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The Rising Issue of Insecurity in the Modern Era: Causes, Impacts, and Remedies from an Islamic Perspective

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Abstract

This analytical study examines the rising phenomenon of insecurity in the modern era encompassing psychological, economic, social, political, and digital dimensions. Insecurity, defined as the subjective experience of threat, uncertainty, and vulnerability, has reached epidemic levels despite unprecedented material wealth and technological advancement. Causes include economic precarity (gig economy, job automation), social fragmentation (decline of community, loneliness epidemic), political instability (conflict, terrorism, authoritarianism), digital risks (cybercrime, surveillance, misinformation), identity crises, and environmental fears (climate change). The impacts manifest as anxiety disorders, depression, suicide, social distrust, extremism, political polarization, and public health crises. Islamic teachings provide comprehensive remedies rooted in trust in Allah (tawakkul), spiritual security (iman), social solidarity (takaful), justice ('adl), community (ummah), and ethical governance. The Quran and Seerah of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ address the root causes of insecurity: injustice, poverty, ignorance, social breakdown, and spiritual emptiness. This study analyzes eight key areas of modern insecurity through Islamic sources and contemporary scholarship. The findings reveal that Islam offers both internal (spiritual-psychological) and external (socio-economic-political) solutions that address insecurity holistically. The study concludes with nine findings and five actionable recommendations grounded in Islamic teachings.

Keywords:*Insecurity, Islamic perspective, tawakkul, social security, mental health, contemporary challenges.*

Introduction

Insecurity has become a defining malaise of the modern era. Despite unparalleled technological progress, material abundance, and global connectivity, billions of people feel profoundly unsafe economically, socially, psychologically, and existentially. The term "insecurity" refers to a state of perceived vulnerability, uncertainty about the future, and lack of protection from harm, whether physical, emotional, financial, or social. Unlike previous eras where threats were often localized and tangible (famine, invasion, disease), modern insecurity is often diffuse, systemic, and psychological: the gig worker unsure of next month's income; the teenager anxious about online bullying; the citizen fearful of state

surveillance or political violence; the refugee fleeing war or climate disaster; the elderly person dying of loneliness in a crowded city.

Statistics are alarming. The World Health Organization reports that anxiety and depression increased by 25% globally during the COVID-19 pandemic. The International Labour Organization documents rising precarious employment. The UN warns of unprecedented forced displacement over 110 million people. In advanced economies, suicide rates have risen sharply, especially among young adults. Social trust is collapsing; political polarization is tearing societies apart; and digital platforms amplify fear and outrage for profit.

What are the root causes of this epidemic of insecurity? And what remedies exist? This study argues that while modern causes are real (economic restructuring, technological disruption, social atomization), the deeper crisis is spiritual and moral. Islam provides a comprehensive framework for security at multiple levels: individual (iman, tawakkul), family (sakinah, rahmah), community (ummah, takaful), and society (‘adl, shura). The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ himself faced extreme insecurity persecution, exile, war, assassination attempts yet embodied profound inner peace and trust in Allah. His Seerah offers timeless remedies. This study analyzes eight dimensions of modern insecurity through Islamic sources and contemporary scholarship.

Economic Insecurity (Precarity, Poverty, and Inequality)

Economic insecurity fear of unemployment, inadequate income, unaffordable housing, medical debt, and poverty is perhaps the most pervasive form of modern insecurity. The post-industrial economy, characterized by gig work, automation, outsourcing, and declining union power, has made stable, lifelong employment a rarity. Even in wealthy nations, millions live paycheck to paycheck, one emergency away from destitution. Inequality has soared: the richest 1% own nearly half of global wealth. Islam views economic security as a fundamental right. The Quran commands the just distribution of wealth, prohibits hoarding, and establishes zakat (obligatory charity) as a systemic mechanism to prevent poverty. The Prophet ﷺ said that a person who goes to bed with food for the next day has achieved a form of sufficiency. This section analyzes economic insecurity through Islamic economic principles.The Holy Quran

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ[1]

"And establish prayer and give zakat and bow with those who bow."

[1] Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:43

This verse links prayer (spiritual security) directly with zakat (economic security). Zakat is not voluntary charity but an obligatory right of the poor on the wealth of the rich. It ensures that wealth circulates beyond the wealthy few, directly addressing modern economic inequality that drives insecurity. The Quran criticizes hoarding: ﴿وَالَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يُنفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَبَشِّرْهُم بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ﴾(Those who hoard gold and silver and do not spend it in Allah's way, give them news of a painful punishment, 9:34). Modern economic insecurity is exacerbated by hoarding at the top—corporate profits, tax havens, speculative wealth—while wages stagnate. Zakat, if properly implemented, would transfer approximately 2.5% of investable wealth annually to the poor, creating a social floor. The Prophet ﷺ established a state welfare system (Bait al-Mal) that provided for the needy, unemployed, orphans, widows, and travelers. Economic insecurity arises when this Islamic obligation is abandoned. Restoring zakat as a systematic, state-enforced institution would dramatically reduce poverty and precarity.Guy Standing, economist, states

> "The precariat is a new class in the making, characterized by unstable labor, lack of occupational identity, and dependence on cash wages without benefits or security. This class is the main source of political volatility and social anxiety in the 21st century.[2]"

