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Structural Homology of Integrated Reality Theory and Islamic Economics: A Theoretical Synthesis

M. Shoim[1*], La Himmah il Princess Choris[2]
[1] Universitas 17 Agustus 1945 Surabaya, Indonesia
[2] Universitas Airlangga, Surabaya, Indonesia

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Corresponding Author:
M.Shoim
Email:dgchoris@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Introduction: *Islamic economics and the Theory of Integrated Reality (IRT) emerge from fundamentally different epistemic traditions. Islamic economics is rooted in revelation and jurisprudential contemplation developed over centuries, while IRT draws upon process philosophy, thermodynamics, and the science of complexity. Despite these differences, both frameworks address the systemic entropy generated by economic systems that neglect the transcendent dimension. This study aims to conduct a structural comparison between Islamic economics and IRT and to identify the potential correspondence between Islamic economic principles and the systemic mechanisms proposed within IRT.*

Methods: *This study employed a theoretical, conceptual, and structural-comparative approach. Islamic economic principles, including the prohibition of ribā, gharar, and maysir, as well as zakāt, waqf, infaq, and maqāṣid al-sharīʿah, were examined in relation to the conceptual components of IRT, particularly systemic entropy (S), energy and information dynamics, and the Consciousness Variable (C). The heuristic formulation $\Phi = (E \times I/S) \times C$ was employed as a conceptual instrument to explore structural relationships rather than as an empirical causal equation. The analysis also considered the gap between normative ideals and historical implementation identified in previous Islamic economic scholarship.*

Results: *The analysis demonstrates a structural correspondence between several principles of Islamic economics and the systemic mechanisms proposed by IRT. The prohibition of ribā, gharar, and maysir can be conceptually interpreted as mechanisms for reducing or damping systemic entropy, while zakāt, waqf, and*

infaq may function as instruments of structural redistribution, entropy release, and consciousness activation. Maqāṣid al-sharīʿah provides a directional orientation for the Consciousness Variable (C), linking systemic transformation to normative objectives. The analysis further identifies four falsifiable propositions for future empirical research. The synthesis suggests that implementation failures may emerge when systemic entropy (S) exceeds collective consciousness (C), providing a potential systemic interpretation of the gap between Islamic economic ideals and their historical implementation.

Conclusion and suggestion: *This study contributes to the theoretical dialogue between Islamic economics and the Theory of Integrated Reality by identifying a structural homology between their respective approaches to economic order, systemic stability, and consciousness. The proposed synthesis does not reduce Islamic economics to IRT or replace the revelatory authority of Islamic principles. Rather, it provides a systemic analytical language through which Islamic economic concepts can engage broader interdisciplinary scholarship. Future research should operationalize systemic entropy, consciousness, redistribution mechanisms, and maqāṣid-oriented outcomes through measurable indicators and test the proposed propositions across contemporary economic, social, and institutional systems.*

Keywords: *Theory of Integrated Reality, Islamic Economics, Systemic Entropy, Maqāṣid al-Sharīʿah, Ribā, Structural Homology*

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INTRODUCTION

The contemporary global economic order presents a profound paradox. Material wealth has reached unprecedented levels, yet systemic instability—manifested in entangled debt, ecological degradation, and social polarization—continues to increase. Mainstream economic theory, with its methodological focus on equilibrium and efficiency, has proven inadequate to diagnose these pathologies, as it systematically treats the root causes as "externalities" that lie outside the confines of formal models (Stiglitz, 2012; Daly & Farley, 2011). Two intellectual traditions, born out of very different epistemic matrices, have responded to this anxiety with parallel critiques. Islamic economics, based on the revelations of the Qur'an and the prophetic tradition, identifies systemic sources of economic disorder in the violation of divine boundaries (ḥudūd Allāh): the prohibition of ribā (riba), gharar (excessive uncertainty), and maysir (gambling), as well as the obligation of zakāt, waqf, and infaq as a mechanism of cleansing and redistribution (Chapra, 2008; Askari et al., 2011). Integrated Reality Theory (IRT), grounded in process ontology, thermodynamics, and the science of complexity, models economic reality as a dynamic interaction of five fundamental variables—Energy (E), Information (I), Entropy (S), Consciousness (C), and Evolution (v)—that interact through the heuristic functions $\Phi = (E \times I/S) \times C$ (Shoim, 2026).

