

*Kashf Foundation Focus Notes Series  
January 2018*

## The Case for Using Mainstream Media for Social Advocacy: Impact Assessment Findings from KASHF's Media Campaign Udaari

*Kashf Foundation ran an issue based television series in 2016 called Udaari which was developed for creating awareness around child sexual abuse whilst highlighting the importance of women's economic empowerment. In 2017, Kashf commissioned an impact assessment of Udaari to assess its impact as a tool for creating mass scale awareness on social issues. This focus note provides the key findings on Udaari's impact.*

### **KASHF'S SOCIAL ADVOCACY APPROACH**

Kashf Foundation offers an integrated micro-finance program which provides low-income households with access to micro-credit, insurance services, capacity building trainings, and social advocacy interventions. These social advocacy interventions have included activities such as Gender Trainings, Social Theatre Performances, and Mainstream Media Campaigns.

Kashf co-produced a television series, along with MD Productions, called Udaari which aired from April – August 2016 on Pakistan's leading private entertainment channel HUM TV. The production was funded by the Government of Canada as part of a

larger program aimed at enhancing women's capabilities and conditions to take part in the formal and informal economy.

Kashf commissioned a Third Party Evaluation to evaluate the impact of the television series. Aftab Associates<sup>1</sup> was selected to undertake the evaluation after a due-diligence and shortlisting process.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Aftab Associates used both qualitative and quantitative means to assess the impact of Udaari. In order to get a more holistic view they also analyzed data from a literature review of articles, posts and comments made online about Udaari.

The quantitative research comprised of 800 Face to Face Computer Assisted Interviews with a mix of urban and rural respondents who watch drama serials and HUM TV. Both males and females ranging from 18 years to 50 years of age were part of this research which was conducted in Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Peshawar, Multan and villages around these cities.

The qualitative research included 19 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and 10 In-depth Interviews (IDIs). 14 FGDs were undertaken with male and female viewers and non-viewers of Udaari and 5 were undertaken with children at risk of abuse. The IDIs were undertaken with policy makers and opinion leaders.

Research Instrument	Number of Interviews	Assessment Tool	Areas
Quantitative Research	800	CAPI Survey	Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Peshawar, and Multan & Villages around these cities
Qualitative Research with viewers and non-viewers of Udaari	14	Focus Group Discussions	Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Peshawar, Sheikhpura, Kasur and Faisalabad
Qualitative Research with children at risk of abuse	5	Focus Group Discussions	Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Peshawar, Sheikhpura, Kasur and Faisalabad
Qualitative Research	10	In-depth Interviews	Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Peshawar, Sheikhpura, Kasur and Faisalabad

### **Respondents Distribution**

**IMPACT OF UDAARI**

Udaari made waves with its attention-grabbing storyline, impactful dialogues and versatile actors. Audiences were drawn to Udaari as it resonated with reality and had a unique story-line and a positive ending. Udaari’s messages were very strongly supported by audiences which can be evidenced from the activism of the media, bloggers, actors, and civil society members who led a social media campaign to oppose a show-cause notice which was issued on Udaari by PEMRA on suitability of content. The show-cause notice which had little legal standing was disposed off and Udaari’s airing and content continued unaffected.