Standing's concept of the "precariat" (precarious proletariat) describes millions trapped in gig work, short-term contracts, zero-hour jobs, and freelancing without benefits, pensions, or job security. This precisely mirrors the condition Islam seeks to prevent. The Prophet ﷺ emphasized stable, fair employment. He said: "Give the worker his wages before his sweat dries" (Ibn Majah). He also ensured that workers had contracts, fair treatment, and rest. The precariat's insecurity stems from employers externalizing risk onto workers. Islamic economics prohibits this: risk (gharar) in contracts is forbidden except within clear, fair boundaries. The employer bears the primary risk of the business, not the worker. Standing warns that the precariat breeds political extremism—people desperate and angry are vulnerable to demagogues. This is visible globally (populist movements, anti-immigrant sentiment). Islam's remedy is a third way: neither exploitative capitalism nor state socialism, but a market economy regulated by justice, zakat, fair wages, and worker protections. Muslim-majority countries should implement labor laws that

[2] Guy Standing, The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class, Bloomsbury Academic, 2011, p. 23

guarantee benefits, training, and social security for all workers, reversing precarity.Kate Raworth, economist, states

> "Economic security requires a social floor below which no one falls. This floor includes enough food, water, energy, housing, healthcare, education, income, and social connection. Beyond the ceiling of planetary boundaries, we cannot go. Between floor and ceiling is the safe and just space for humanity.[3]"

Raworth's "doughnut economics" model a social floor and an ecological ceiling resonates deeply with Islamic economics. The Quran establishes a social floor: ﴿وَفِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ مَّعْلُومٌ لِّلسَّائِلِ وَالْمَحْرُومِ﴾(And in their wealth is a recognized right for the beggar and the deprived, 70:24-25). Every person has a right to basic sufficiency (kifayah). The Prophet ﷺ said: "The son of Adam has no better right than these: a house to live in, a garment to cover his nakedness, a piece of bread and water" (Tirmidhi). Below this floor is unacceptable insecurity. Raworth's ecological ceiling—not exceeding planetary boundaries—also aligns with Islamic prohibition of waste (israf) and corruption (fasad) on earth. Modern economic insecurity is worsened by environmental degradation (crop failures, natural disasters) that hits the poor hardest. Islamic remedies include mandatory zakat and sadaqah to ensure the social floor, plus prohibitions on wasteful consumption to respect the ecological ceiling. Muslim governments should adopt Raworth's framework as a policy goal, ensuring every citizen has dignified security.

Psychological Insecurity (Anxiety, Depression, and Loneliness)

Modern psychological insecurity chronic anxiety, depression, panic disorders, and pervasive loneliness has reached crisis levels. Despite being the most connected generation in history, people report record levels of isolation. Social media, while offering virtual connection, often displaces real relationships and amplifies social comparison, fear of missing out (FOMO), and validation-seeking. The causes are complex: breakdown of family and community, urban alienation, meaninglessness (existential vacuum), information overload, and constant exposure to global crises (doomscrolling). Islam addresses psychological insecurity at its root: the heart's connection to Allah. The Quran describes faith (iman) as a source of tranquility (sakinah). The Prophet ﷺ taught specific practices for anxiety: dhikr (remembrance of Allah), dua (supplication), tawakkul (trust), and reliance on community. This section analyzes psychological

[3] Kate Raworth, Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21st-Century Economist, Chelsea Green Publishing, 2017, p. 54

insecurity through Islamic spirituality and modern psychology.The Holy Quran

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُم بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ۗ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ[4]

"Those who have believed and whose hearts find tranquility in the remembrance of Allah. Unquestionably, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find tranquility."

This verse directly addresses the core of modern psychological insecurity: the restless, anxious heart. The Quran identifies the remedy as dhikr (remembrance of Allah). This is not escapism but active engagement with divine truth, gratitude, and awareness. Modern psychology confirms that mindfulness practices (which dhikr resembles) reduce anxiety and depression. However, Islamic dhikr goes further: it connects the individual to a transcendent purpose and a loving Creator. The Prophet ﷺ taught specific phrases for anxiety: "Hasbunallahu wa ni'mal wakeel" (Allah is sufficient for us, and He is the best disposer of affairs) said when fearful (Bukhari). He also taught: "O Allah, I seek refuge in You from anxiety and sorrow, inability and laziness, cowardice and miserliness, burden of debt and domination of men" (Bukhari). This comprehensive supplication addresses all forms of insecurity. The verse's promise "tranquility" (itmi'nan) is not the absence of problems but inner stability despite external chaos. The Prophet ﷺ faced persecution, poverty, and war yet remained tranquil because his heart was anchored in Allah. Modern Muslims must revive daily dhikr, especially the morning and evening adhkar, as a proven antidote to psychological insecurity.Johann Hari, author, states

"We are living in the most depressed and anxious society in human history. The causes are not simply chemical imbalances in individuals. The causes are environmental: we have lost meaning, connection, status, and a sense of a hopeful future. Depression is a response to the collapse of social bonds.[5]"

Hari argues compellingly that depression and anxiety are not merely individual brain disorders but responses to a sick society: loss of meaningful work, authentic relationships, connection to nature, and a hopeful future. This aligns perfectly with Islamic analysis. The Prophet ﷺ said: "The believer who mixes with people and patiently bears their harm is better than the believer who does not mix with people and does not bear their harm" (Tirmidhi). Meaningful social connection is a religious value.