Although their origins are different, these two traditions share a structural intuition: economic disorder is not a temporary deviation from equilibrium, but rather the cumulative effect of unmanaged systemic entropy, and the restoration of order requires not just technical adjustments but the activation of a reflective consciousness anchored in values capable of redirecting the trajectory of the system. Consider a simple illustration of this structural parallelism. Imagine two economies with identical GDP per capita (E) and regulatory quality

(I). In the first economy, financial transactions are largely equity-based and profit-sharing; in the second, transactions are largely debt-based with fixed-interest instruments. The IRT predicts that, over time, debt-based economies will accumulate higher systemic entropy (S) manifested as a debt-to-GDP ratio that exceeds productive capacity while equity-based economies will demonstrate greater systemic resilience. Islamic economics, from its normative framework, achieves the same prediction through different reasoning: ribā systematically dissociates financial claims from real productive capacity. The convergence in these predictions, despite differences in epistemic origin, exemplifies the structural homology that this article seeks to articulate. This article makes the first systematic comparison between IRT and Islamic Economics, identifying the structural homologies underlying their parallel diagnoses. The article is structured as follows. Part 2 clarifies the epistemological positioning of IRT and reviews the relevant literature. Part 3 presents structural comparison methods. Part 4 maps five IRT variables to the concepts of Islamic Economics. Part 5 analyzes Islamic prohibitions as a mechanism for entropy damping. Part 6 analyzes Islamic redistribution mechanisms as entropy release and activation of consciousness. Part 7 formulates four propositions that can be tested as future empirical research agendas. Section 8 discusses implications, limitations, and multiple research agendas.

IRT is a mid-level systemic framework that models reality as a dynamic process involving five fundamental variables (Shoim, 2026; Shoim, Mujanah, & Halik, 2026). The function $\Phi = (E \times I/S) \times C$ is used as a heuristic conceptual model, rather than a deterministic law. Its structural forms—the multiplicative synergy between E and I, the divisive effect of S, the multiplier role of C—are derived from thermodynamic analogies (Prigogine & Stengers, 1984; Georgescu-Roegen, 1971), information theory (Shannon, 1948; Bateson, 1979), and the science of complexity (Arthur, 2015; Meadows, 2008). The five variables are operationalized at the macro level through standard proxies: E as GDP per capita (PPP) or gross capital formation; I as regulatory quality, rule of law, and internet penetration; S as debt-to-GDP ratio, Gini coefficient, carbon emissions, and corruption perception; C as governance effectiveness, social trust, and long-term orientation; and v as an innovation index or technology adoption rate (Shoim & Hwihanus, 2026). IRT does not claim to replace existing economic theories; it serves as an integrative meta-framework for diagnosing systemic interactions across domains that are usually analyzed separately. Islamic economics is a normative economic system derived from the Qurʾān, Sunnah, and jurisprudential reasoning (ijtihād) over the centuries. Its foundational principles include: the recognition of Allah as the supreme owner of all resources (mālik al-mulk), with man as the trustee (khalīfah); the prohibition of ribā, gharar, and maysir; the obligation of zakāt; the institution of waqf; and an overarching orientation towards maqāṣid al-sharīʿah—the higher goals of Sharīʿah (Al-Ghazālī, d. 1111; Al-Shāṭibī, d. 1388).

Chapra (2008) argues that Islamic Economics cannot be understood as a mere variant of capitalism or socialism; it is a different paradigm that places ethical values and divine accountability at the center of economic decision-making. Askari et al. (2011) demonstrate empirically that countries that institutionalize Islamic economic principles exhibit greater economic stability and lower inequality. Kuran (2004), from a critical perspective, questions whether Islamic economic institutions have historically lived up to their systemic promises, highlighting the gap between normative ideals and historical implementation. This gap is real and significant: the claim put forward in this article is not that Muslim-majority countries empirically exhibit a higher Φ than others, but rather that the structural logic of Islamic Economics, if implemented systematically, will reduce S and activate C. IRT provides a diagnostic framework for understanding why historical implementation has so often failed namely, that systemic entropy (S) in the form of political corruption, colonial interference, and institutional breakdown goes beyond the collective consciousness (C) necessary to sustain Islamic economic institutions. Islamic economics has a rich normative vocabulary ribā, zakāt, maqṣad, ʿadl, iḥsān—but lacks a formal, operationalized model of how these concepts interact to produce systemic outputs. The extensive literature on Islamic banking and finance (El-Gamal, 2006) focuses largely on compliance (ḥalāl) rather than systemic diagnosis. IRT, in contrast, has a formal model of systemic interaction but its C variable remains abstract,

awaiting substantive ethical content. The synthesis proposed here addresses both gaps simultaneously: IRT provides formal grammar; Islamic economics provides an axiological vocabulary.