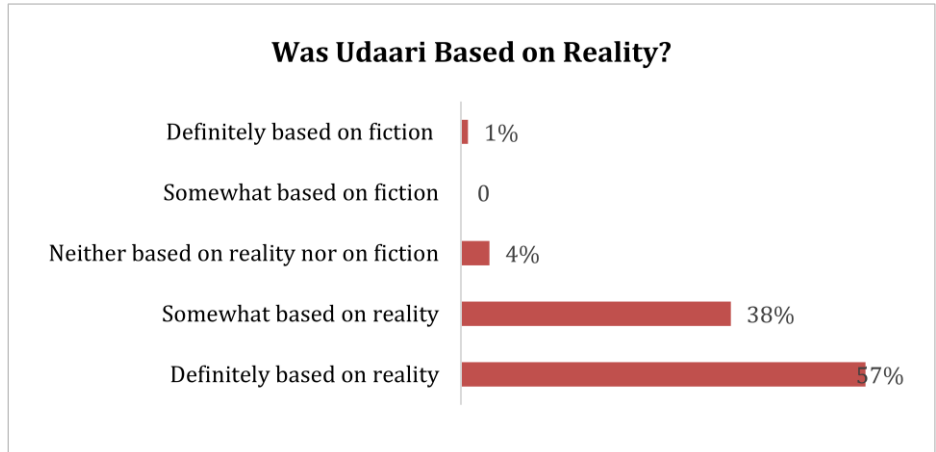
Udaari was thus able to create awareness about child sexual abuse, create a more positive image of women’s economic empowerment as well as set a precedent for social programming for other television channels. The following sections provide the key findings of the impact assessment report.

**OVERALL IMPACT OF UDAARI AS A PUBLIC SERVICE CAMPAIGN**

***Udaari Resonance with Reality***

Out of the respondents, 57% believed that Udaari is definitely based on reality and a further 38% felt that it is somewhat based on reality. These results revealed that people were aware of the occurrence of incidents of child abuse prior to watching the show.

Adults were more comfortable in acknowledging Udaari’s association with reality. In



general girls were a little hesitant to speak about Udaari because of the sensitivity of the issue that it dealt with while boys, especially from Kasur, were very forthright when the association of the story with child sexual abuse was mentioned.

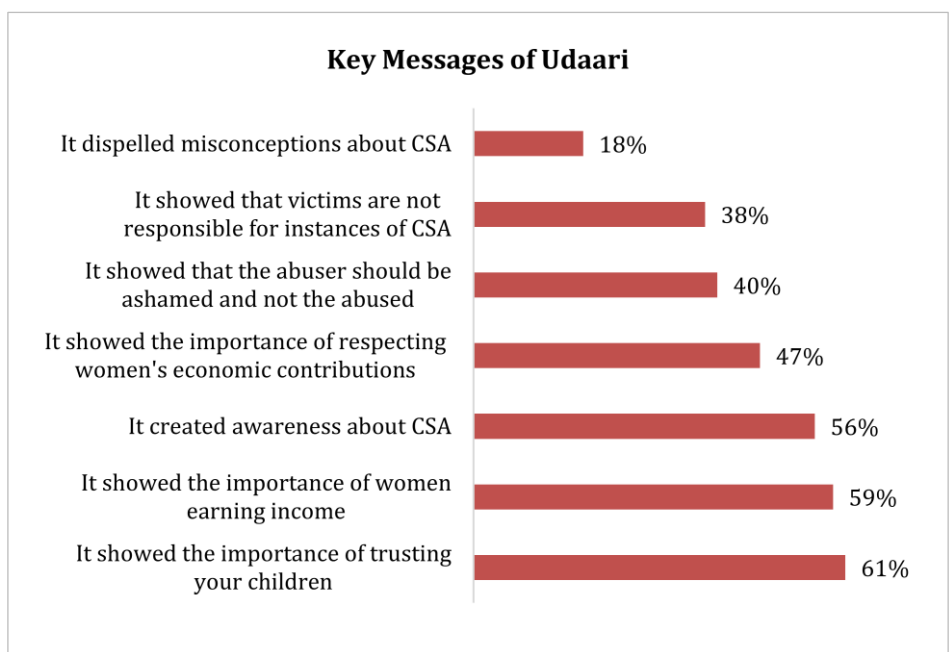
***Key Messages of Udaari***

The participants unanimously agreed that child sexual abuse was the central message of Udaari followed by women’s empowerment. 61% of the participants felt that Udaari emphasized the need to trust one’s children and 59% believed that it

was a lesson on the importance of women’s empowerment. Additionally, 18% agreed that Udaari successfully debunked many misconceptions concerning child sexual abuse.