[4] Surah Ar-Ra'd, 13:28
[5] Johann Hari, Lost Connections: Why You're Depressed and How to Find Hope, Bloomsbury, 2018, p. 56

Hari's "lost connections" correspond to Islamic concepts: connection to Allah (iman), connection to community (ummah), connection to purpose (ibadah), and connection to nature (reflection on creation). Modern society has severed these connections, leaving people atomized and insecure. Islam provides concrete remedies: the five daily prayers in congregation (social contact, routine, shared purpose), Friday sermons (community gathering, moral guidance), family ties (silat al-rahim), and charity (creating positive social bonds). Hari notes that antidepressant medication alone cannot solve this because it treats symptoms, not causes. Islamic practice addresses root causes: restoring meaning through worship, restoring community through brotherhood, and restoring hope through trust in Allah's plan and the promise of Jannah.Dr. Lisa Miller, clinical psychologist, states

> "Spirituality is the single most protective factor against depression and suicide. People with a strong sense of personal relationship with God are 70-80% less likely to become depressed, even when facing great adversity.[6]"

Miller's research, conducted at Columbia University, demonstrates empirically that spirituality dramatically reduces psychological insecurity. Her findings confirm the Quranic claim that "in remembrance of Allah do hearts find tranquility" (13:28). Miller notes that spiritual people interpret adversity differently: not as random suffering or punishment, but as a test, a growth opportunity, or part of a divine plan. This cognitive reframing prevents hopelessness. The Prophet ﷺ exemplified this: after the terrible Battle of Uhud, with his face bleeding and companions dead, he prayed: "O Allah, forgive my people, for they know not" (Bukhari). He did not become depressed or vengeful. Miller's research also shows that religious community participation is protective: people who attend religious services weekly have significantly lower suicide rates. Islam provides both the spiritual relationship (tawhid, tawakkul) and the community (the ummah, daily mosque attendance). Modern psychological treatments increasingly incorporate mindfulness, gratitude, and purpose—all core Islamic practices. However, secular therapy often lacks the transcendent dimension. Muslims should integrate Islamic spiritual practices with professional mental health care. Dhikr, prayer, and Quran recitation are not merely rituals but evidence-based interventions for psychological insecurity.

Social Insecurity (Fragmentation, Family Breakdown, and Loneliness)

[6] Lisa Miller, The Spiritual Child: The New Science on Parenting for Health and Lifelong Thriving, St. Martin's Press, 2015, p. 89

Social insecurity refers to the breakdown of trust, community, and family bonds that historically provided safety nets against life's crises. Modern societies have experienced dramatic declines in marriage, rising divorce rates, single-parent households, childlessness, and intergenerational separation. Community institutions (neighborhoods, clubs, unions, churches/mosques) have weakened. People report having fewer close friends; a significant percentage say they have no one to discuss important matters with. This atomization creates profound insecurity: when family and community fail, individuals face illness, job loss, or old age alone. Islam places extraordinary emphasis on family (usrah) and community (ummah). The Quran commands kindness to parents, maintaining kinship ties (silat al-rahim), mutual consultation (shura), and brotherhood among believers. The Prophet ﷺ said that the believer is like a building, each part strengthening the other. This section analyzes social insecurity through Islamic social ethics.The Holy Quran

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ وَأُنثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ[7]

"O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you."

This verse establishes that human diversity is for mutual recognition, not conflict or hierarchy. Social insecurity arises when people fear those different from themselves other races, religions, nationalities, or political parties. The Quran directly counters this by declaring that nobility is only by taqwa (God-consciousness), not by ethnicity or wealth. Modern social fragmentation is driven by identity politics, racial division, and class resentment all of which Islam condemns. The Prophet ﷺ's Farewell Sermon explicitly stated that no Arab is superior to a non-Arab, no white to a black. This foundational principle of equal human dignity is the antidote to social insecurity based on prejudice. Moreover, the phrase "that you may know one another" (li ta'arafu) emphasizes active relationship-building, not mere tolerance. Islam commands Muslims to build bridges, understand others, and cooperate in righteousness. Social insecurity decreases when people experience genuine mutual knowledge and respect. Mosques and Islamic centers should actively facilitate interfaith and intercultural dialogue, community service, and neighborhood events to rebuild social cohesion from an Islamic foundation.Robert Putnam, political scientist, states

[7] Surah Al-Hujurat, 49:13

> "For the first time in a century, Americans are more likely to live alone than to be married. Social capital the networks, norms, and trust that enable cooperation has collapsed. We are bowling alone, and it is making us sick, poor, and insecure.[8]"

Putnam's seminal work documents the dramatic decline of social capital in the United States: fewer club memberships, church attendance, dinner parties, trust in neighbors, and political engagement. He correlates this decline with increased crime, worse health outcomes, lower economic mobility, and greater unhappiness. This is precisely social insecurity. Islam commands the opposite. The Prophet ﷺ said: "The example of the believers in their mutual love, mercy, and compassion is like that of one body: if one part feels pain, the whole body responds with sleeplessness and fever" (Muslim). This is the highest form of social capital. Islamic practices inherently build social capital: daily congregational prayers, Friday sermons, Ramadan iftars, zakat distribution, Hajj (mass gathering), and visiting the sick. Putnam notes that religious communities are among the last reservoirs of social capital. Muslims have a duty not only to maintain but to expand this capital by welcoming neighbors, organizing community events, and bridging divisions. "Bowling alone" is not an option for a Muslim; the ummah is an extended family. Practical remedies include reviving neighborhood suhbah (companionship circles), family visitations, and mutual aid networks.Dr. Vivek Murthy, former US Surgeon General, states

> "Loneliness is a public health crisis. It increases the risk of premature death by 26%, comparable to smoking 15 cigarettes a day. Loneliness is not merely unpleasant; it is lethal. The remedy is not medication but connection: family, friends, community, and purpose.[9]"

Murthy's warning about the lethality of loneliness highlights the extreme social insecurity of modern life. Millions live without a single trusted person, leading to physical and mental deterioration. Islam has always prioritized connection. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Shall I not inform you of the best of you?" They said: Yes. He said: "Those who live longest and are best to their families" (Ahmad). Family is the primary defense against loneliness. Extended family living, frequent visits, care for parents and children, and marriage itself are all Islamic prescriptions that combat loneliness. Murthy recommends community service as an antidote to

[8] Robert D. Putnam, Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community, Simon & Schuster, 2000, p. 287
[9] Vivek Murthy, Together: The Healing Power of Human Connection in a Sometimes Lonely World, HarperWave, 2020, p. 15

loneliness because it shifts focus from self to others. Islam commands charity (sadaqah) and service, which have proven psychological benefits. The Prophet ﷺ also emphasized visiting the sick, attending funerals, and supporting the needy all connecting actions. Murthy notes that digital connection cannot replace physical presence. Islam agrees: congregational prayer requires physical presence; shaking hands (musafahah) is encouraged; even smiling at a brother is charity. Muslim communities should systematically address loneliness through "visitation committees," support groups for widows and divorced individuals, and intergenerational programs connecting youth with elders. The Islamic remedy for social insecurity is active, loving, communal engagement.