This article uses the method of structural comparison (muqāranah haykaliyyah), an approach that identifies correspondence not at the surface level of terminology but at the deeper level of systemic function. Two concepts are structurally homologous if they perform the same systemic function within their respective frameworks, regardless of differences in terminology, epistemic origin, or metaphysical justification. Structural comparison differs from syncretism, which seeks to combine two systems into one. Instead, it aims at translation: allowing scholars in one tradition to understand the claims of another tradition on their own terms, without requiring one to abandon its foundational commitments. The procedure involves three steps: (1) identifying the core variables and mechanisms in the IRT; (2) identifying parallel concepts in Islamic Economics; (3) examining whether each pair performs the same systemic function within their respective frameworks. This analysis uses both deductions from the first principles and illustrations through stylized cases. Quantitative data from secondary sources (IMF, World Bank, Transparency International) are referred to as empirical context, rather than as inferential evidence. In IRT, E denotes the total material capacity available for a system to do its work: financial capital, physical infrastructure, human labor, natural resources. E is morally neutral; it can be directed toward productive or destructive goals depending on the quality of I, S, and C.

In Islamic Economics, wealth (al-māl) is not an absolute right but a trust (amānah) from Allah. "To Allah belongs the kingdom of heaven and earth and what is between them" (Qurʾān, al-Māʾidah 5:120). Man is the trustee (khalīfah), not the owner (mālik). This ontological framing produces structural consequences: since E is a trust, its use is subject to accountability (ḥisāb); since ownership is ultimately divine, E cannot be hoarded (kanz) or scattered (isrāf); since the trustee is responsible, E must be circulated (tadāwul) rather than concentrated (takāthu). Its structural function is identical: E is the capacity to act, whose normative quality depends entirely on how it is directed. Neither IRT nor Islamic Economics treats E as an end in itself. In IRT, I denotes a rule, knowledge, and communication structure that reduces uncertainty and funnels E toward productive goals. High-quality I (clear property rights, consistent regulation, reliable data) reduces entropy; low-quality I (ambiguous rules, information asymmetry, noise) increases it.

In Islamic Economics, Sharīʿah serves as a comprehensive regulatory architecture. It establishes what is permissible (ḥalāl) and what is prohibited (ḥarām), the terms of valid contracts (ʿuqūd), and the dispute settlement mechanism. The prohibition of gharar is, in systemic terms, a requirement for the completeness of information in a transaction; the obligation of transparent recording ("And do not be weary of writing it, both small and large, until the deadline"—Qurʾān, al-Baqarah 2:282) is a mandate for the preservation of information. Its systemic function is identical: I operates as a channeling structure that determines whether E flows efficiently into productive activities or is dissipated through unproductive conflict and uncertainty. In IRT, S indicates the tendency of any system towards disorder, dissipation, and loss of coherence. S manifests as debt that consumes future capacity, ecological degradation that depletes natural capital, corruption that diverts resources, and social conflicts that waste collective energy. S is divisive: for a given E and I, an increase in S decreases Φ, ceteris paribus. Islamic economics identifies a spectrum of entropy-generating mechanisms: ribā (usury) as the accumulation of systemic debt; gharar (excessive uncertainty) as informational entropy; maysir (gambling) as probabilistic entropy; iḥtikār (hoarding) as distributional entropy; ẓulm (injustice) as social entropy. These are not simply "sins" in the moralistic sense; they are structural mechanisms that systematically dissipate energy, distort information, and degrade collective coherence. In IRT, C is the most distinguishing variable: the capacity of the system for self-monitoring (murāqabah), evaluation (muḥāsabah), and conscious directional correction. C does not create energy out of nothingness, but it multiplies the effectiveness of existing E and I by directing it towards coherent and long-term goals. Islamic economics has a rich vocabulary for this reflective capacity. Taqwā is individual and collective awareness of divine accountability—the

permanent awareness that every economic action is observed and will be judged. Ḥisāb is the practice of self-evaluation. Naṣīḥah (sincere advice) is the obligation to convey the truth to the ruler. At the collective level, maqāṣid al-sharīʿah—the higher goals of Sharīʿah: the protection of religion (dīn), soul (nafs), intellect (ʿaql), offspring (nasl), and property (māl)—serves as a compass for systemic self-correction. Its structural homology is again precise: C is the multiplier that determines whether E and I are placed towards a coherent and sustainable goal or dissipated through non-reflective momentum.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In IRT, v is the learning and adaptation level of the system. When v > 1, the system shows an increased result; improvements merge exponentially. When v < 1, the system shows a decreased result; it stagnates even though the input continues. In Islamic Economics, ijtihād is a mechanism of intellectual effort to obtain solutions to new problems within the framework of unchanging principles. The Prophet Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلم affirmed both the necessity and the possibility of error of ijtihād: "If a judge does ijtihad and reaches the right decision, he gets two rewards; if he does ijtihad and is wrong, he gets one reward" (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 7352; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 1716). This hadith encodes a systemic insight: v must be activated despite the risk of error; stagnation is more dangerous than learning that may be wrong. The most striking structural homology between IRT and Islamic Economics lies in the systemic function of the three main prohibitions. Mainstream Islamic economic literature usually justifies these prohibitions on moral or textual grounds. The IRT provides a complementary reading: each prohibition serves as a mechanism to prevent the accumulation of systemic entropy. This structural-rational analysis does not replace the revelatory authority of these prohibitions—for believing Muslims, divine commands are sufficient. Rather, it provides a systemic grammar that makes the structural logic of these prohibitions understandable to scholars outside the Islamic tradition, and offers Muslims an additional lens for appreciating the wisdom (ḥikmah) underlying divine law.

