

Gallup Pakistan Health Cyberletter



Edition 1, October 2022

EDITOR'S NOTE

A few years back, Gallup Pakistan launched the Health CyberLetter which was aimed at providing population level health insights gathered through surveys, which are regularly conducted over the course of the year. Some of our previous editions included the following:

1. *A National Survey on Public Perceptions about Health*. 2015. <https://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Health-Cyberletter-April-2015.pdf>
2. *Public Perceptions about Stroke*. 2013. <https://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Health-Cyberletter-March-2013.pdf>
3. *Public Perceptions of Clean and Safe Drinking Water*. 2012. http://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Health_Cyberletter-Nov-Dec-2012-1.pdf
4. *Public Perceptions on Health and General Well-being*. 2012. <http://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/HCL09121.pdf>
5. *Public Awareness about Risk Factors of Oral Cancers in Pakistan*. 2011. <http://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/August-16-20111.pdf>
6. *Public Awareness about Hepatitis B and C*. 2011. <http://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Health-Cyberletter-Public-awareness-about-Hepatitis-B-and-C-jul-aug-20111.pdf>
7. *Global Study on Patient-Doctor Communication*. 2011. <http://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Health-Cyberletter-Vol21.pdf>
8. *Health and Nutrition in Pakistan*. 2008. <http://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Health-Cyberletter-Health-and-Nutrition-in-Pakistan-Dec-20081.pdf>

This year, we're restarting the **Gallup Pakistan Health CyberLetter Initiative** with our first edition on **"COVID-19 Vaccination Perceptions in Pakistan."** Although COVID-19 is no longer viewed as a critical threat, closely examining population behaviors and perceptions from the past two years, can be beneficial as governments move into recovery and future planning phases. Specifically, with the focus of this edition on COVID-19 Vaccinations, we believe that there is tremendous potential for Pakistan to learn, unlearn and relearn and to form evidence-based, successful strategies for future vaccinations. We hope that as you read through, you're inspired to think of the ways in which governments can better serve populations given that population behaviors are crucial elements of public health policy and practice.

In the coming months, we also hope to enhance and expand our Health CyberLetters through additional stories in each print issue which capture the breadth of public health experiences in Pakistan.

Mishalle A. Kayani

COVID-19

In March 2020, countries all over the world collectively faced an unprecedented challenge like no other. The World Health Organization (WHO) announced the outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) on March 11, which, initially discovered in Asia, had now rapidly spread to different parts of the world and was officially declared a pandemic.¹ In the first seven weeks, the disease had affected more than 6,200 people and approximately 111 deaths had been reported in Pakistan.² With a fragile and overburdened healthcare system, overpopulation, and the turbulent economic and political landscape, the ability to tackle this challenge, was deeply in question for the country. In the early days of the pandemic, having little to no information about the novel disease, prevention measures such as lockdowns, social distancing, mask wearing etc. coupled with experimental treatments were not only exercised in Pakistan but across the world. In essence, there was a mutual struggle to aggressively confront the global crisis and achieve a common goal; that of saving lives.

Despite its numerous challenges, Pakistan, through a targeted strategy, and collaborative efforts from policy-makers and communities, managed to keep its human cost low in comparison to other, more developed parts of the world. By the end of September 2020, global deaths due to COVID-19 were recorded at 991, 224 with Asia reporting a total of 110, 711 deaths.³ Inevitably, given just how much the pandemic had impacted lives as well as livelihoods, what seemed to be the most pertinent question at the time was, “When will life return to normal?”

COVID-19 VACCINATION

Joint vaccination efforts at “warp speed”⁴ offered the first glimmer of hope for a life after COVID-19. In December 2020, the early rollout of vaccination had commenced with emergency authorization being granted to frontline workers and the population demographic aged over 80. Soon after, using a phase-wise approach which targeted different age-brackets, each country began administering COVID-19 vaccines. In Pakistan too, the names Pfizer, Moderna, SinoVac and Sinopharm, among others, had become a part of everyday discourse.

As of today, more than 12.8 billion doses have been administered globally, and 1.8 million are administered each day.⁵

GALLUP PAKISTAN’S SURVEYS

During the pandemic life-cycle, Gallup Pakistan conducted surveys, at different points in time, with respondents across Pakistan, to assess population perceptions regarding COVID-19 and its vaccination.

