# ROLES OF AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE IN DETERMINING PEOPLE'S PERCEPTION TOWARDS TAKAFUL: EVIDENCE FROM SOUTHWESTERN AFGHANISTAN

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**Abstract:** The main purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of awareness and knowledge in determining people's perceptions towards takaful services in Afghanistan's southwestern zone, with a particular focus on the provinces of Kandahar, Helmand, and Zabul. This study aims to shed light on the elements impacting people's perceptions of takaful by assessing their awareness and understanding levels of takaful in the specified geographic and socioeconomic environment. To achieve the study objective, an expert research methodology is adopted. It includes survey-based inquiries conducted using a carefully chosen heterogeneous purposive sampling (HPS) technique. The data collected is subjected to rigorous analysis, including reliability testing, multiple regression, and Pearson correlation analysis. The robust analysis is facilitated by the utilization of SPSS version 26:00 software. The results state that the role of awareness and knowledge is established as statistically significant and has a positive impact on shaping individuals' perceptions towards takaful services within the southwestern zone of Afghanistan. To enhance the breadth of future research, it is recommended that similar investigations be extended to other provinces, fostering a more

comprehensive understanding. As an avenue for future exploration, subsequent studies could delve into additional determinants of individuals' perceptions that may have been unaddressed in this research. The insights garnered from this study possess significant implications for policymakers seeking to facilitate the establishment of the takaful industry, with a particular emphasis on aligning regulatory measures with Sharia law and focusing on the salient determinants that influence individuals' perceptions.

**Keywords**: Awareness, Knowledge, People's Perception, Takaful, Southwestern Afghanistan.

## INTRODUCTION

The word Takaful comes from the Arabic noun "Kafala," which means "guaranteeing each other," (Rafeea, n.d.). The history of Islamic insurance, according to(Soualhi & Shammari, 2015), began in Mecca and Medina under the "Aquila" system, in which tribes mutually agreed to pay indemnity in the event of a loss to another tribe member. Prophet Muhammad later agreed to it. Takaful, according to Allen (1990) of the Oxford Dictionary of English, is a structural system in which members pool their resources and then reinvest them under Islamic Sharia laws. The most legitimate definition of Takaful, according to(Rahman, 2009), comes from the Malaysian Takaful Act 1984, which states, "Takaful is a construct based on brotherhood, solidarity, and mutual-assistance providing financial aid in case of catastrophe or loss occurrence to indemnify accused one, where all participants are agreed to mutually contribute." The first Takaful operator company, according to (H. A. Hassan & Abbas, 2020), was "Islamic Insurance Company Ltd of Sudan," which was founded in 1979.

The Takaful mechanism, according to (Ahmed Salman et al., 2017), is a pure mutual construct. Takaful is built on mutual collaboration and voluntary contribution, in which the risk element is shared among policy members and the Takaful operator, whereas risk is transferred from the policy member to the insurance operator in conventional insurance. Members of the policy contribute to a pooled fund. The contributions are invested in numerous Sharia-compliant schemes, with the earnings remaining in the pool. In the future, if a member suffers a loss, the pool will compensate him or her.

In 2020, the global takaful market is expected to reach a value of US$ 27.6 billion. Looking ahead, the IMARC Group anticipations that the market will increase at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of around 11 per cent between 2021 and 2026. Takaful is an Islamic insurance system in which members mutually contribute a quantity of money to support one another in the event of loss, damage or theft. The goal of takaful is for people to work together, live in harmony with one another, and protect one another from unforeseeable events. In the case of takaful, the policyholders make regular monetary contributions, which are overseen and handled by a takaful management firm on a contractual basis. Nonetheless, the excess cash invested is then used to make investments that are beneficial to the policyholders in terms of earning a bigger profit(Husin & Rahman, 2016).

The Afghan insurance market is governed by the Afghanistan Insurance Authority (AIA), which is part of the Ministry of Finance. The Insurance Procedures to Accompany the Insurance Law of the previous regime (Islamic Republic of Afghanistan) of 2008, as well as the Insurance Law of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan of 2009, are examples of

regulations in Afghanistan. In addition to this, there is the Law of the Land and the Law of Commercial Transactions.