Ribā—a predetermined and secured interest charge on a loan—creates a structural asymmetry: the lender earns a fixed yield regardless of the borrower's actual productivity. In IRT terms, ribā systematically generates S by releasing financial claims (future E-future) from real productive capacity (E-present). Any unit of debt that grows faster than the underlying capacity to pay it increases the S/E ratio, decreasing Φ over time. The Qur'an's characterization of ribā as something that "multiplies" (yarbū—literally "grows" but figuratively "consumes") wealth (Āl ʿImrān 3:130) captures precisely this structural dynamic: ribā consumes the productive base of the system even as it creates the illusion of growth. Empirical evidence supports this reading. Reinhart and Rogoff (2010) demonstrate that public debt that exceeds 90% of GDP systematically reduces economic growth. IMF data (2024) shows that global debt that exceeds 300% of GDP is accompanied by a decline in productivity growth in most advanced economies. The IRT explains why: when S grows faster than E and I, Φ decreases regardless of nominal GDP. Gharar—excessive uncertainty or ambiguity in the terms of exchange—serves as informational entropy. When the specifications of the goods exchanged or the terms of payment are unclear, I is incomplete, and the transaction becomes a site of potential conflict rather than mutual benefit. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم forbade the sale of unripe fruit, uncaught fish, and anything for which the delivery is uncertain (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 1513). In IRT terms, each of these prohibitions ensures that I is sufficiently complete before E is tied. Transactions with incomplete I's carry a higher probability of disputes, requiring an additional E to settle—a net increase in S. The contemporary relevance of these insights runs profound. Financial derivatives whose underlying assets are obscure, algorithmic trading that speeds up transactions beyond human comprehension, and supply chains so complex that no single actor fully understands them—these are systemic forms of gharar that increase S at the macro level.

Maysir—gambling, or more broadly, risk-taking without adequate information—is probabilistic entropy in its purest form. In maysir, E is tied without an I directing its allocation. The outcome is determined by pure chance, not by productive contribution. The Qur'an

classifies maysir with khamr (intoxicating drink) as something that contains "a great sin and some benefit to man, but the sin of both is greater than the benefit" (al-Baqarah 2:219). In systemic terms, this verse identifies the effect of the net entropy of maysir: the aggregate S produced go beyond any localized benefit. Contemporary manifestations include speculative bubbles that are detached from productive fundamentals, high-frequency trading that extracts value without creating it, and lottery systems that systematically transfer E from the poor (who spend a higher proportion of income on tickets) to the state or private operators. If the prohibitions serve as a prevention of entropy, the obligations of zakat, waqf, and infaq serve as the release of entropy and activation of consciousness. Zakāt is a compulsory transfer of a certain part (generally 2.5%) of wealth from those above the niṣāb threshold to eight specified categories of recipients (al-Tawbah 9:60). In IRT terms, zakāt is a mechanism of entropy reduction that is forced: it reallocates E from the point of accumulation (where marginal utility is low) to the point of need (where marginal utility is high), reduces distributional S (inequality) and enables localized economic flows.

Critically, zakāt is not voluntary charity (ṣadaqah); it is an obligation enforced by the state or community. This distinguishes it from individual philanthropy, which may be selective, inconsistent, or motivated by reputational benefits. Zakāt is a structural mechanism that reduces S regardless of the payer's subjective disposition—although the Qur'an emphasizes that spiritual benefits lie in the payer's conscious intention (niyyah)Waqf—the endowment of assets that are essentially conserved and the proceeds directed to specific charitable purposes—serve as intergenerational infrastructure. Waqf properties have historically funded education (madrasas), health services (hospitals), water supply (public fountains), and research (libraries), providing stable I's and E's across generations. In IRT terms, waqf reduces S over the long term by creating permanent nodes I and E that are isolated from short-term political or market fluctuations. Waqf-funded universities do not depend on annual budget allocations; waqf-funded hospitals do not depend on quarterly profit targets. Waqf-funded infrastructure stability reduces S arising from unstable funding cycles. The single most important contribution of Islamic economics to the IRT is perhaps the concept of maqāṣid al-sharīʿah—the higher goals that orient the entire regulatory system. Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111) articulated five essential goals (al-ḍarūriyyāt al-khams): religious protection (dīn), soul (nafs), intellect (ʿaql), posterity (nasl), and property (māl). Abū Isḥāq al-Shāṭibī (d. 790/1388) synthatized this into a comprehensive theory of legal goals.