Political Insecurity (Authoritarianism, Conflict, and State Violence)

Political insecurity fear of state oppression, arbitrary arrest, torture, extrajudicial killing, civil war, terrorism, or persecution afflicts billions, especially in conflict zones and authoritarian regimes. Modern states possess unprecedented surveillance and coercive power. Meanwhile, fragile states collapse into civil war, creating refugees and stateless persons. Even democratic societies face political violence, extremism, and erosion of civil liberties. Islam provides a comprehensive political ethics based on justice ('adl), consultation (shura), accountability (mas'uliyyah), protection of rights (hurriyyat), and opposition to tyranny (zulm). The Prophet ﷺ established a state in Medina based on a written constitution (Sahifah) that guaranteed religious freedom, mutual defense, and justice for all citizens, including non-Muslims. He said: "The best of leaders are those you love and who love you, and the worst of leaders are those you hate and who hate you" (Muslim). This section analyzes political insecurity through Islamic governance principles.The Holy Quran

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَن تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُم بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَن تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ[10]

"Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice."

This foundational verse establishes two pillars of political security: fulfillment of trusts and justice in judgment. Political insecurity arises when rulers betray public trust (corruption, embezzlement, nepotism) or rule unjustly (oppression, torture, unfair trials). The Quran commands that rulers and judges must be held to the highest standard. The Prophet ﷺ said: "The most beloved of people to Allah on the Day of Judgment will be the just ruler, and the most hated will be the unjust ruler" (Tirmidhi). Justice

[10] Surah Al-Nisa, 4:58

(‘adl) is so central that the Quran says: "Do not let hatred of a people prevent you from being just" (5:8). Modern political insecurity often stems from governments that protect elites while oppressing minorities or political opponents. Islamic governance requires accountability mechanisms: the ruler is answerable to the community; public funds are trusts; judges are independent. The Prophet ﷺ warned: “If Allah appoints a ruler over a people and he dies while cheating his people, Allah forbids Paradise for him” (Muslim). To combat political insecurity, Muslim societies must demand transparency, independent judiciaries, anti-corruption agencies, and constitutional limits on power all derived from this Quranic command.Dr. Steven Pinker, psychologist, states

> "Despite the terrifying news, violence has declined dramatically over the long sweep of history. But the decline is not automatic; it depends on institutions of justice, democracy, and human rights. When these erode, violence returns. We cannot take security for granted.[11]"

Pinker documents the historical decline of violence but warns that it is reversible if institutions fail. Political insecurity re-emerges when states become predatory or collapse. Islam provides the institutional blueprint to sustain peace: justice, consultation, and rule of law. The Prophet ﷺ established the Constitution of Medina, which protected all religious communities and prohibited internal fighting. He said: “Do not revert to disbelievers after me, striking the necks of one another” (Bukhari). Political insecurity from civil war is explicitly forbidden. Pinker emphasizes democracy and human rights as violence-reducing institutions. Islam is compatible with democratic values (shura, bay’ah, accountability), though with unique Islamic characteristics. Many Muslim-majority countries suffer political insecurity precisely because they lack these institutions: hereditary dictatorships, military coups, weak judiciaries, and suppressed dissent. The Islamic remedy is not Western secular democracy but an Islamic democratic system where rulers are elected (or selected with community consent), governed by shura (consultation), bound by sharia’s justice principles, and removable for injustice. The Prophet ﷺ set no dynastic succession; leadership was based on merit and community choice. Restoring authentic Islamic governance with accountability, justice, and consultation is the cure for political insecurity.Professor Erica Chenoweth, political scientist, states

> "Nonviolent civil resistance is twice as effective as violent insurgency in achieving political goals and

[11] Steven Pinker, The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined, Viking, 2011, p. 672

> produces far more stable democracies afterward. Violence breeds insecurity; nonviolent action, when successful, builds more secure, participatory societies.[12]"

Chenoweth's research shows that nonviolent resistance is statistically more successful and leads to more secure societies. This aligns with Islamic ethics: the Prophet ﷺ endured persecution in Mecca for 13 years nonviolently, responded to insults with forgiveness, and only fought in self-defense when attacked. He forbade rebellion against a ruler as long as prayer was established (Muslim), meaning change should come through nonviolent reform, not civil war that creates greater insecurity. When oppression is extreme, Islam permits resistance but with strict rules: no targeting civilians, no destruction of property, and only in proportion to oppression. Modern political insecurity often results from violent insurgencies that kill civilians and destroy infrastructure, leaving failed states. The Arab Spring uprisings initially followed nonviolent civil resistance, but some degenerated into civil war when armed groups intervened. Chenoweth's research suggests that the nonviolent path mass protests, civil disobedience, strikes, boycotts is both more effective and more Islamic. Muslim activists should study the Prophet's Meccan period as a model of nonviolent resistance to political insecurity, demanding rights without resorting to counterproductive violence.