In Afghanistan, there are four licensed active insurance companies listed below: Afghanistan National Insurance Company, which was established in 1964 and is owned by the government; Insurance Corporation of Afghanistan, which was established in 2008 by a group of experienced investors and managed by a team of professionals from the London market; Afghan Global Insurance, which was established in 2010 and is owned by local investors and businessmen; and Insurance Group of Afghanistan. Because there are no brokers or agents in the Afghan market, all business is conducted directly with companies or prospects in the country. Advertising is carried out on billboards that are quite enormous. There are regional offices for several corporations, and one company maintains a representative office in Dubai. Any reinsurance is put outside of the country, and the majority of it is placed in the London market, particularly at Lloyd's, where some of the syndicates invest in a variety of different lines of business(Profile, 2014). Afghanistan, which is an Islamic country with a Muslim majority, has not yet takaful markets. However, the country's insurance services are provided by four of the country's largest corporations, each of which has a small customer base. People in Afghanistan are reluctant to participate in traditional insurance markets due to the interest rates, and they urgently require Islamic insurance (Takaful). Due to the lack of Islamic insurance in the country, dangers exist among families and enterprises. On the other hand, it is unknown whether Afghans have an understanding of Islamic insurance (takaful) and whether they are aware of and knowledgeable

about Islamic insurance (takaful). As a result, this study asks for awareness and knowledge and examines people's perception of Islamic insurance (takaful) in Afghanistan's southwestern region.

The study aims to investigate the relationship between awareness and knowledge as independent variables, and people's perception as the dependent variable, in the context of Takaful (Islamic insurance) in Southwestern Afghanistan. The objectives of this research include:

1. To assess the level of awareness among individuals in Southwestern Afghanistan regarding the concept and benefits of Takaful.

2. To analyze the extent of knowledge that individuals possess about Takaful principles, mechanisms, and their role within Islamic finance.

3. To understand how awareness and knowledge levels influence people's perception towards Takaful, including their attitudes, opinions, and willingness to participate in Takaful arrangements.

4. To establish a quantitative link between awareness and knowledge, and their combined impact on shaping individuals' perception towards Takaful.

5. To enrich the existing literature by providing empirical evidence on the role of awareness and knowledge in influencing people's perception of Takaful, specifically within the unique context of Southwestern Afghanistan.

6. To offer insights that could inform policymakers and industry stakeholders about the significance of awareness and knowledge enhancement programs in promoting Takaful adoption and understanding in the region.

By addressing these objectives, the research aims to shed light on the relationship between awareness, knowledge, and perception towards Takaful in Southwestern Afghanistan, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of factors influencing the acceptance and growth of Takaful in the region

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Takaful has gained importance as an ethical alternative to traditional insurance as an integral aspect of Islamic finance(Aziz et al., 2019). Takaful's success and acceptance are heavily reliant on people's awareness, knowledge, and perception of its ideas and benefits(Areeba Khan et al., 2020). This literature review investigates existing research to better understand the roles that awareness and knowledge play in creating people's perceptions of Takaful, with a particular emphasis on the unique environment of Southwestern Afghanistan.

### Awareness and Perception of Takaful

Numerous studies have highlighted the significance of awareness in driving individuals' perception of financial products and services (Bhatti & Md Husin, 2020,(Aziz et al., 2017). In the context of Takaful, awareness encompasses familiarity with its underlying concepts, such as profit-sharing and risk-sharing in compliance with Islamic principles (Kehinde & Sharofiddin, 2021). Studies have indicated that higher levels of awareness correlate positively with perception of Takaful, suggesting that informed individuals are more likely to view Takaful as a viable and ethical financial instrument (Areeba Khan et al., 2020). The term "people's perception" describes the arbitrary comprehension, interpretation, and assessment that people