METHOD

The structural homologies identified above result in four testable propositions that shape the agenda of future empirical research. This article does not test these propositions; rather, it formulates them as falsified hypotheses for subsequent empirical investigations, by specifying the variables, data sources, and methods required for each. Proposition 1 (Entropy Mechanism): The usury-based financial system exhibits a systematically higher S (measured as the debt-to-GDP ratio and the frequency of financial crises) than the equity-based financial system, ceteris paribus. Variables and data: Proportion of Islamic banking assets to conventional (IFSB database); debt-to-GDP ratio (IMF Global Debt Database); frequency of financial crises (Laeven & Valencia, 2020). Methods: Panel regression with country and year fixed effects. Proposition 2 (Redistribution Mechanism): Countries with an institutionalized system of zakat collection and distribution show lower S (measured as Gini coefficients and poverty levels) and higher C (measured as social trust) than countries where zakat is voluntary and uncoordinated. Variables and data: Institutionalization of zakāt (dummy variables encoded from national legislation); Gini coefficients (World Bank WDI); social trust (World Values Survey). Methods: Comparative case analysis or regression of instrumental variables to address endogeny.

Proposition 3 (Mechanism of Awareness): The introduction of a maqāṣid-oriented governance framework in Islamic financial institutions positively influences C (measured as long-term orientation and stakeholder trust), which mediates improvements in Φ (measured

as return on assets and stability) without requiring an increase in E (capital). Variables and data: Maqāṣid-oriented governance index (constructed from Sharia governance reports); ROA and Z-score for stability (BankScope). Methods: Difference-in-differences or structural equation modeling (SEM). Proposition 4 (Evolutionary Mechanism): An Islamic legal system that institutes collective ijtihād (as opposed to relying solely on individual juristic opinions) shows a higher v (measured as regulatory adaptability to new financial products) without increasing S (measured as regulatory inconsistency). Variables and data: Institutional ijtihād mechanism (coded from central bank regulations); Regulatory adaptability index (constructed from the frequency and quality of regulatory updates). Methods: Comparative case analysis and time series tracking of regulatory reforms. Each proposition is specified with conditions that can be falsified. For example, Proposition 1 will be falsified if the panel regression shows no significant difference in S between the usury-dominated and equity-dominated financial systems after controlling for GDP per capita and institutional quality. The operationalization of C in Proposition 3 requires special caution: long-term orientation can be proxied using survey data on stakeholder perceptions, but this remains the second best approach pending the development of a more refined instrument for measuring collective awareness.

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

For Islamic Economics, synthesis with IRT offers a formal grammar for communicating its systemic intuition in global scientific forums. Islamic Economics has long argued that ribā, gharar, and maysir are harmful; IRT provides a formal model—Φ = (E× I/S) × C—that explains why they are harmful, in systemic rather than purely textual terms. This translation does not replace the authority of revelation; it complements it with a rational framework that can engage scholars who do not share the premise of revelation. For IRT, synthesis with Islamic Economics provides substantive ethical content for the still abstract C variable. The C of IRT has been operationalized through proxies such as Governance Effectiveness and Voice & Accountability (Shoim & Hwihanus, 2026). These are procedural measures; they capture whether a system reflects, not what it reflects on. Maqāṣid al-sharīʿah demonstrates what a fully specified C entails: reflection oriented towards the preservation and development of life, intellect, and community across generations. This synthesis has important limitations. First, it is a theoretical exercise; the four propositions in Section 7 form the agenda of future empirical research and have not been tested in this article. Second, the structural homology identified does not imply an ontological identity. The concept of barakah (divine blessings, improvement beyond measurable inputs) in Islamic Economics has no equivalent in the IRT; it belongs to the dimension of reality that is not modeled by the IRT, as a secular framework. Third, the gap between normative ideals and historical implementation—emphasized by the Quran (2004)—applies to both frameworks. The claim put forward here is not that Muslim-majority countries empirically exhibit a higher Φ than others, but rather that the structural logic of Islamic Economics, if implemented systematically, will reduce S and activate C. That implementation has often failed historically can be explained in IRT: systemic entropy (S)—manifested as colonial interference with waqf institutions, centralization of zakāt by postcolonial states, and political corruption—goes beyond the collective consciousness (C) necessary to sustain Islamic economic institutions.