Digital Insecurity (Cybercrime, Surveillance, Misinformation, and Identity Theft)

The digital age has created new forms of insecurity: cybercrime (hacking, ransomware, identity theft, online fraud), surveillance (government and corporate monitoring of every click, message, and location), misinformation (deepfakes, propaganda, fake news), and online harassment (trolling, doxxing, revenge porn). These create profound psychological and material insecurity. People fear their bank accounts being drained, their private photos leaked, their reputations destroyed by a viral lie, or their political views monitored by authorities. Islam provides clear principles regarding privacy, honesty, protection of property, and prohibition of spying (tajassus) and spreading rumors. The Prophet ﷺ said that a person who spies on others has committed a sin. He also said that it is enough falsehood to speak everything one hears (Muslim). This section analyzes digital insecurity through Islamic information ethics.The Holy Quran

[12] Erica Chenoweth and Maria J. Stephan, Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict, Columbia University Press, 2011, p. 15

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يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَإٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ[13]

"O you who have believed, if a disobedient person comes to you with information, verify it, lest you harm a people out of ignorance and become regretful over what you have done."

This verse commands verification (tabayyun) of information before acting. In the digital age, misinformation spreads at lightning speed via social media, often from unverified or malicious sources. This causes immense harm: a false accusation ruins a reputation; a deepfake video incites violence; a conspiracy theory leads to harassment. The Quran commands Muslims to resist the urge to share shocking news without confirmation. The Prophet ﷺ said: "It is enough for a man to be a liar that he narrates everything he hears" (Muslim). This directly condemns retweeting, forwarding, or repeating unverified claims. Digital insecurity fear of being deceived or harmed by false information requires a culture of verification. Islamic digital ethics include: do not share unverified news, correct misinformation when you find it, do not amplify rumors, and hold platforms accountable for algorithmic amplification of false content. The verse also holds the "disobedient person" (fasiq) responsible for false reports. In modern terms, this applies to bots, troll farms, and malicious actors. Muslims should demand that social media platforms verify identities and remove malicious actors. Personal responsibility: before clicking share, verify.Shoshana Zuboff (already cited in AI section) states

"Surveillance capitalism is a new economic order that claims private human experience as free raw material for translation into behavioral data. This data is then used to predict and modify human behavior for profit. It is a fundamental threat to human autonomy and security.[14]"

Zuboff's critique applies directly to digital insecurity: people feel unsafe because their every online move is tracked, analyzed, and sold. This surveillance is not just corporate but often shared with governments. Islam explicitly prohibits spying (tajassus) on others' private affairs (Quran 49:12). Corporate surveillance is spying for profit. It violates the hadith: "Beware of suspicion, for suspicion is the most false of speech. Do not spy" (Bukhari). Digital insecurity also arises from behavioral manipulation: algorithms secretly modify what you see, nudge your purchases, and even influence your votes. This violates Islamic principles of transparency and consent. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Every deceit will have

[13] Surah Al-Hujurat, 49:6
[14] Shoshana Zuboff, The Age of Surveillance Capitalism, PublicAffairs, 2019, p. 14

a flag on the Day of Judgment" (Muslim). When platforms hide their data collection and manipulation, they commit deceit (ghish). Zuboff argues that people are not simply users but "the source of raw material" mined without consent. Islam requires that any use of a person's data requires their informed consent, clear benefit, and compensation. Muslims should use privacy-protecting tools, support data protection laws, and advocate for a digital bill of rights that prohibits surveillance capitalism.Laura DeNardis, internet governance scholar, states

> "The greatest threat to digital security is not hackers but the architecture of the internet itself: centralized control, lack of encryption by default, and business models based on surveillance. To be secure online, we need to re-engineer the internet for privacy and user control.[15]"

DeNardis argues that digital insecurity is built into the internet's design: centralized servers vulnerable to attack, protocols that leak data, and economic incentives for surveillance. This resonates with Islamic ethics: systems should be built on trust, security, and justice. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Religion is sincerity (nasihah)" (Muslim). Sincerity includes building secure systems that protect users, not expose them to harm. DeNardis calls for "re-engineering" the internet. Muslim engineers and policymakers should advocate for end-to-end encryption, decentralized platforms, open-source software (allowing accountability), and privacy-by-design. The hadith "There is no harm and no reciprocating harm" (Abu Dawud) applies: if a platform's architecture causes harm (data breaches, identity theft), it is prohibited. DeNardis also notes that smart devices (Internet of Things) cannot be turned off, creating constant vulnerability. Islam teaches that people have a right to rest and safety in their homes. The Quran says: ﴿وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مِّن بُيُوتِكُمْ سَكَنًا﴾(And He has made your homes as tranquility, 16:80). An Alexa or smart camera that can be hacked violates this tranquility. Muslims should demand the right to turn off and physically disconnect devices. Digital insecurity is a religious issue.

Environmental Insecurity (Climate Change, Natural Disasters, and Resource Scarcity)

Environmental insecurity fear of climate change impacts, extreme weather, sea-level rise, crop failure, water scarcity, and displacement is an escalating global crisis. Even those not yet directly affected experience eco-anxiety. The world's poorest, who contributed least to emissions, suffer most. The UN warns that climate change is a "threat multiplier,"

[15] Laura DeNardis, The Internet in Everything: Freedom and Security in a World with No Off Switch, Yale University Press, 2020, p. 112

exacerbating all other insecurities. Islam teaches that humans are stewards (khalifah) of the earth, responsible for its care. The Quran describes cosmic balance (mizan) and prohibits corruption (fasad) on earth. The Prophet ﷺ forbade waste, encouraged planting trees even at the end of the world, and warned against polluting water. Environmental insecurity arises from humanity's collective violation of divine trust. This section analyzes environmental insecurity through Islamic environmental ethics.The Holy Quran

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُم بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ[16]

"Corruption has appeared on land and sea because of what the hands of people have earned, so that He may make them taste some of what they have done, that they might return (to the right path)."

