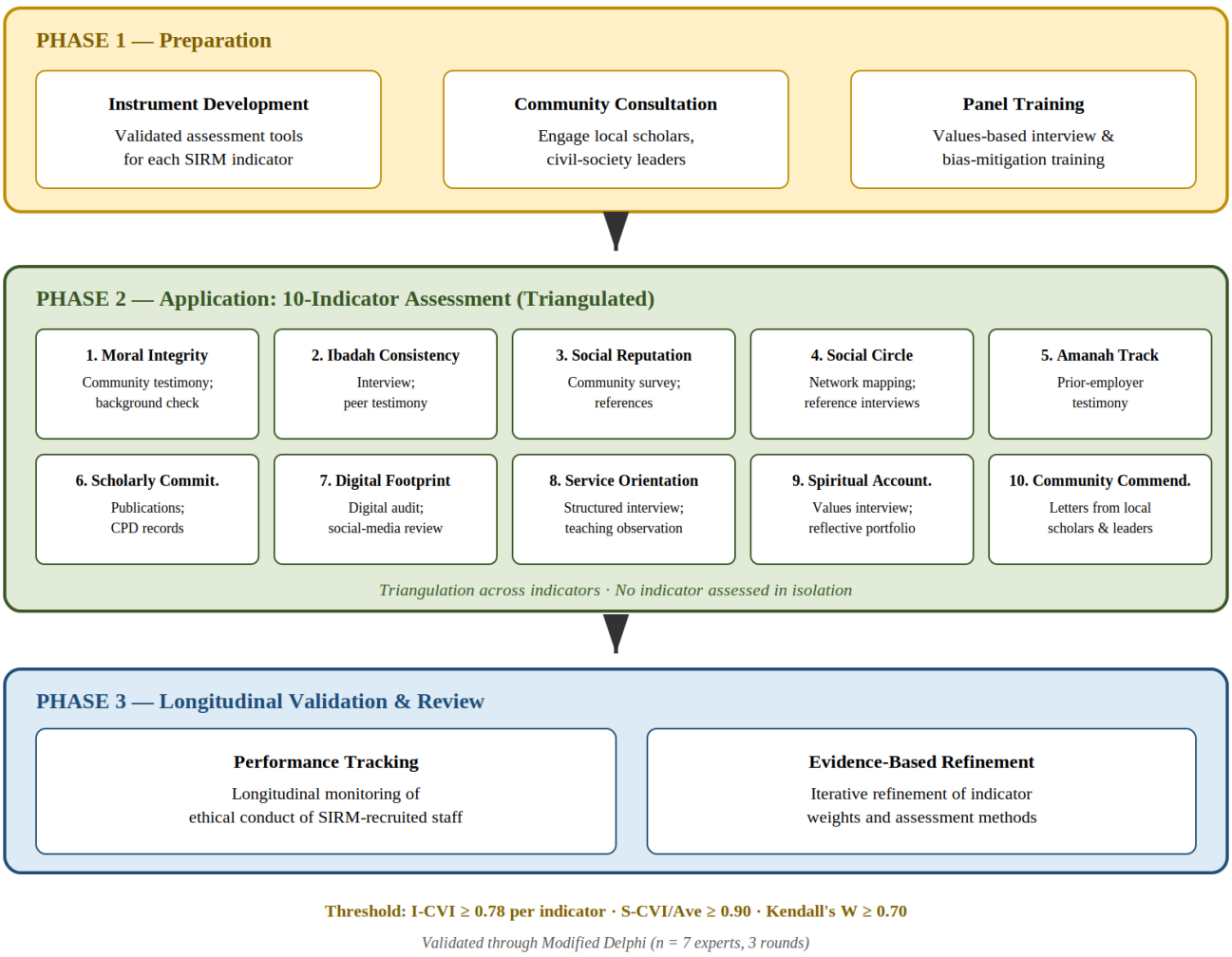


Figure 3

The Spiritual Integrity Recruitment Model (SIRM): Process Flow for Spiritually-Informed Educator Selection