Structural Homology between Integrated Reality Theory and Islamic Economics

The theoretical analysis demonstrates that Integrated Reality Theory (IRT) and Islamic economics, despite emerging from different epistemological traditions, reveal several structural correspondences in their understanding of economic reality. Islamic economics is fundamentally grounded in revelation, Islamic jurisprudence, and the normative objectives of *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*, whereas IRT approaches reality through systemic relationships involving energy, information, entropy, consciousness, and evolutionary change. The relationship proposed in this study should therefore be understood as a structural homology rather than an ontological equivalence. IRT does not replace the revelatory foundation of Islamic economics; rather, it provides a conceptual language through which the systemic implications

of Islamic economic principles can be explored. The first structural correspondence concerns the Islamic prohibition of *ribā*, *gharar*, and *maysir*. Within Islamic economics, these concepts represent prohibited forms of economic activity because of their implications for justice, contractual certainty, risk, and social welfare. Contemporary Islamic finance literature continues to emphasize the importance of avoiding excessive uncertainty, gambling-like transactions, and interest-based mechanisms in constructing ethical and stable financial relationships (Sari & Ledista, 2022). From an IRT perspective, these principles can be interpreted heuristically as mechanisms for limiting sources of systemic instability. *Gharar*, for example, is particularly relevant to the informational dimension of economic systems. Excessive uncertainty and inadequate information can create asymmetrical decision-making conditions and increase the possibility of systemic imbalance. Thus, the Islamic emphasis on contractual clarity can be conceptually associated with the role of information in maintaining systemic coherence.

Similarly, *maysir* may be examined through the relationship between financial activity and productive economic value. When economic behavior becomes excessively oriented toward speculative gains without corresponding productive activity, the relationship between financial transactions and the real economy may become increasingly fragile. From the perspective of IRT, such a condition can be interpreted as an increase in systemic complexity without a proportional increase in productive capacity. The prohibition of *maysir*, therefore, can be read as a normative mechanism that directs economic activity toward more productive and socially beneficial forms. This interpretation does not suggest that Islamic law prohibits *maysir* because of thermodynamic entropy; rather, it identifies a structural analogy between the Islamic concern with harmful speculation and the IRT concern with systemic instability. The same reasoning can be extended to *ribā*. Islamic economics does not treat financial relationships merely as neutral exchanges of monetary quantities. Questions of justice, risk sharing, responsibility, and distribution are embedded within the institutional structure of Islamic finance. In the IRT framework, an economic structure that systematically concentrates benefits while transferring disproportionate risks to weaker participants may increase systemic pressure. Consequently, the prohibition of *ribā* can be examined as part of a broader Islamic mechanism for maintaining balanced economic relationships. The structural relationship may therefore be expressed as a movement from potentially destabilizing economic mechanisms toward greater contractual responsibility, risk awareness, and social balance.

A second correspondence appears in the relationship between Islamic Social Finance and systemic adaptation. *Zakāh*, *waqf*, and *infaq* do not merely transfer financial resources; they can also strengthen the capacity of individuals and communities to participate in economic life. *Zakāh*, for instance, creates a redistribution mechanism through which resources are transferred toward eligible beneficiaries. *Waqf*, particularly productive waqf, can establish long-term assets that generate continuous social and economic benefits. *Infaq* provides an additional mechanism through which voluntary transfers can support social welfare and community development. Recent research has emphasized the potential of Islamic Social Finance to contribute to poverty reduction, social welfare, and sustainable development, although institutional fragmentation and governance challenges remain important constraints (Furqon et al., 2024; Mukhlishin et al., 2025). Within IRT, these mechanisms can be conceptualized through the notion of systemic entropy release. The term is used here heuristically rather than as a literal thermodynamic claim. Economic inequality, resource concentration, institutional fragmentation, and exclusion can generate social pressures that reduce the adaptive capacity of a system. Redistribution through *zakāh*, productive *waqf*, and *infaq* can potentially reduce such pressures by improving access to resources and strengthening the economic capabilities of marginalized groups. The structural sequence can therefore be represented as: resource concentration → systemic pressure → redistribution → increased adaptive capacity.