This verse directly links environmental degradation (fasad) to human actions, precisely describing modern climate change: pollution (land), ocean acidification and plastic waste (sea), deforestation, species extinction, and atmospheric disruption. The "corruption" is the consequence of human greed, waste, and negligence. The verse states that Allah allows humans to experience some consequences so they might repent and change. Environmental insecurity fear of floods, droughts, fires, storms is thus a divine warning. The remedy is tawbah (repentance) and changing behavior: reducing emissions, stopping deforestation, eliminating pollution, and living sustainably. The Prophet ﷺ said: "If the Day of Judgment comes and you have a seedling in your hand, plant it" (Ahmad). This shows that even in the face of apocalyptic environmental insecurity, individual action matters. Muslims have a religious duty to combat environmental fasad: join climate activism, reduce their carbon footprint, support renewable energy, and advocate for just environmental policies. The verse also implies that the rich and powerful who caused most of the pollution have a greater responsibility. Environmental insecurity will only worsen unless humanity collectively "returns" to Allah's way of balance, moderation, and stewardship.Naomi Klein, author and activist, states

"Climate change is a crisis of capitalism's logic of extraction, growth at all costs, and privatization of the commons. It makes everyone insecure, but especially the poor. The solution requires a fundamental shift from greed to care, from competition to cooperation.[17]"

[16] Surah Ar-Rum, 30:41

[17] Naomi Klein, This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate, Simon & Schuster, 2014, p. 15

Klein argues that the root of environmental insecurity is an economic system that treats the planet as a resource to be extracted for profit, ignoring ecological limits. This directly violates Islamic principles: the earth is a trust (amanah), not a commodity. The Quran says: ﴿وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا﴾(Do not corrupt the earth after its reformation, 7:56). The Prophet ﷺ forbade hoarding and waste. Klein's call for a shift from greed to care mirrors Islamic values: the Prophet ﷺ said: "The most beloved of people to Allah are those most beneficial to people." Environmental insecurity is worsened by the fact that corporations externalize costs (pollution) onto the poor and future generations a form of zulm (oppression). Islam prohibits harming others (la darar). Therefore, a polluting factory is committing darar against its neighbors and posterity. Klein's proposed solution cooperation, care, and commons aligns with Islamic economics based on mutual responsibility (takaful) and justice ('adl). Muslims should support a green economy, divest from fossil fuels, and hold corporations accountable for environmental harm as a religious obligation to combat fasad.Dr. Vandana Shiva, environmental activist, states

> "The ecological crisis is a spiritual crisis. When we forget that the earth is our mother, that water is life, and that seeds are our heritage, we become destructive. We need a return to reverence, to gratitude, and to Earth-centered spirituality.[18]"

Shiva identifies environmental insecurity as rooted in spiritual forgetfulness: humanity has lost reverence for creation. This is exactly the Islamic diagnosis. The Quran repeatedly calls people to reflect on the heavens, earth, rain, plants, and animals as signs (ayat) of Allah. The Prophet ﷺ taught reverence for all creatures: he forbade killing frogs, ants, and bees; he protected trees even in war. Shiva's "return to reverence" is the Islamic concept of taqwa (God-consciousness) extended to creation. The Quran says: ﴿وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ﴾(They did not estimate Allah with the estimation due to Him, 39:67). Environmental destruction is a failure to recognize the sacredness of Allah's creation. Shiva's call for gratitude (shukr) is central to Islam: the Prophet ﷺ said that gratitude for blessings increases them. If humans are grateful for clean water, fertile soil, and biodiversity, they will protect them. Environmental insecurity will persist as long as people treat nature as a dead resource rather than a living trust. Muslim spiritual practices dhikr, reflecting on nature, giving thanks before eating, avoiding waste are powerful antidotes. Mosques should lead

[18] Vandana Shiva, Soil Not Oil: Environmental Justice in an Age of Climate Crisis, South End Press, 2008, p. 107

environmental education, plant gardens, and adopt renewable energy, demonstrating reverence in action.

Existential Insecurity (Meaninglessness, Fear of Death, and Loss of Purpose)

Beyond material and social insecurities lies existential insecurity: the fear that life has no meaning, that death is the end, that one's suffering is pointless, and that there is no ultimate justice or purpose. Modern secular societies, having abandoned religious worldviews, face an epidemic of nihilism, meaninglessness, and death anxiety. Despite material comfort, many feel empty; suicide rates rise. Islam directly addresses existential insecurity with a clear worldview: life is a test from Allah, death is a transition to eternal life, and every soul will be judged with perfect justice. The Prophet ﷺ said that the world is a prison for the believer and paradise for the unbeliever (Muslim) meaning that the believer endures temporary insecurity knowing the permanent security of Jannah awaits. This section analyzes existential insecurity through Islamic theology of meaning, death, and the afterlife.The Holy Quran

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا[19]

"He who created death and life to test you as to which of you is best in deed."