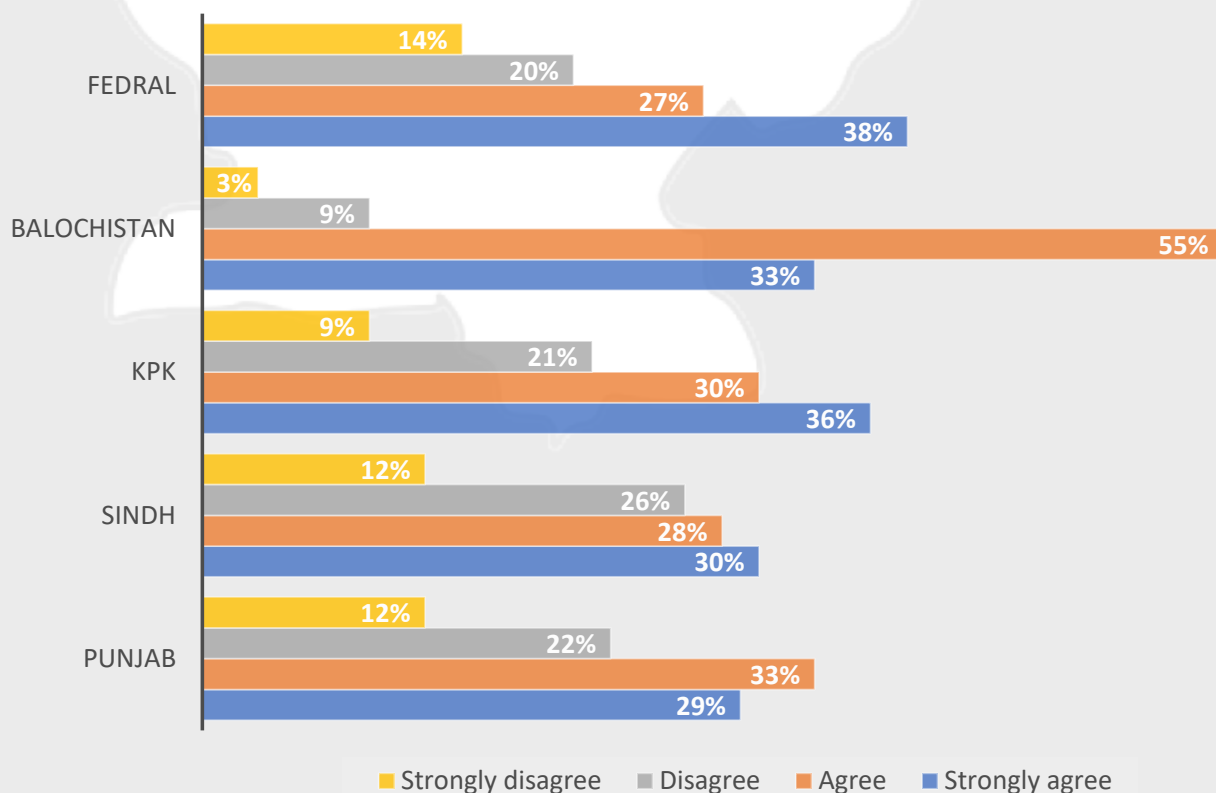
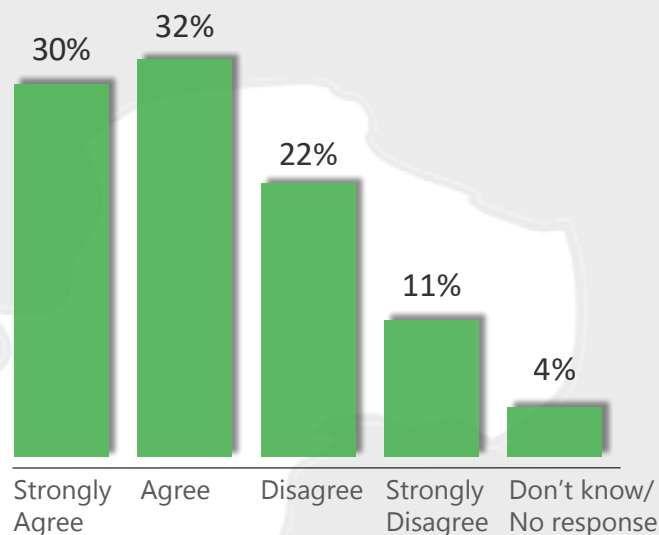
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1. Asselah T & Durantel D et.al. (2021). “COVID-19: Discovery, Diagnostics and Drug Development” *Journal of Hepatology*, Vol 74 p.168-184
 2. Ilyas, N., Azuine, R. E., & Tamiz, A. (2020). “COVID-19 Pandemic in Pakistan.” *International Journal of Translational Medical Research and Public Health*, 4(1), 37–49
 3. World Health Organization. 2020
 4. Operation Warp Speed was a public-private partnership initiated by the United States government to accelerate the development of COVID-19 vaccines
 5. Our World in Data: COVID-19 Vaccinations

THE LIKELIHOOD OF TAKING THE VACCINE.