This interpretation also helps explain why Islamic Social Finance should not be evaluated solely according to the amount of funds collected or distributed. The systemic effect depends on the quality of institutions, information, governance, beneficiary empowerment, and the continuity of economic benefits. Recent scholarship indicates that Islamic Social Finance

increasingly intersects with sustainable development, digital technology, social welfare, and institutional innovation (Etika et al., 2025). Digitalization can improve information flows, transparency, and accessibility, but technology alone cannot guarantee systemic transformation. The effectiveness of digital Islamic Social Finance remains dependent on governance, institutional integration, and human capabilities. The third and perhaps most significant structural correspondence concerns maqāṣid al-sharīʿah and the Consciousness Variable (C) in IRT. In this study, C represents the capacity of actors and institutions to recognize systemic conditions, process information, internalize values, and orient their decisions toward particular objectives. *Maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* provides a normative orientation for those objectives by emphasizing *maslahah*, justice, protection of essential human interests, and prevention of harm. Consequently, C should not be understood as equivalent to *maqāṣid*. Rather, *maqāṣid* provides normative direction, while C represents a conceptual mechanism through which awareness may influence systemic behavior.

The relationship can be described as follows: maqāṣid → normative orientation → consciousness → decision-making → economic action → systemic transformation. This relationship is particularly important because knowledge of Islamic economic principles does not necessarily produce behavioral transformation. An institution may formally comply with Islamic financial requirements while still facing problems related to inequality, exclusion, weak governance, or insufficient environmental responsibility. Therefore, the distinction between formal compliance and substantive transformation becomes important in the proposed framework. The heuristic equation $\Phi = (E \times I/S) \times C$ further illustrates this relationship. E represents the resources or energy available to a system, I represents information, S represents systemic entropy, and C represents consciousness. The equation is not proposed as an empirically established physical law. Instead, it functions as a conceptual device for explaining why resources and information do not automatically produce positive transformation. A system may possess considerable financial resources and extensive information but remain incapable of sustainable transformation when systemic fragmentation is high and collective consciousness is weak. Conversely, stronger institutional awareness and maqāṣid-oriented governance may improve the capacity of a system to convert resources and information into socially meaningful outcomes.

Systemic Entropy, Consciousness, and the Evolution of Islamic Economic Systems

The second major finding concerns the dynamic relationship between systemic entropy, consciousness, and economic evolution. Islamic economics can be understood not only as a collection of financial rules but also as a normative system intended to organize economic relationships toward justice, balance, welfare, and sustainability. IRT adds a dynamic perspective by asking how economic systems respond when internal pressures, information flows, institutional structures, and levels of consciousness change over time. Systemic entropy in this framework refers broadly to the accumulation of fragmentation, inequality, information asymmetry, institutional inefficiency, social conflict, and other conditions that reduce the capacity of a system to coordinate its components. This interpretation must be distinguished from the strict physical meaning of entropy in thermodynamics. The concept is employed here as a theoretical analogy for the degree of disorder or systemic pressure within complex socio-economic structures. From this perspective, economic development is not necessarily equivalent to systemic evolution. A system may experience economic expansion while simultaneously accumulating inequality, environmental degradation, institutional fragmentation, or financial instability. Consequently, the direction of economic evolution depends not only on the quantity of resources available but also on how those resources are organized and guided. This is where the Consciousness Variable (C) becomes theoretically significant.

A higher level of systemic consciousness implies a greater capacity to recognize interdependence and long-term consequences. In Islamic economics, such consciousness can be connected to values such as *ʿadl* (justice), *ihsān* (excellence and benevolence), *amanah* (trust and responsibility), and *maslahah*. These values influence how economic actors perceive their responsibilities toward other individuals, society, future generations, and

the environment. The incorporation of maqāṣid-oriented thinking into economic analysis therefore expands the definition of economic success beyond income or financial efficiency. Recent scholarship on Islamic Social Finance supports the relevance of this broader perspective. Research has increasingly connected *zakāh* and *waqf* with sustainable development, poverty reduction, education, health, and social inclusion, while also highlighting weaknesses in governance and institutional coordination (Furqon et al., 2024; Mukhlishin et al., 2025). Similarly, research on digital Islamic Social Finance indicates that technological integration can strengthen transparency and accessibility but requires appropriate institutional governance to generate sustainable outcomes (Etika et al., 2025). These findings suggest that systemic transformation depends on the interaction between resources, information, institutions, and human awareness.

This relationship provides an alternative way of interpreting the implementation gap within Islamic economics. The existence of Islamic economic principles does not automatically guarantee that the economic system will realize their intended outcomes. Implementation depends on institutions, governance, human behavior, information systems, technological capacity, and collective consciousness. When these elements are fragmented, the normative objectives of Islamic economics may remain disconnected from actual economic outcomes. The concept of consciousness therefore becomes particularly important at the institutional level. Individual awareness is insufficient when institutional structures create incentives that contradict long-term social objectives. Similarly, institutional reform may be insufficient when individuals and communities lack the awareness or capacity to participate effectively. Sustainable transformation requires interaction between individual consciousness and institutional consciousness.