have of a given idea, concept, thing, or service. It includes all of their ideas, attitudes, and opinions formed as a result of their life experiences, education, and outside influences. This section provides the most relevant results of prior researchers' awareness and knowledge of Takaful. (R. Hassan et al., 2018)surveyed in Malaysia to explore the awareness and knowledge of Takaful among Malaysian consumers. The findings revealed that a significant number of respondents lacked awareness regarding Takaful. Out of the 503 respondents, 124 were unaware of Takaful, and 45 percent were unaware that Takaful policyholders share risks. Moreover, a considerable percentage of respondents were uncertain about whether Takaful is a form of gambling. However, it is noteworthy that 70.2 percent of the respondents believed that Takaful products are Sharia-compliant.

(Liyana Mohamed Yousop et al., n.d.) investigated to assess the awareness level of Takaful products among microenterprises in Malaysia. The study found that the majority of respondents were aware of the availability of insurance products in the market. However, only a small percentage of the respondents were aware of the emergence of Takaful products. This demonstrates a lack of familiarity with Takaful among small and medium-sized businesses, particularly micro businesses. These findings are in line with the observations made by (Rafeea, n.d.)who highlighted the detrimental impact of a lack of understanding of insurance concepts and a scarcity of education on the development of Takaful products. Hence, in the light of above studies, this study developed the following hypothesis:

$H_1$: Awareness is significant to people's perception

**Knowledge and Perception of Takaful**

Knowledge about Takaful intricacies, operational mechanisms, and its compatibility with Sharia principles contributes to a deeper understanding and perception of the concept (Bhatti & Md Husin, 2020).Studies have shown that individuals possessing comprehensive knowledge of Takaful exhibit a greater inclination towards adopting Takaful arrangements and expressing positive attitudes towards its value proposition (Maiyaki & Ayuba, 2015). (Soualhi & Shammari, 2015),conducted an exploratory study in India to examine the acceptability, possibility, and appropriate model of Takaful in the Indian context. The study included 216 Muslim and 117 non-Muslim respondents, and the findings suggested that Takaful enjoys immense popularity among Indians, irrespective of their religious affiliation. The researchers also found that a hybrid model combining the concepts of wakalah and mudarabah would be the most suitable for the Indian market. Furthermore, the opinions of ten Shari'ah experts, seven takaful operators, and five consultants supported the potential promotion of Takaful in India.

Hidayat and Rafeea (2014) surveyed Bahrain to assess public awareness of the Takaful concept and principles. The study revealed a high level of public knowledge regarding Takaful in Bahrain. Additionally, the researchers discovered that individuals with higher levels of education exhibited greater awareness compared to those with lower levels of education, and this difference was statistically significant. (H. A. Hassan & Abbas, 2020) surveyed Pakistan to investigate the factors influencing investors' intention to adopt Takaful

products. The findings indicated that relative advantage, compatibility, social influence, awareness, and religiosity significantly influenced the behavioural intention towards Takaful among Pakistani respondents. The study also highlighted that although Takaful has considerable potential in Pakistan, its market share remains lower than that of traditional insurance due to a lack of understanding. The authors recommended that Takaful operators focus on raising awareness about Takaful and develop more innovative products to enhance its market presence.

$H_2$: knowledge is significant to people's perception.

**Local Context and Southwestern Afghanistan:**

The role of awareness and knowledge in shaping perception of Takaful is likely to be influenced by the socio-cultural and economic context of Southwestern Afghanistan. Research has indicated that Islamic finance and ethical considerations are particularly significant in Islamic societies, potentially amplifying the impact of awareness and knowledge on Takaful perception (Siddiqi, 2018; Iqbal et al., 2020). However, studies specific to Afghanistan, especially its southwestern region, are limited, warranting further investigation to understand how local factors interact with awareness and knowledge to determine Takaful perception.

**Conclusion:**

The literature demonstrates a consistent pattern highlighting the positive relationship between awareness, knowledge, and perception of Takaful. Existing research emphasizes the importance of informed individuals in fostering favourable attitudes towards Takaful, and this

relationship is expected to hold in the distinct context of Southwestern Afghanistan. The next section of this study presents the research methodology designed to explore the roles of awareness and knowledge in determining people's perception towards Takaful in the specific Afghan context.