A global study conducted in October 2020 surveyed 19 countries to investigate the acceptance of COVID-19 vaccines and the results revealed that 71.5% of respondents would consider taking a vaccine and 48.1% would consider taking it if their employer recommended it.⁶

In October 2020, Gallup Pakistan also conducted a round of surveys and asked respondents how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the following statement, "If a new COVID-19 vaccine became publicly available and is considered safe and effective, I would take it." Approximately 60% of the respondents agreed that they would take the vaccine. Across provinces, on average, 33% strongly agreed.

"If a new Coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine became publicly available and is considered safe and effective, I would take it"



*Provincial statistics for Don't Know/No Response excluded since values were negligible.

6. Lazarus J & Ratzan S. et.al. (2020). "A Global Survey of Potential Acceptance of a COVID-19 Vaccine" Nature Medicine. 225-228
Source: TVS 220-09 Gallup Pakistan October 09 - November 02, 2020 (Sample size:1076) All Pakistan rural and urban;face to face.

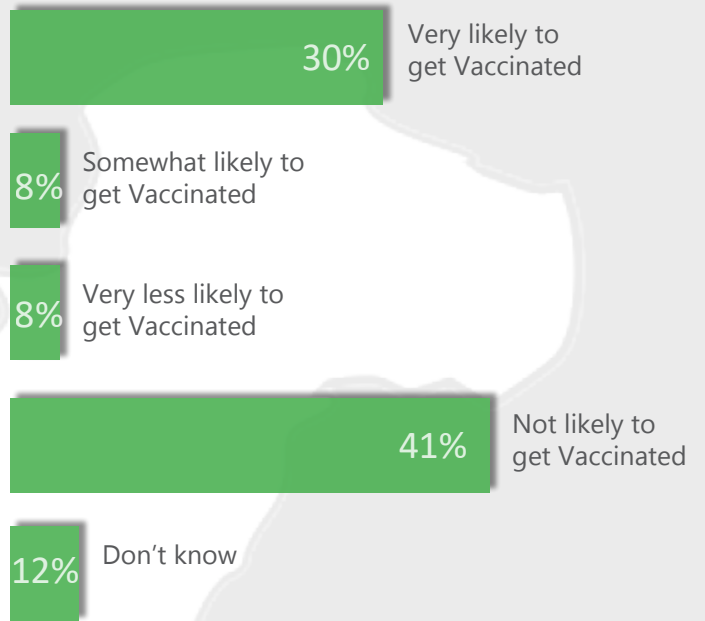
REASONS FOR NOT GETTING VACCINATED (DECEMBER 2020)

By early January 2021, when vaccine rollout for healthcare workers had commenced in Pakistan, 41% of the respondents claimed that they were not likely to get vaccinated for COVID-19.

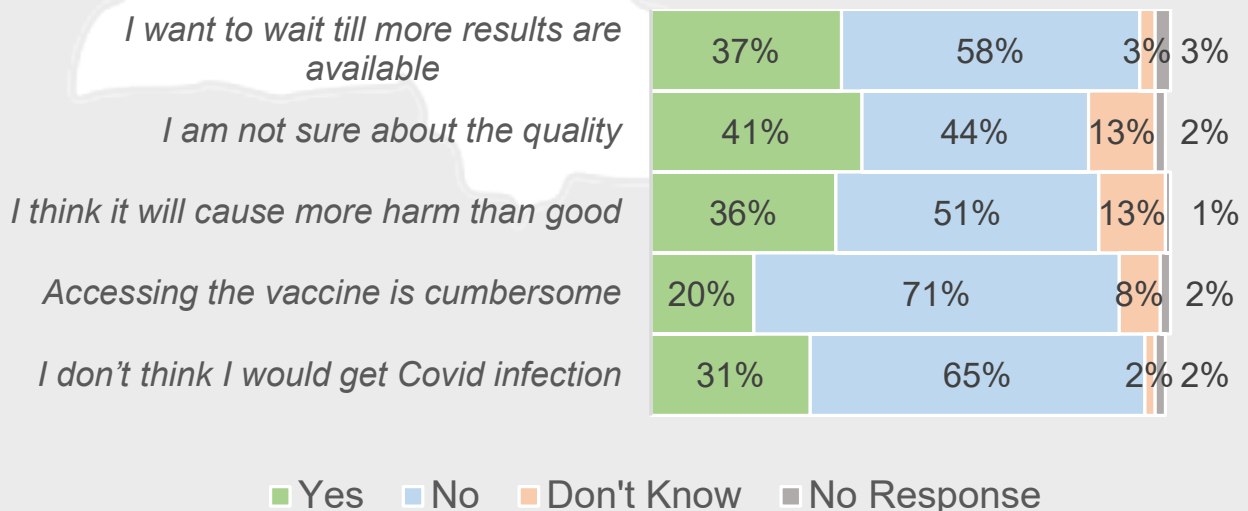
Of the respondents who were not likely to get vaccinated, a variety of reasons were cited for their unwillingness. 41% seemed to be having doubts about the quality of the vaccine available and at least 31% still believed that they would not get infected with COVID-19, despite being well into almost one year of the pandemic cycle.