This leads to a broader interpretation of *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*. Rather than functioning only as a framework for evaluating individual transactions, maqāṣid can also provide a directional framework for evaluating systemic evolution. A financial innovation, for example, should not only be assessed according to whether its contractual structure satisfies formal requirements. It may also be evaluated according to whether it strengthens financial inclusion, reduces harmful uncertainty, protects wealth, improves social welfare, and contributes to sustainable development. Such an approach is consistent with recent efforts to connect Islamic economics with sustainability and broader development objectives. The structural synthesis also generates four propositions for future empirical research. First, higher levels of systemic entropy should be associated with lower adaptive capacity in economic systems. Second, more effective Islamic Social Finance mechanisms should be associated with stronger economic and social resilience among vulnerable groups. Third, consciousness may moderate the relationship between information, resources, and systemic adaptation. Fourth, stronger maqāṣid-oriented governance may be associated with more sustainable economic outcomes.

These propositions create opportunities for empirical operationalization. Systemic entropy could be measured through indicators of inequality, institutional fragmentation, information asymmetry, financial volatility, and social exclusion. Consciousness could be operationalized through measures of Islamic economic literacy, ethical orientation, sustainability awareness, institutional responsibility, and maqāṣid-oriented decision-making. Islamic Social Finance could be measured through the effectiveness of *zakāh* and *waqf* collection, distribution, beneficiary empowerment, institutional transparency, and digital accessibility. The theoretical synthesis ultimately suggests that the relationship between Islamic economics and IRT is strongest when both are treated as complementary analytical perspectives. Islamic economics explains the normative direction of economic life, while IRT helps conceptualize the systemic processes through which economic structures evolve. The resulting framework does not claim that Islamic economics can be reduced to entropy, energy, information, or consciousness. Instead, it proposes that these concepts can provide an additional systemic vocabulary for investigating how Islamic economic principles interact with complex social and institutional realities. The central implication is that sustainable economic transformation requires more than additional resources. It requires the integration of resources, information, institutions, and consciousness under a coherent normative

orientation. In this sense, *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* can provide the direction, Islamic Social Finance can provide redistributive and developmental mechanisms, and IRT can provide a conceptual framework for analyzing systemic interaction and evolution. Future empirical research should test whether these proposed relationships hold across different Islamic financial institutions, zakāh organizations, waqf institutions, Islamic banking systems, and digitally enabled Islamic Social Finance platforms between 2021 and 2026 and beyond.

Empirical: Estimating Φ for Muslim-majority countries with varying levels of Islamic financial institutionalization; using process-tracing to examine how zakāt reduces distributional S in a given community; comparing maqāṣid-oriented governance frameworks and purely procedural; identifying historical conditions under which Islamic economic institutions have succeeded or failed in reducing systemic entropy. Theoretical: Deepening the dialogue between IRT and other normative economic traditions (Buddhist economics, Gandhian economics, distributive economics); developing a more refined index for C that incorporates both procedural reflexivity and substantive ethical orientation; exploring whether the concept of barakah points to dimensions of systemic productivity that cannot be captured by standard economic measures.

CONCLUSION

This article has demonstrated a profound structural correspondence between Integrated Reality Theory and Islamic Economics, extending from the concept of Energy (E) as a mandate (amānah) to the role of legal reasoning (ijtihād) in systemic evolution (v). This correspondence does not imply identity—the two frameworks differ fundamentally in epistemic origin, metaphysical commitment, and justification structure. But it implies the ability of translation: each can be read in terms of the other without one being reduced. In a global intellectual landscape in which Islamic Economics is often dismissed as confessional apologetics and the IRT may be dismissed as speculative abstraction, their mutual illumination offers something rare: a demonstration that the resulting frameworks of process philosophy and the science of complexity and tradition grounded in revelation and juristical reasoning can meet at the same diagnosis—that economic systems fail when entropy accumulates unchecked, and that its recovery requires not merely technical adjustments but the activation of goal-oriented consciousness that transcends immediate importance. The next step is not further theoretical elaboration but rather empirical testing. The four propositions formulated in Section 7 provide a starting point for a collaborative research program that each tradition cannot undertake alone. Whether these propositions are confirmed or falsified, the dialogue itself enriches both traditions. As the Qur'an commands: "O you who believe, fear Allah and let every soul pay attention to what he has done for tomorrow" (al-Ḥashr 59:18). This command towards a reflective foresight—towards the activation of Consciousness—resonates with the most fundamental insight of the IRT: that a system that does not reflect itself will be consumed by its own entropy

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