## METHODS

This study uses a deductive research method. According to Burney & Saleem (2008), it goes from general to particular and from theory to data, which implies applying broad theory to a specific region to see whether it fits. Awareness and knowledge theory is applied to the people's perception of Islamic insurance or Takaful in the Afghanistan southwestern zone.

The nature of this research is exploratory. According to Stebbins (2014), such a study design is concerned with how the phenomena of interest are investigated. Exploratory research may be both qualitative and quantitative, according to the author. Similarly, the study selects a quantitative exploratory design based on the research questions and goals. The primary data is gathered using heterogeneous purposive sampling to ensure that the data is varied and that various perspectives on Afghanistan's southwestern zone. Awareness and knowledge are the examining variables and are independent of this paradigm. In the questionnaire, these elements were utilized as IVs, while perception was used as DV. Despite all of the modifications, the awareness and knowledge items were adopted from(R. Hassan et al., 2018), and perception items were adopted from(Ahmed Salman et al., 2017), The survey instrument (questionnaire) is divided into three sections.

Section 1 contains demographic information about respondents, such as gender, age, education level, and occupation. The second part contains the dependent variable perception, which has four items, as well as independent variables such as awareness (4 items), and knowledge(4 items), The total number of questions in the questionnaire is 15. the research utilized a five-point Likert Scale assessment option in the questionnaire, ranging from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating severe disagreement, three neutrals, and 5 indicating strong agreement. A statistical technique uses to investigate the connection between one or more independent variables and a dependent variable (Sykes, 2000). According to Wei (2010), two kinds of regressions (simple linear and multiple linear) are the most often used statistical methods in the social sciences. However, the researcher in this study utilizes multiple linear regression to establish the significant relationship between awareness, knowledge and people's perception (Jaccard & Turrisi, 2003).

Multiple linear regression is used to examine the following hypotheses in this research.

$H_1$: Awareness is significant to people's perception

$H_2$: knowledge is significant to people's perception

$$PP= \alpha+\beta 1(AW)+ \beta 2(KN) +\varepsilon$$

In the above regression analysis equation:

PP= People Perception,

AW= Awareness,

KN = Knowledge,

$\varepsilon$ = Error term

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Reliability Test

According to Tavakol & Dennick, (2011), Cronbach's alpha coefficient is the most widely used assessment instrument for dependability, particularly in the organizational and social sciences. They noted that the tests indicated characterized the questionnaire's reliability and internal consistency, as well as rates and occasion. However, they claim that there would be strong internal consistency if Cronbach's alpha coefficient were closer to 1. Cronbach's alpha coefficient for all items (questions) contained in the variables is 0.796, as shown in Table 1, indicating a high degree of consistency across items.

**Table 1.** Cronbach's alpha coefficient for internal consistency (Reliability Statistics)

| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
|---|---|
| .796 | 14 |

Notes: Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for the scale is calculated as α = 0.796, indicating a satisfactory level of internal consistency among the items

Source: Data analysis based on the studies collected data

### Multiple Regression Analysis

In the regression model of the study, there are two IVs: awareness and knowledge, and a dependent variable the people's perception. To assess the influence of IVs on people's perception, these IVs were regressed against people's perception in a linear multiple regression model.

**Table 2.** Multiple Regression

| Model Summary | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. The error in the Estimate |
| 1 | .564a | .318 | .304 | .64358 |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), KN, AW | | | | |

Notes: The multiple regression analysis indicates a moderate positive relationship between the variables, with R = 0.564. The coefficient of determination, $R^2$ = 0.318, suggests that approximately 31.8% of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variables included in the model

Source: Data analysis based on the studies collected data

R denotes the coefficient of correlation in the above table Model 1, which indicates the strength of the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The strength of the power of the association between variables is dependent on the proximity of the R-value to +1 or -1, according to (Chhapra et al., 2018). Several RS close to +1 indicates a very strong positive link, whereas a value close to -1 indicates a very strong negative relationship. As a result, the value of R of 0.564 in our study regression analysis reveals a somewhat good link between the dependent variable perception and the other independent variables (awareness, knowledge). It claims that people's perceptions of takaful in southwestern Afghanistan are positively influenced by their level of awareness, knowledge.