By March 2021, vaccinations for the 60+ age group and the immunocompromised were underway across Pakistan. However, a sizeable percentage of the population had varying views regarding the vaccine. 42% believed in natural immunity, while another 42% worried about the side-effects.

“Please tell us how likely you are to get vaccinated for COVID-19 once the vaccine is available in Pakistan”



If not willing to receive the vaccine, what are the reasons in your mind?



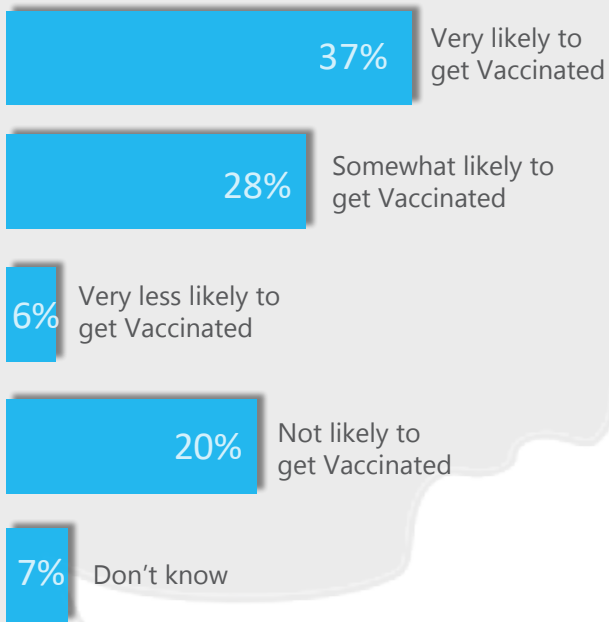
Source: TVS 220-11 Gallup Pakistan December 24, 2020 - January 15, 2021 (Sample size:1081) All Pakistan rural and urban; face to face.

Source: TVS 221-02 Gallup Pakistan March 24, 2021 - March 31, 2021 (Sample size:1590) All Pakistan rural and urban;face to face.

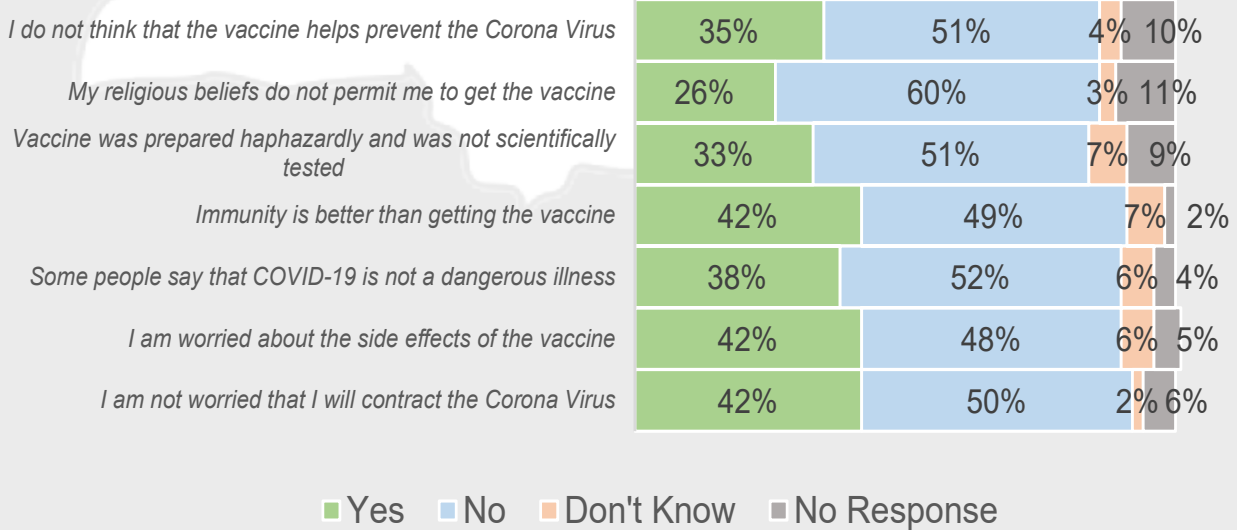
*Of those who were not likely to get vaccinated, what are the reasons in your mind?

REASONS FOR NOT GETTING VACCINATED (MARCH 2021)

"Please tell us how likely you are to get vaccinated for COVID-19 once the vaccine is available in Pakistan"



If not willing to receive the vaccine, what are the reasons in your mind?



