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GALLUP PAKISTAN POLL FINDINGS ON

## **URBAN MOTHERS TURNING TO BREAST-MILK SUBSTITUTES**

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H-45, St.52,F-7/4, Islamabad, Pakistan. Tel +92-51-2655630, Fax +92-51-2655632,

Email: [isb@gallup.com.pk](mailto:isb@gallup.com.pk)

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### *Urban Mothers turning to Breast-milk Substitutes*

According to a recent Gallup poll, nearly one half of the mothers living in major urban centres in Pakistan have turned to the substitutes of breast-feeding as a primary source of feeding their young babies 56% of the lactating mothers in the major urban centres of Pakistan were primarily breast-fed, while the remaining 44% of the urban mothers were equally divided between those using dairy milk (22%) and powdered milk (22%) as a primary source of feeding their babies. The survey was conducted by Gallup Pakistan with a representative sample of households in the major urban centres of Pakistan. The sample included women belonging to various incomes, educational and social backgrounds. The findings of the survey were computer-processed to analyze the differences in the behavior pattern of various social classes in the country.

The Gallup Survey of lactating mothers showed that women in the higher income families were increasingly turning to breast-milk substitutes. Breast-milk substitutes were used by 54% of mothers in the upper-middle and high income families, 41% of mothers in the middle income families and 20% of mothers in the low income families. The use of breast-milk substitutes is strongly correlated with the education of the mother. 70% of mothers with high school education used breast-milk substitutes, while their use by mothers with middle school or primary school education was 48% and only 23% of the illiterate mothers used breast-milk substitutes. It is ironic that while medical experts consider the voluntary use of breast-milk substitutes a health hazard, the more educated and more prosperous mothers are turning towards them. The trend to substitute mother milk is a world-wide phenomenon, first initiated in the industrialized countries and followed by the developing countries. According to WHO studies, 32% of middle income mothers in Philippines have never attempted to breast-feed their last child. In South Korea the practice of prolonged breast-feeding declined sharply between 1950 and 1970, from over 55 to nearly 35% of first birth. In Taiwan, the percentage of infants initially breast-fed fell sharply from 90% in 1966 to 50% in 1980. At a time when the developing countries are switching to breast-milk substitutes there is a reverse trend in the industrialized countries, where more mothers are reverting to breast-feeding and according to a recent WHO study of Sweden 93% of the mothers studied had at least partially breast-fed their youngest child.

PRIMARY SOURCE OF MILK  
FOR YOUNG BABIES



