



Gallup Economic Wellbeing Index for Pakistan falls as reality of a slowed economy hits home – millions report inability to afford good quality food , selling assets, relying on outside help

October 29, Islamabad, Karachi

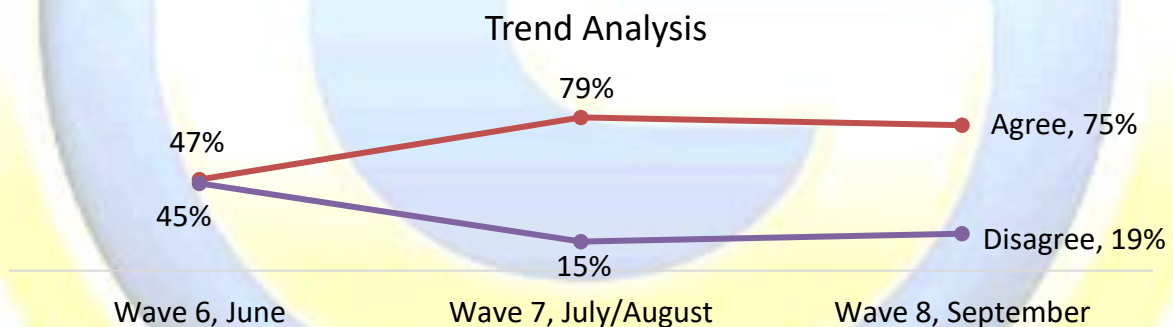
Gallup Pakistan is releasing the findings of **Wave 8** of the Coronavirus Attitude Tracker Survey in Pakistan. The nation-wide poll includes more than 2,100 randomly chosen respondents.

Please [click here](#) or visit the Gallup Pakistan website to view the full report.

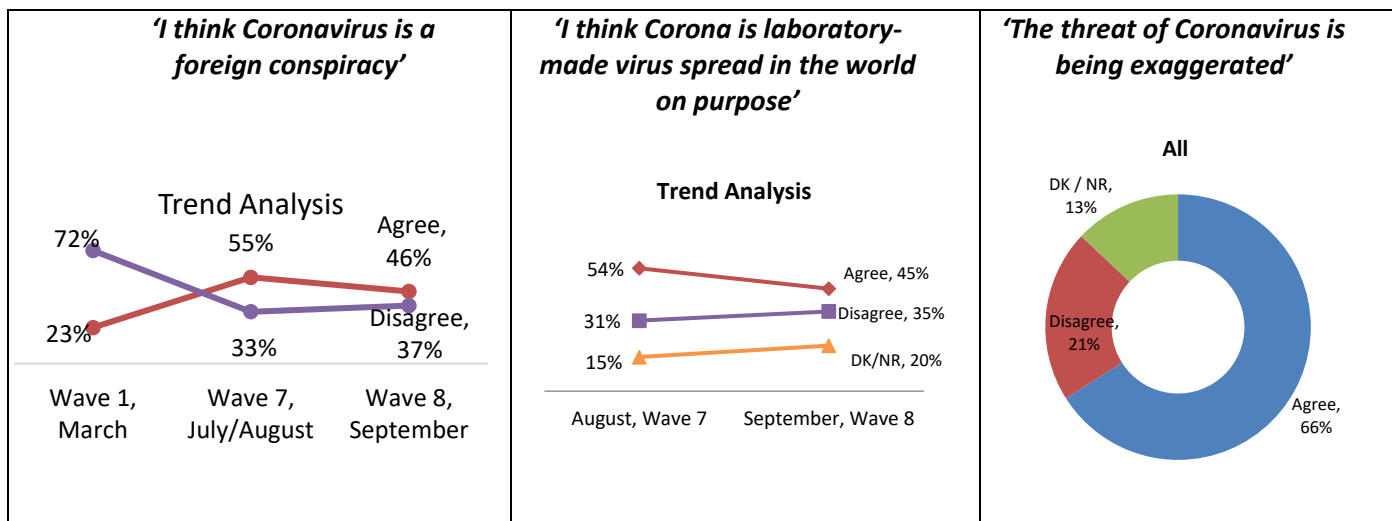
Key Findings of Wave 8

1. With a 4% fall since August, nearly 3 in 4 Pakistanis continue to agree that the coronavirus pandemic is under control

Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements: 'I think the Coronavirus pandemic is now under control'