Source: TVS 221-02 Gallup Pakistan March 24, 2021 - March 31, 2021 (Sample size:1590) All Pakistan rural and urban;face to face.
 *Of those who were not likely to get vaccinated, what are the reasons in your mind?

COVID-19 VACCINATIONS AND THE VACCINE MIX IN PAKISTAN

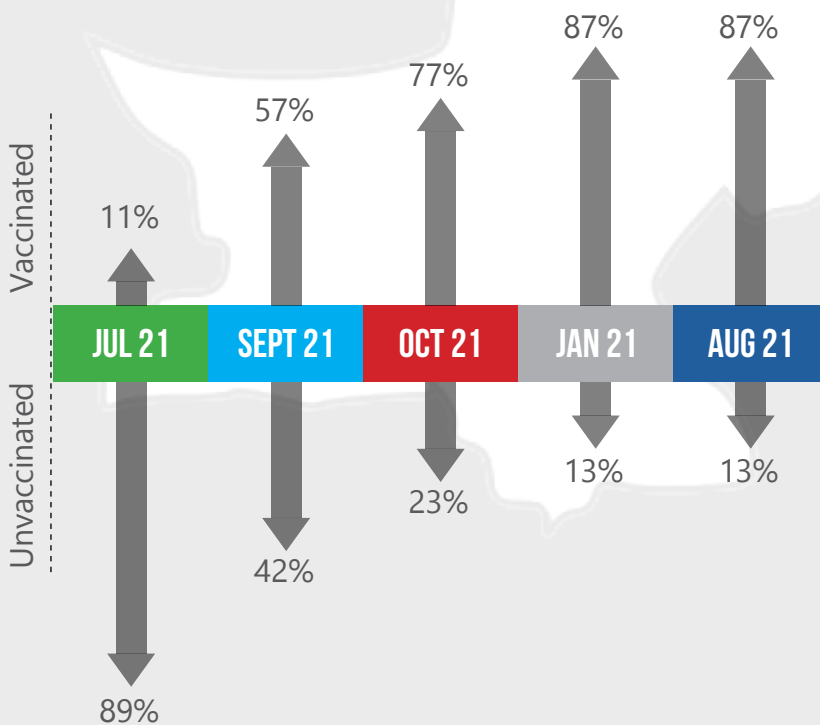
As we moved into the second half of 2021, attributing to a variety of factors such as mass communication efforts by the government and free of cost vaccinations, to name a few, there was a significant increase in vaccinations reported by respondents across Pakistan.

We also noticed substantial variations across provinces and gender over the same time period. Across gender, in July 2021, just 11% males and 7% females had been vaccinated while these percentages saw a massive hike in August 22, with 86% and 89% vaccination for males and females respectively.

As of August 2022, the vaccine mix in Pakistan included the following vaccines:

Sinopharm, SinoVac, Sputnik V, CanSino, AstraZeneca, Pfizer, Moderna

Moreover, in August 2022, 85% respondents reported being vaccinated. This is in line with the current national level vaccination data on COVID-19 in Pakistan.



Source: TVS 221-04 Gallup Pakistan July 01, 2021 - July 13, 2021 (Sample size:1066) All Pakistan rural and urban;face to face.

Source: TVS 221-05 Gallup Pakistan August 13, 2021 - September 05, 2021 (Sample size:2407) All Pakistan rural and urban;face to face.

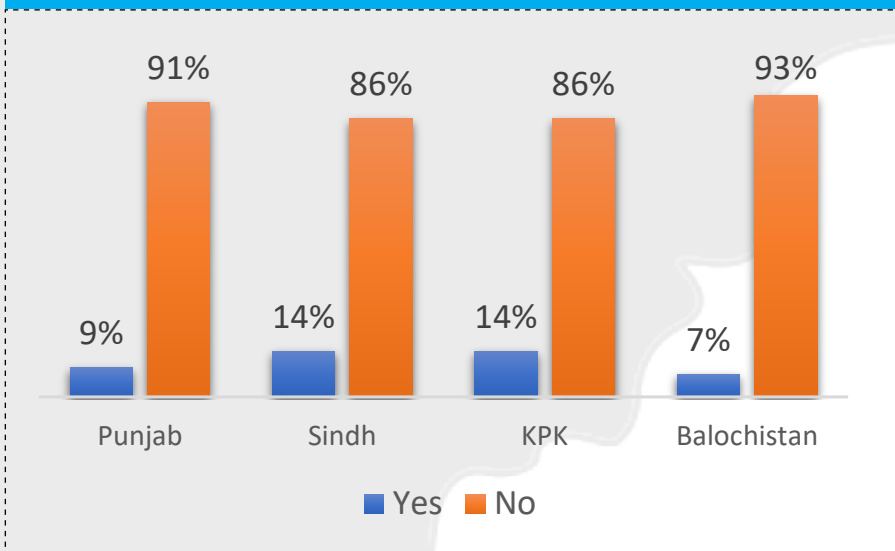
Source: TVS 221-06 Gallup Pakistan September 23, 2021 - October 08, 2021 (Sample size:1730) All Pakistan rural and urban;face to face.