Furthermore, in the above table Model 1, R square explains the coefficient of determination, which depicts the degree of variance in perception due to the study's independent factors. If we look at the $R^2$ value of 0.318, we can see that people's perception level of Takaful in southwestern Afghanistan is 38 percent, as indicated by our study's

independent variables awareness, and knowledge. The beta (b) value of awareness (0.576) implies that increasing the awareness levels by one will result in a change in the consumers' perception of 1.489+0.576. In our study, the p-value for awareness is 0.000 (or t = 4.774). At a 5% level, this indicates that awareness has a considerable impact on consumer perception. As a result, our study hypothesis number one, that awareness of takaful alters people's perceptions in southern Afghanistan, is undoubtedly supported.

When it comes to knowledge, the beta for knowledge is 0.443, which means that changing the values of knowledge by one will cause a 1.483 + 0.443 change in people's perceptions of the Southwest. The p-value of 0.001 implies that the knowledge has a significant effect on consumers' perceptions in southwestern Afghanistan. As a result of this finding, we conclude that the second hypothesis of our study, that knowledge influences Takaful in southwestern Afghanistan, is supported.

**Table 3.** Coefficients

| Coefficients | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 1.483 | .302 | | 4.903 | .000 |
| | Mean_AW | .576 | .121 | .522 | 4.774 | .000 |
| | Mean_KN | .443 | .109 | .630 | 4.581 | .000 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Mean_DV | | | | | | |

Notes: The table presents the coefficients for the regression model. The results indicate that Awareness has a significant positive relationship with the dependent variable (Beta = 0.522, t = 4.774, p < 0.001), while Knowledge also shows a significant positive relationship with

the dependent variable (Beta = 0.630, t = 4.581, p < 0.001). The constant term (Constant) is 1.483 (t = 4.903, p < 0.001), representing the expected value of the dependent variable when both Awareness and Knowledge are zero. Overall, the coefficients suggest that both Awareness and Knowledge have meaningful influences on the dependent variable, further highlighting their importance in understanding the relationship with the dependent variable.

Source: Data analysis based on the studies collected data

To summarize the overall model of this study, we structured it as follows:

$PP = \alpha + \beta_1 (AW) + \beta_2 (KN) + \varepsilon$

$PP = 1.483 + 0.576(AW) + 0.443(KN) + \varepsilon$

**Table 4.** Hypothesis Testing

| HYPOTHESIS | Est | P.VALUE | RESULTS |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Ho1: Awareness is significant to people's perception** | 4.338 | .000 | Support |
| **Ho2: knowledge is significant to people's perception** | 4.786 | .001 | Support |

Notes: Results strongly support both hypotheses. Awareness (Est = 4.338, p < 0.001) and Knowledge (Est = 4.786, p < 0.001) significantly influence people's perceptions.

Source: Data analysis based on the studies collected data

The correlation analysis between the study variables that are significant at the 0.01 level is shown in the table below. The dependent variable perception and the independent variable awareness have a positive correlation of .556**, while the dependent variable perception and the second independent variable knowledge have a positive correlation of .398** in this study. The first independent variable in the

study, awareness, had a positive correlation of .641** with the second independent variable.

**Table 5.** Correlation Matrix

| Correlations | | DV | AW | KN |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| DV | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .562** | .398** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 300 | 300 | 300 |
| AW | Pearson Correlation | .562** | 1 | .641** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | | .000 |
| | N | 300 | 300 | 300 |
| KN | Pearson Correlation | .398** | .641** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | |
| | N | 300 | 300 | 300 |
| **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). | | | | |

Notes: The correlation matrix indicates significant associations among the variables. DV (Dependent Variable) shows a moderate positive correlation with AW (Awareness) (r = 0.562, p < 0.01) and a moderate positive correlation with KN (Knowledge) (r = 0.398, p < 0.01). Additionally, there is a strong positive correlation between AW and KN (r = 0.641, p < 0.01). All correlations are statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). The sample size for each variable is N = 100.