This verse transforms existential insecurity fear of death and uncertainty of purpose into meaningful orientation. Death is not annihilation but a creation of Allah. Life is not random but a test. The purpose is not happiness or wealth but "best in deed" (ahsan 'amal) excellence in action for Allah's pleasure. This directly counters modern nihilism. The Prophet ﷺ said: "The intelligent one is he who subdues his desires and works for what comes after death; the foolish one is he who follows his desires and expects Allah's forgiveness without effort" (Tirmidhi). Existential insecurity fades when one knows: life has a purpose, actions matter, justice will be served, and death opens a door to eternal security. The Quran repeatedly promises that those who believe and do good have nothing to fear (la khawfun 'alayhim). This is not denial of death but contextualization. The Prophet ﷺ visited graves, reminded people of death, but with hope in Allah's mercy. Muslims are taught to prepare for death (good deeds) not dread it. This Islamic worldview is a powerful antidote to existential anxiety. Regular remembrance of death (dhikr al-mawt) is a spiritual practice that increases good deeds, not despair.Dr. Irvin Yalom, existential psychiatrist, states

[19] Surah Al-Mulk, 67:2

> "The fear of death is the ultimate root of all anxiety. We spend our lives trying to deny death through fame, wealth, procreation, or merging with something larger. But only by confronting death directly can we live authentically and meaningfully.[20]"

Yalom, a leading existential psychotherapist, argues that death anxiety underlies most other insecurities. People seek money, status, and power to feel immortal, but these never satisfy. The remedy, Yalom says, is confronting death directly—accepting mortality and choosing meaningful action in limited time. Islam agrees remarkably with this diagnosis but provides a different resolution. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Remember often the destroyer of pleasures: death" (Tirmidhi). He did not say avoid thinking about death but actively remember it. Why? Because death-remembrance makes the believer prioritize eternal deeds over transient pleasures. It also causes tawbah (repentance) and gratitude. Yalom suggests meaning comes from within (authenticity). Islam says meaning comes from divine purpose: serving Allah and serving creation. Yalom's therapy helps people live without neurotic anxiety. Islam provides that plus hope: death is not annihilation but transition. The believer knows that death opens the door to reunion with Allah and the righteous. This hope eliminates existential terror. Yalom admits that for religious believers, fear of death is often lower. Research confirms that Muslims with strong faith have lower death anxiety. The Islamic remedy: cultivate tawakkul (trust in Allah), pray regularly (connection to the Eternal), and do good deeds (leaving a legacy of benefit).Viktor Frankl, psychiatrist and Holocaust survivor, states

> "Life is never made unbearable by circumstances, but only by lack of meaning and purpose. The person who has a 'why' to live for can bear almost any 'how.' He who knows the meaning of his life has no need for security.[21]"

Frankl, who survived Nazi camps, observed that prisoners with a sense of meaning (to publish a book, to see a loved one) survived even when physically weaker, while those who lost meaning perished. Meaning, not comfort, provides existential security. This directly supports the Islamic worldview. The Quran gives the ultimate "why": to worship Allah and to be His vicegerent (khalifah) on earth. This meaning is available even in extreme suffering: the Prophet ﷺ said, "Strange is the affair of the believer; all of it is good. If he experiences something pleasing, he thanks

[20] Irvin Yalom, Staring at the Sun: Overcoming the Terror of Death, Jossey-Bass, 2008, p. 7
[21] Viktor Frankl, Man's Search for Meaning, Beacon Press, 1946/2006, p. 109

Allah, and it is good for him. If he experiences harm, he is patient, and it is good for him" (Muslim). No circumstance is meaningless. Frankl developed logotherapy, where patients find meaning through work, love, or suffering nobly endured. Islam provides all three: work as worship, love of Allah and His creation, and suffering as expiation or test leading to reward. Existential insecurity disappears when the believer knows that every moment has purpose, that Allah is just, and that ultimate security (Jannah) is assured for the righteous. Muslims should actively cultivate meaning through daily worship, service to others, and reflection on divine purpose.

Islamic Remedies for Insecurity (Tawakkul, Iman, and Community)

Having diagnosed multiple forms of modern insecurity—economic, psychological, social, political, digital, environmental, existential—this final section synthesizes Islamic remedies. Islam does not promise a life without trials (the Prophet ﷺ himself suffered greatly). But it provides tools to transform insecurity into security: internal anchors (tawakkul, iman, dhikr) and external structures (family, community, justice, zakat). The Quran promises that those who believe and do good will be made to dwell securely (24:55). The Prophet ﷺ taught specific practices for security: morning and evening adhkar, dua for anxiety, visiting the sick, giving charity, and establishing justice. This section integrates the previous sections into a coherent Islamic response to the modern insecurity epidemic.The Holy Quran

وَمَن يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّهُ مَخْرَجًا وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ[22]

"And whoever fears Allah, He will make for him a way out and will provide for him from where he does not expect."

This powerful verse directly addresses insecurity about the future. Taqwa (God-consciousness, piety) is the ultimate remedy for anxiety. The promise "a way out" (makhraja) means from every difficulty financial, social, personal. "Provision from where he does not expect" means divine support and unexpected solutions. The Prophet ﷺ lived this: when he and Abu Bakr were trapped in the cave of Thawr during hijrah, the enemy was at the entrance. Abu Bakr wept: "If one of them looks down at his feet, he will see us." The Prophet ﷺ said: "Do not grieve; indeed Allah is with us" (Quran 9:40). Then Allah sent a spider to weave a web over the cave entrance, and the enemy left. This is tawakkul: taking legitimate means (going to the cave) but trusting Allah for outcomes. Modern Muslims can

[22] Surah At-Talaq, 65:2-3

practice tawakkul by: making sincere efforts to address their insecurity (education, job applications, therapy, voting, activism), then leaving results to Allah without crippling anxiety. Taqwa also means avoiding haram income, fraud, and exploitation—all of which create long-term insecurity (Allah removes blessing from haram wealth). The verse teaches that security is not the absence of problems but the presence of divine support through taqwa. Strengthening one's relationship with Allah is the most effective insecurity-reduction strategy.Imam Tirmidhi narrates that:

عَنِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ قَالَ: «مَنْ أَصْبَحَ مِنْكُمْ آمِنًا فِي سِرْبِهِ، مُعَافًى فِي جَسَدِهِ، عِنْدَهُ قُوتُ يَوْمِهِ، فَكَأَنَّمَا حِيزَتْ لَهُ الدُّنْيَا بِحَذَافِيرِهَا[23]

"Whoever among you wakes up secure in his property, healthy in his body, and having his food for the day, it is as if he has been given the entire world."