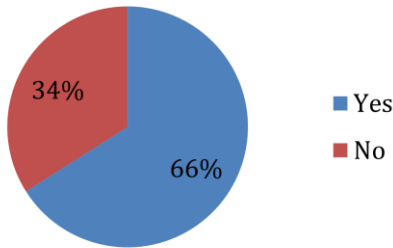
***Talking about Child Sexual Abuse was Easier after Udaari***

A majority of the participants felt that it became easier to talk about child sexual abuse post Udaari. Adult viewers claimed that they were initially hesitant to talk about prevalent issues like child sexual abuse but Udaari made them realize the importance of being vocal. As a result, older females



not only became more comfortable with discussing such issues but also began taking preventative measures like talking to their children and educating them regarding sexual abuse.

**Has Talking about Child Abuse Become Easier post Udaari?**



The participants who felt that Udaari did not make it easier for them to talk about child sexual abuse constituted a significant number of people who were already comfortable with discussing social issues. So overall, Udaari was successful in making the issue of child sexual abuse a part of popular discourse.

**IMPACT ON PERCEPTIONS**

***Change in Perceptions about Child Sexual Abuse***

There has been a marked change in perceptions regarding child sexual abuse after Udaari was aired. 60% of the respondents said that they noticed a change in perceptions on a societal level as a result of Udaari.

Udaari effectively debunked many myths regarding child sexual abuse like the fact that the perpetrator does not necessarily have to be a stranger but could also be a close relative and that the

abuser, and not the abused, was the one at fault.

IDIs with experts showed that they felt that Udaari enabled them to become more vigilant about incidents of child sexual abuse. Community level opinion leaders stated that they will be conducting meetings to spread awareness regarding child sexual abuse and to give people the information necessary to avoid and tackle such situations. Other experts with more societal reach also stated that they had planned to start working against this issue from their own workplace/institutes.

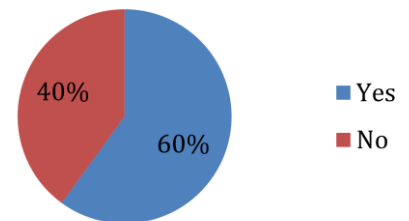
***Change in Self-Perceptions of Child Sexual Abuse Victims***

Before watching Udaari sexual abuse victims felt that the abuse was their fault and this belief deterred them from speaking up. The victims had to live with the trauma of being sexually abused while the perpetrator got away scot-free. Udaari made audiences, and in particular child sexual abuse victims, realize that the abusers were at fault and needed to be punished. It changed the perspective of the victim, as it repositioned power back into the victim’s hands and introduced the concept of how the victim has a choice between staying a victim, or moving forth as a survivor.

Watching the protagonist’s successful legal battle against her abuser gave child sexual abuse survivors the impetus they needed to confront what had happened to them. Consequently, victims of child sexual abuse started overcoming their fear of discussing this taboo topic and began opening up and sharing their stories. All of the respondents were of the opinion

that the issues raised improved their understanding of issues women face in their daily lives which testifies to the relevance of using mainstream media to create awareness about issues.

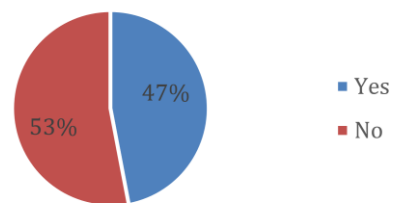
**Have Perception about CSA changed at the Community Level**



***Change in Opinion Regarding Women’s Economic Empowerment***

With respect to women’s economic role, around 69% of the respondents that had watched Udaari believed that women should be allowed to work. When collecting data on a change in opinion on letting women work post Udaari 53% of these respondents stated that there has been no change in their opinion about letting women work which does not necessarily mean that

**Has your opinion regarding women’s economic empowerment changed post Udaari?**



these people are not in favor of women working because 69% already thought that women should be allowed to work.