Source: TVS 221-06 Gallup Pakistan December 22, 2021 - January 27, 2022 (Sample size:1865) All Pakistan rural and urban;face to face.

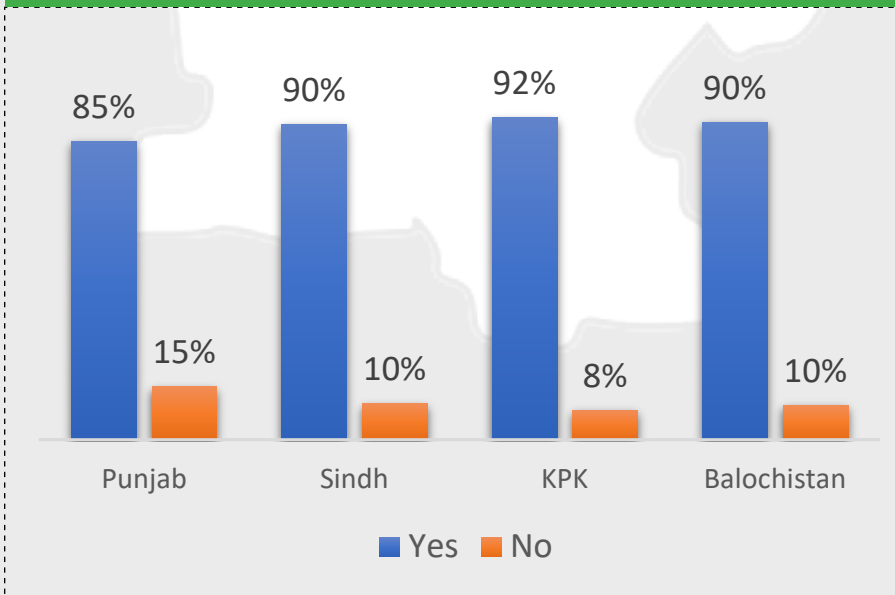
Source: TVS Wave_4 Gallup Pakistan Aug 03, 2022 - Aug 24, 2022 (Sample size:1462) All Pakistan rural and urban;face to face.

COVID-19 VACCINATIONS AND THE VACCINE MIX IN PAKISTAN

Vaccination across provinces in July, 2021



Vaccination across provinces in August, 2022



Source: TVS 221-04 Gallup Pakistan July 01, 2021 - July 13, 2021 (Sample size:1066) All Pakistan rural and urban;face to face.

Source: TVS 221-05 Gallup Pakistan August 13, 2021 - September 05, 2021 (Sample size:2407) All Pakistan rural and urban;face to face.

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Source: TVS Wave_4 Gallup Pakistan Aug 03, 2022 - Aug 24, 2022 (Sample size:1462) All Pakistan rural and urban;face to face.

BEYOND THE VACCINE

Beyond determining the extent of vaccination in numbers, we attempted to evaluate different aspects of the vaccination itself, its process and why people would feel it was important to get vaccinated. Respondents were asked to share their views regarding the governments' handling of COVID-19 vaccinations. Around 60% felt that the government had been doing an adequate job.*

Additionally, we asked respondents how likely they were to agree or disagree to certain statements. A scale of 1 to 10 was used for each statement with 1 representing strong disagreement and 10 representing strong agreement. Vaccinated respondents, on average, agreed that they were aware of the vaccination process and were influenced by people important when evaluating whether to get the shot. Unvaccinated respondents, on average, agreed slightly less with the statement that "COVID-19 vaccination is common in my society."

	Average score for Vaccinated respondents	Average score for Unvaccinated respondents
<i>Please tell us, on a scale of 1 to 10, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? - I know the process of getting a COVID vaccine</i>	5	6
<i>Please tell us, on a scale of 1 to 10, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? - For me, it was difficult to get COVID vaccine</i>	7	5
<i>Please tell us, on a scale of 1 to 10, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? - With regards to getting COVID vaccine, if something can go wrong it will</i>	5.5	6
<i>Please tell us, on a scale of 1 to 10, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? - For me getting COVID vaccine is useless</i>	5	5.5
<i>Please tell us, on a scale of 1 to 10, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? - When I got COVID vaccine, I received recognition from people who are important to me</i>	7	5
<i>Please tell us, on a scale of 1 to 10, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? - For me covering something else on my agenda was often a higher priority than getting a COVID vaccine</i>	6	5
<i>Please tell us, on a scale of 1 to 10, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? - In my society, getting COVID vaccine is common</i>	8	6
<i>Please tell us, on a scale of 1 to 10, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? - Most people who are important to me thought that I should get a COVID vaccine</i>	7.5	7
<i>Please tell us, on a scale of 1 to 10, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? - People who I know have had their COVID vaccine</i>	8	6

*Source: TVS 221-04 Gallup Pakistan July 01, 2021 - July 13, 2021 (Sample size:1066) All Pakistan rural and urban;face to face.