2. COVID-19 cases trajectory in Pakistan and lifting of lockdown has made Pakistani public very suspicious. More than half of the population (55%) claims to take precautions despite being unsure if the virus is real. Highest proportion of such people are from KP and are under the age of 30. Nearly 45% think that the virus is laboratory-made and spread around the world on purpose. This suspicion is most common among respondents under the age of 30 and is least common among respondents from Balochistan. As per results from September, 46% Pakistanis consider the virus a conspiracy, which is an improvement from 55% in August. Perhaps, suspicions fell slightly owing to the increased awareness about the virus and renewed fears of a second wave as well as perhaps personal exposure to increasing people who are falling sick. Nonetheless, these suspicions could erode trust in government and health interventions by government and international organisations in a significant manner and must be carefully dealt with. Policymakers need to work on Communication Strategy that addresses the Foreign, Fake, Futile (3 Fs) that population feels with respect to COVID-19. This is crucial also for future COVID-19 lockdowns if needed as well as mass vaccinations if required from international community.



Younger you are the more suspicious and conspiracy prone

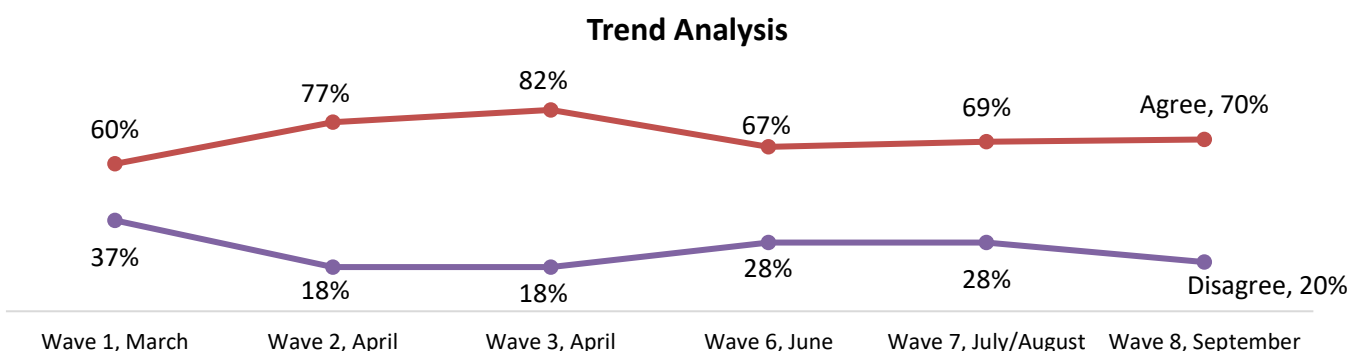
An alarming development is that younger people under the age of 30 are significantly more likely to believe that COVID is a foreign conspiracy. This is problematic because this age groups represents a significant proportion of population owing to median age being 21 in Pakistan as well as the fact that young people have significantly larger mobility and therefore the probability of infecting people if not following SOPs is higher.

3. Covid-19 and the Government in Pakistan: Government continues to be the only winner in this unfortunate battle of life and death

Suspicion about the number of cases reported by government has risen slightly. While 61% people believed the accuracy of the numbers in August, that percentage has since fallen to 55% in September. Gallup Pakistan interprets that an even larger number of Pakistan are now suspicious that the numbers reported by the government are an exaggeration. This is a dangerous turn of events because in event of a second wave it would be harder to convince people of the gravity of the situation.

Overall however, federal government enjoys support as majority (70%) Pakistanis believe that the government is handling the coronavirus situation well. It is imperative however to note that support for the federal government in terms of tackling the virus is high in all provinces except for Balochistan, where the proportion of people who think the federal government is doing well has fallen from 76% in August to 52% in September - a 24% fall. While PTI's government has received international praise for its handling of the COVID crisis, shifts in the political arena as the crisis subsides would remain to be noted.

Question: To what extent do you agree/disagree that the Federal Government of Pakistan is controlling the Coronavirus situation very well?



