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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The main objective of this research is to find the level of awareness of common people and specially mothers, doctors and retailers selling the milk substitute products regarding the fact that mother's milk is the best and there is no other food which can be equally nutritious or effective for a child then the mothers milk.

As there has been an "International code" formulated against the unethical marketing of breast milk substitute and there has been an ordinance, which was passed last year by President. General Pervaiz Musharraf, the researcher sees the authenticity of the law and how it has been implemented and whether or not it is being followed by the manufacturers.

This research concludes with the importance of breast feeding and throws a light at the violation of the international code which is still in practice. The research also brings into focus the doctors who act as a focal point in the infant's life and are betraying their profession by suggesting substitute products for their personal gains. They put the health of the infant at the back in their pursuit of self-interests.

This research brings into open the ignorance of mothers who somehow tend to believe that infant formula is the best choice for their child and ignore the fact that the price they are paying for it is higher than they assume. They forego the mother and child bond that develops through breast feeding, they are actually compromising on their child's growth and development.

Questionnaires were distributed in Islamabad and Pindi in various hospitals and to various retailers. The findings reflect the ignorance on behalf of mothers, doctors and retailers. It also highlights the fact that unethical marketing is still taking place. Manufacturers of infant formula are still distributing gifts to the doctors, which were displayed in their clinics while they were in favor of breastfeeding. The questionnaires show that 40% of the doctors are unaware of the law regarding unethical marketing and compulsion of six month breastfeeding according to the medical law.

The questionnaires also prove that approximately 72% of mothers use infant formula for feeding their children. 16% of mothers buy the substitute on doctor's prescription. Once again 72% of mothers are unaware of the law that six-month compulsion for breastfeeding is there.

It was observed that 84.8% of the brands don't discourage breast-feeding on their labels, which is unethical. 26.5% of brands show pictures on their packets to idealize the use on infant formula, which is again the international code. The ordinance regarding the unethical marketing of substitute milk should be made known to everyone and media should play a big role in it.

Doctors who now are playing a double game like on side they have contracts with these companies and on the other hand they are advising the mothers so naturally doctors give a biased opinion. Doctors should see the infant's health & future first and then their own personal benefit. Even the medicine field is contaminated by these organizations that are in a way paid marketing agents of their products.

It is recommended that more and more organizations like “The Network” should be established in order to make these issues known to all mothers and other normal people. Our rural areas should be targeted more as the greater ratio of this unawareness. Retailers should be given training regarding the importance of this subject. It is highly recommended that substitute products be provided to patients on the production of doctor’s prescription. Seminars should be organized in colleges and universities to promote the breast-feeding culture.

PROBLEM AND ITS BACKGROUND