*Source: TVS 221-05 Gallup Pakistan August 13, 2021 - September 05, 2021 (Sample size:2407) All Pakistan rural and urban;face to face.

Source: TVS 221-06 Gallup Pakistan December 22, 2021 - January 27, 2022 (Sample size:1865) All Pakistan rural and urban;face to face.

THE FUTURE OF VACCINATIONS

DISCUSSION

Findings from our surveys suggest that addressing doubts regarding vaccines, ensuring access to all and sharing information efficiently are just some of the measures, if adopted at the right time, can help governments and citizens in future public health crises, particularly on the demand-side. For more insights, you can view our COVID-19 tracker reports released between 2020 and 2022:

1. <http://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Gallup-Pakistan-COVID-19-Wave-2-Report.pdf>
2. <https://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Gallup-Pakistan-Coronavirus-Attitude-Tracker-Wave-3.pdf>
3. <https://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Gallup-Pakistan-Coronavirus-Attitude-Tracker-Wave-4.pdf>
4. <https://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Gallup-Pakistan-Coronavirus-Attitude-Tracker-Wave-5-1.pdf>
5. <https://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Gallup-Pakistan-Coronavirus-Attitude-Tracker-Wave-6-1.pdf>
6. <https://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Gallup-Pakistan-Coronavirus-Attitude-Tracker-Survey-Wave-7-8.pdf>
7. <https://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Gallup-Pakistan-Coronavirus-Attitude-Tracker-Survey-Wave-8-.pdf>
8. <https://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Wave-9-2.pdf>
9. <https://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Gallup-Covid-Opinion-Tracker-Wave-10.pdf>
10. <https://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Gallup-COVID-19-Tracker-Wave-11.pdf>
11. <https://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Gallup-COVID-19-Tracker-Wave-12.pdf>
12. <https://gallup.com.pk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Gallup-COVID-19-Tracker-Wave-13-2.pdf>

Given Pakistan's track record of slow immunization for other lethal diseases such as Polio and HBV and the institutional failure to achieve previous vaccinations at quick rates, Pakistan's efforts to increase the uptake of COVID-19 vaccinations, in comparison to past performance, are quite commendable. At present, COVID-19 vaccinations in the country have exceeded 80%, which is beyond the limit required to achieve herd immunity. While COVID-19 remains a disease of concern, the severity with which it ravaged through in 2020, has significantly decreased over time.

The virus, given its natural tendencies, is still mutating, and in future, it would be interesting to see how the population in Pakistan would react to variant specific vaccines. Globally, such vaccines are under development and the accompanying narrative around COVID-19 vaccination is similar to that of the influenza virus shot – A vaccine administered across the world **annually**. Will the COVID-19 vaccine follow suit? If so, what strategies will Pakistan's government employ to convince the population on an annual vaccine dose given COVID-19's waning threat?

METHODOLOGY

All findings in this Cyberletter are from surveys carried out by Gallup Pakistan. This edition includes results from multiple surveys conducted between 2020 and 2022.

For surveys, Gallup Pakistan typically uses multi-stage random area probability sampling. The findings are weighted according to rural and urban population share of the four provinces according to Population Census, 2017. All figures are National average unless otherwise specified. Error margin is estimated to be approximately $\pm 2-3$ per cent at 95% confidence level.

GALLUP PAKISTAN

Gallup Pakistan, the Pakistani affiliate of Gallup International, is a leading survey research and consultancy firm in Pakistan. Gallup Pakistan is a specialist in independent third-party evaluation and ratings. The company is widely attributed to be the founder of science of polling in Pakistan and brings over 40 years of experience in conducting and analyzing opinion polling in Pakistan.

For any queries, please contact:
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GALLUP PAKISTAN PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM

Gallup Pakistan formally introduced the Gallup Pakistan Public Health Program earlier this year. Through this dedicated space, we hope to act as catalysts of change in the public health landscape by using innovative and collaborative solutions to tackle complex problems in the country.

Under this program, the streams of work currently include:

- Let's Talk Public Health
- Gallup Pakistan and CDC Sponsored Projects
- Gallup Pakistan 40-year report on Health
- Gallup Pakistan and Digital Vaccine Register Project

One of our pioneering initiatives as part of the Public Health Program is the "Let's Talk Public Health" series which was launched in March 2022. Through this platform, we conduct insightful conversations with experts in the field, on public health challenges that Pakistan is facing today and we hope we can find ways to reimagine the concept of health as well as make meaningful contributions to the public health discourse in both, Pakistan and globally.