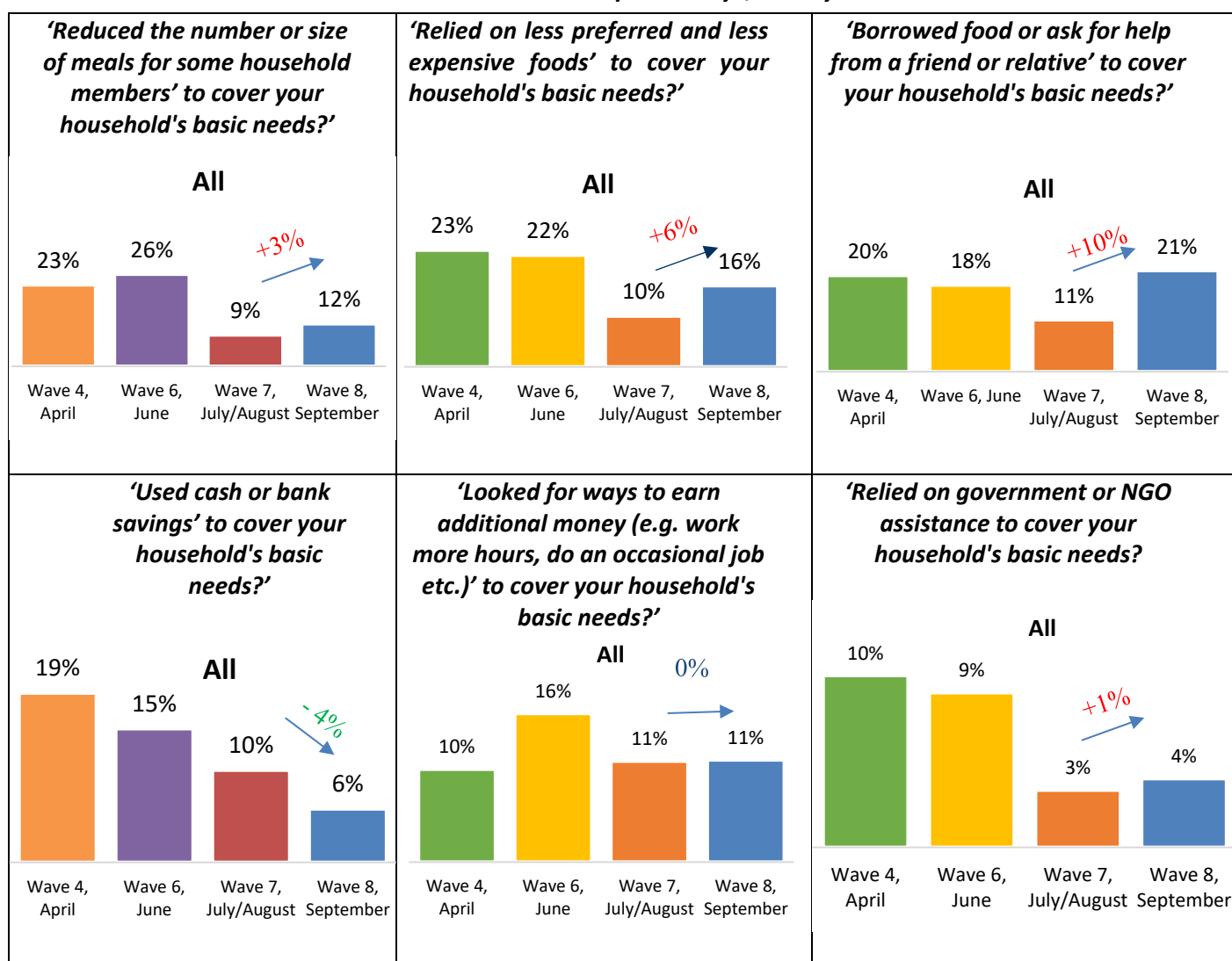
4. Economic devastation continues and after brief lull Gallup finds economic indicators to be deteriorating again

While government continues to enjoy support, economic impact of the virus on household remains immense. 85% Pakistanis report a fall in their household incomes since the spread of the virus. Since August, there have been slight increase in proportion of households that had to rely on alternate food items to cover needs, had to borrow food or seek help from relatives or had to sell assets. Savings seem to now also not provide a respite from economic hardship as savings have been exhausted as well for a large number of Pakistanis.

Bilal Gilani, Executive Director at Gallup Pakistan adds 'In light of these results, our takeaway is that a long-term plan should be in place so that such shocks do not impact households severely. Moreover there is a dire need for a Covid Stimulus package 2 to be announced to create liquidity for the households. This we say is also due to fairly uncontrolled inflation especially for food products. In other words, people have lost their employment in large numbers due to Covid, their savings are depleted and now inflation is taking away their left purchasing power. These are very devastating signs for an economy that is contracting and projected to grow at 2% in the coming year.

Gallup Pakistan Economic Wellbeing Index

Question: In the past 7 days, have you:



Your feedback is appreciated. Please feel free to contact us at caf@gallup.com.pk in case of any queries or comments.



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Gilani Research Foundation is a not for profit public service project to provide social science research to students, academia, policy makers and concerned citizens in Pakistan and across the globe.

Gilani Research Foundation is headed by Dr. Ijaz Shafi Gilani who pioneered the field of opinion polling in Pakistan and established Gallup Pakistan in 1980. Currently Dr. Gilani, who holds a PhD from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and has taught at leading universities in Pakistan and abroad, is Chairman of Gallup Pakistan.

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