Source: Data analysis based on the studies collected data

## CONCLUSION

The research findings represent a comprehensive and rigorous investigation into the factors; awareness and knowledge and their influence on people's perception of takaful in the southern region of Southwestern Afghanistan. The study successfully achieved its research objectives by providing detailed insights and statistical evidence to support the conclusions drawn. Employing the robust

statistical technique of multiple regression analysis, the researchers were able to precisely examine the extent to which awareness and knowledge contribute to the observed variation in people's perception of takaful. The statistical analysis revealed compelling results, with all variables exhibiting a significant p-value at the 1 percent level. This strong statistical significance solidifies the acceptance of hypotheses H1 and H2 at a significant level of 1 percent, thereby confirming the significant role of awareness and knowledge as determinants of people's perception of takaful.

The research findings are of paramount importance as they shed light on the intricate relationship between awareness, knowledge, and people's perception of takaful. Notably, even when considering the more stringent 1 percent and 5 percent significant levels ($p > 0.01$, $P > 0.05$), the analysis revealed significant positive connections between awareness, knowledge, and people's perception. This implies that higher levels of awareness and knowledge are strongly associated with more favourable perceptions of takaful among individuals in the region. Furthermore, the magnitude of the impact of the independent variables, quantified by their respective beta coefficients ($\beta$), is particularly noteworthy. The beta coefficient for awareness was calculated to be 0.576, indicating that a one-unit increase in awareness can lead to a substantial 57.6 percent change in people's perception of takaful. Similarly, the beta coefficient for knowledge was determined to be 0.443, suggesting that a one-unit increase in knowledge can result in a significant 44.3 percent change in people's perception.

The findings of the study addressed the second research objective by discovering the essential factors of people's perception towards

takaful in Southwestern Afghanistan's southern region. Knowledge alongside awareness is a significant factor in people's perception towards takaful service. These determinants, however, have been recognized in the literature, and the study's statistical findings validated them in the setting of southern Southwestern Afghanistan. This research also backed up the theory of planned behaviour(Raza et al., 2020).

Based on multiple regression analysis, it was determined that Knowledge alongside awareness explained variation in people's perception towards takaful. Furthermore, the p-value of the t-test was significant at 1 percent for all variables. Thus, $H_1$, and $H_2$, are accepted at a significant level of 1 percent, Knowledge alongside awareness are the significant factors of people's perception towards takaful. The findings of the research were used to meet Research objective two. At the 1% significant levels ($p > 0.01$,), there were significant positive connections between awareness and people's perception towards takaful. The variation explained by awareness in people's perception was equal to 57.6%.

When it comes to objective number 3 of the study, it was found that at the 1% significant levels ($p > 0.01$,), there were significant positive connections between knowledge and people's perception towards takaful. The variation explained by awareness in people's perception was equal to 44.3%.

In conclusion, this research endeavours to delve into the realm of Takaful within the context of Southwestern Afghanistan. By assessing awareness levels, analyzing knowledge of Takaful principles, and understanding the resulting perceptions, this study has revealed

intricate connections. The empirical evidence unveiled the pivotal role of awareness and knowledge in shaping individuals' attitudes, opinions, and willingness to partake in Takaful arrangements.

In addition, the correlation was established, emphasizing how heightened awareness and comprehensive knowledge synergistically impact the perception of Takaful. This study enriches existing literature by providing context-specific insights, thus enhancing our comprehension of Takaful's acceptance and growth factors in Southwestern Afghanistan. Policymakers and industry stakeholders can leverage these findings to prioritize awareness and knowledge enhancement initiatives, fostering Takaful's adoption and understanding across the region.

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