- *Episode 1: Lifestyle and Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) – Conceptual, Empirical and Practical Perspective by Dr. Ijaz Gilani.* <https://youtu.be/uJcYQij3GH4>
- *Episode 2: Pakistan's Healthcare Market, Medical Devices and Digital Health by Hammad Ijaz.* <https://youtu.be/Wz8QWExlHGg>
- *Episode 3: Health Perception Survey - WiN International and Gallup Pakistan by Mishalle Kayani and Laila Waqar.* <https://youtu.be/IFQp6Qp6GrQ>
- *Episode 4: Value of Community Co-design for Vaccine Confidence Interventions - A Case from Karachi by Rubina Qasim.:* <https://youtu.be/7TqL3cM17A>
- *Episode 5: Science Behind Artistic Processes (Conductive Tools for Health Sector) by Dr. Habib Afsar.* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ZWK0EhZyD8>
- *Episode 6: Family Planning in Pakistan: Issues, Progress and the Way Forward by Dr. Adnan Khan.* <https://youtu.be/LyQfFv0w8oA>

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GALLUP PAKISTAN PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM

In addition to our talk series, we've worked on several *research projects with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC)*.

Project: Survey of Social and Behavioral Determinants of COVID-19 Vaccination Uptake and Evaluation of On-going National and Subnational Programming to Increase Demand for COVID-19 Vaccines. 2021

Description: The project aimed to prepare for the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines by assessing social and behavioral determinants for under vaccination in the EMRO region. The multi-country assessment focused on understanding determinants of demand for COVID-19 and other vaccines among priority populations, particularly the role of rumors and misinformation on behavior, and a secondary focus on challenges in vaccine service delivery faced by healthcare workers and program administrators. This project also evaluated ongoing regional, country-level, and subnational planning efforts to introduce COVID-19 vaccines to high priority populations of healthcare workers, adults over 65, and high-risk adults. An important aspect of this project was data triangulation- collecting and reviewing diverse sources of data to compare, contrast, and develop a fuller picture of demand for COVID-19 vaccines in each selected country.

Project: A Cross-Sectional Survey on COVID-19 Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices (KAP) and Resiliency in Pakistan. 2021-2022

Description: The goal of this study was to provide a nationally and regionally representative comprehensive understanding of knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAPs) around COVID-19 as well as the mental health impacts and other personal effects of the pandemic by providing context specific evidence to help address COVID-19 more effectively. Measuring key cognitive and behavioral factors associated with COVID-19 will help inform recommendations for effective public health management of the disease, such as behavior change strategies, communication strategies to counteract misperceptions around COVID-19, address stigma, community and home-care strategies, and the deployment of food or cash assistance, to vulnerable households.

Project: Track and Trace of COVID-19 Suspected Cases – Pilot Program Working with Faith-Based Organizations. 2022

Description: Engaging faith communities to advance COVID-19 risk communication and mitigation represents a pivotal opportunity to accelerate pandemic control. The project goal was to pilot a program in which contact tracing and advocacy around non-pharmaceutical intervention (NPIs) is done by FBO's and lessons can be learned and shared with policy-makers dealing with COVID-19.

**Funding for this conference was made possible (in part) by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The views expressed in written conference materials or publications and by speakers and moderators do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.*

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GALLUP PAKISTAN PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM

Project: Estimating Excess Deaths and Improving Mortality Surveillance and Civil Registration Systems in Pakistan during COVID-19. 2022-2023

Description: This project aims to estimate and improve the capacity for estimation of excess deaths and their causes in selected areas of Pakistan; understand and inform as to causes of increases in preventable deaths; and to attempt to integrate relevant partners and systems to build sustainable capacity in mortality surveillance and in National Public Health Institutes.

Gallup Pakistan is also working on producing a ***40-year report on Health in Pakistan*** which is a compilation of findings from health research conducted by the organization over the last 2 decades.

Lastly, during this year we also worked on a ***Digital Vaccine Register Project***, the details of which, you can find below:

The Zindagi Mehfooz (ZM) application has been designed as a digital repository of enrolment and vaccination records of women and children on a web-based dashboard, currently being leveraged as a micro-data collection tool in the health centers of Sindh, Pakistan. The scope of the research study was to evaluate the impact of the application on immunization service delivery, registry coverage, uptake of immunization services, and data use patterns.

The qualitative aspect of the evaluation included a series of focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and observations across health facilities/offices in the districts of Jacobabad, Shikarpur, and Naushahro Feroz with the goal of understanding the perceptions of all the stakeholders involved (ZM staff, caregivers, vaccinators, supervisors/coordinators, district managers, and provincial managers) regarding the use and impacts of the ZM application.

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