This hadith redefines security: not wealth or power, but three basic conditions: security (amnan fi sirbihi safe from harm in his community), health (mu'afan fi jasadihi), and daily food (quta yawmihi). The Prophet ﷺ says this person "has been given the entire world"not in quantity but in quality: contentment (qana'ah). Modern insecurity often arises from comparison (seeing others on social media with more) and wanting more than basic sufficiency. This hadith teaches that true security is gratitude for sufficiency, not endless accumulation. The Prophet ﷺ also said: "Richness is not an abundance of wealth; rather, richness is richness of the soul" (Bukhari). The remedy for insecurity is not more money or possessions (which create new anxieties: theft, maintenance, envy) but contentment with sufficiency and trust in Allah. Muslims are taught to recite the morning dua: "O Allah, whatever blessing I or any of Your creation has woken up with is from You alone, without partner. To You is all praise and gratitude." This practice cultivates awareness of already-present security. If one has safety, health, and today's food, all else is surplus. This hadith powerfully counters consumer culture that profits from making people feel perpetually insecure and needing more.Dr. Brené Brown, research professor, states

"We cultivate security not by armor, but by vulnerability and connection. The illusion that we can control everything and protect ourselves by walling others out is the source of deep insecurity. True belonging and

[23] Sunan al-Tirmidhi, Book of Zuhd, Chapter on Contentment, Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, Beirut, 1418 AH, vol. 4, p. 562, hadith no. 2346

security come from showing up, being seen, and trusting others.[24]"

Brown's research on vulnerability, shame, and connection shows that attempts to achieve security through control, isolation, and armor actually increase insecurity. People who try to avoid rejection by never risking connection end up more lonely and anxious. Her findings parallel Islamic teachings. The Prophet ﷺ was extremely vulnerable: he wept openly in prayer, admitted fear and hunger, shared his struggles, and loved his companions deeply. He said: "The believer is the mirror of his brother" (Abu Dawud), meaning we see ourselves in others and rely on them. The Islamic community (ummah) is built on mutual vulnerability and support (takaful). Brown says "true belonging" requires "showing up and being seen." Islam commands congregational prayer, charity, visiting the sick, and attending funerals all acts of vulnerable connection. Brown notes that trust is built through small, consistent acts of reliability. Islam calls this amanah (trustworthiness) and teaches that believers fulfill promises and are reliable. Brown's remedy for insecurity courageous connection is exactly the Prophetic model: the brotherhood (ukhuwwah) established in Medina turned insecure refugees (Muhajirun) and local supporters (Ansar) into a powerful, secure community. Modern Muslims should build such communities: small groups that meet regularly, share struggles, offer practical help, and pray together, replacing isolation with belonging.

Conclusion

1. Modern insecurity is multidimensional: economic precarity, psychological anxiety, social fragmentation, political oppression, digital surveillance, environmental collapse, and existential meaninglessness all of which are interconnected.
2. The root causes are both structural (neoliberal capitalism, authoritarianism, technology design) and spiritual (forgetting Allah, loss of purpose, breakdown of values).
3. Islam provides a holistic framework: internal security through tawakkul (trust in Allah), iman (faith), dhikr (remembrance), and qana'ah (contentment).
4. Economic security requires zakat, fair wages, prohibition of hoarding, and social safety nets (Bait al-Mal) as established by the Prophet ﷺ.

[24] Brené Brown, Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead, Gotham Books, 2012, p. 45

5. Psychological security requires prayer, supplication, community connection, and gratitude all empirically supported by modern mental health research.
6. Social security requires strong family bonds (silat al-rahim), community brotherhood (ukhuwwah), and mutual responsibility (takaful).
7. Political security requires justice (‘adl), consultation (shura), accountability, and nonviolent resistance to tyranny as modeled by the Prophet ﷺ in Mecca.
8. Digital security requires privacy, verification of information (tabayyun), prohibition of spying (tajassus), and structural reform of surveillance-based business models.
9. Environmental and existential security require recognizing the earth as a trust (amanah), humanity as stewards (khalifah), and death as a door to eternal justice and mercy.

Recommendations

1. For Individuals: Strengthen daily Islamic practices: morning/evening adhkar, five daily prayers with concentration, weekly Quran reflection, regular dhikr, and dua for anxiety. Limit social media use, avoid comparison, and practice gratitude (shukr) and contentment (qana‘ah).
2. For Families and Communities: Revive extended family connections (silat al-rahim), host regular community meals (similar to iftar), establish neighborhood support groups for mutual aid (childcare, elder care, financial help), and create mental health support circles integrated with Islamic spiritual guidance.
3. For Islamic Institutions: Mosques should offer free counseling services, financial literacy classes, job placement assistance, and community gardens. Friday sermons should address insecurity causes (economic, social, digital) and Islamic remedies without judgment. Establish waqf funds for affordable housing and healthcare.
4. For Muslim Governments: Implement comprehensive social security systems (based on zakat and Bait al-Mal), enact anti-hoarding and fair wage laws, protect privacy and civil liberties, ban surveillance capitalism practices, invest in renewable energy, and ensure justice (rule of law) for all citizens regardless of status.
5. For Civil Society and Activism: Organize nonviolent advocacy for economic justice (living wage, universal healthcare), political accountability (anti-corruption, free press), digital rights (encryption, data protection), and climate action (divestment,

renewable energy). Frame all activism within Islamic values of justice, mercy, and consultation.

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