Hence, Udaari was able to convince 47% of the people that women should be economically empowered and should be allowed to work. 57% females and 33% males were convinced that women should be allowed to work after watching Udaari, which is a significant difference as per the significance test.

**Importance of Dramas in Changing Social Perceptions**

An overwhelming majority of the respondents felt that dramas such as Udaari play a vital role in changing society’s views on prevalent social issues. None of the respondents stated that dramas were not important in changing social perceptions. Furthermore, the aforementioned data on change in perceptions regarding child sexual abuse and women’s empowerment also revealed a manifest change in perceptions as a result of Udaari.

Out of the participants, females consider such dramas to be more important (67%) than males (64%) did. The role of such dramas in changing social perceptions was recognized most by people between 21-30 years of age.

**UDAARI’S POPULARITY AND RECOGNITION**

**Comparison with Other Dramas**

Amongst the 800 respondents interviewed, 44% had watched Udaari and it was declared a favorite drama serial by majority of the respondents. In terms of awareness, viewership and likeability, Udaari seems to be more popular in comparison to other dramas which were aired at around the same time. Udaari has the highest top of mind awareness of 16%, highest unaided awareness at 41%, and highest aided awareness at 58% when compared to other dramas aired at the same time.

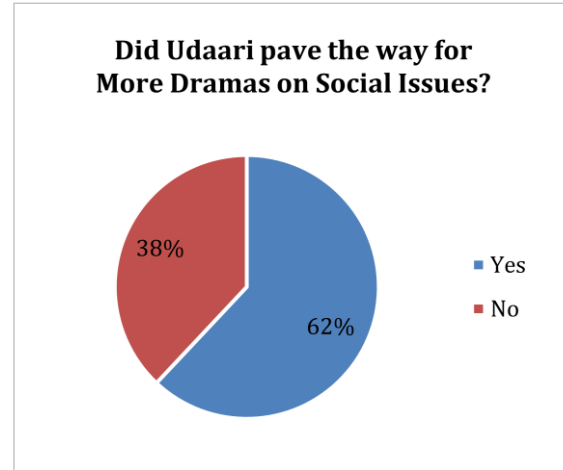
**Television Rating Point (TRP) Analysis**

The analysis for TRP data was done across the age groups of 18-35 and 18-45 separately, both at an overall level and amongst females only. The results revealed that HUM TV was the most watched channel followed closely by ARY Digital and Udaari was the most popular show.

**Udaari Paving the Way for More Dramas on Social Issues**

62% of the respondents believed that with its success Udaari had set

an example for other dramas on social issues. There has been a marked increase in dramas regarding social issues after Udaari including Sammi.



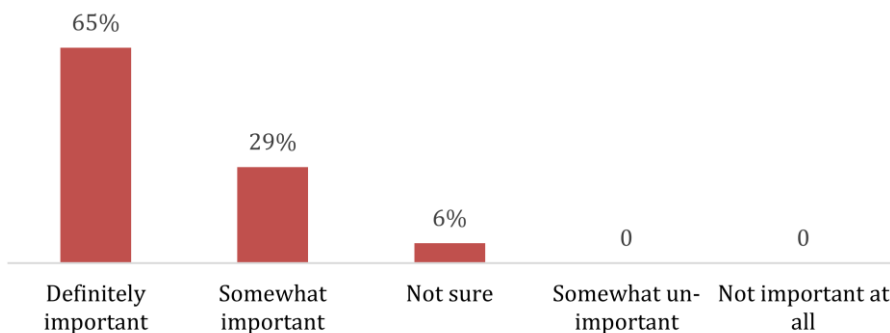
**Popularity of Characters**

The characters in Udaari were brought to life by the evocative performances of very accomplished actors whose realistic performances contributed to the far-reaching impact of Udaari. Udaari had a number of strong and independent female characters who were certainly vulnerable at times, but they used their strength to benefit themselves and others and kept moving forward. This left a long-lasting impact amongst male and female respondents alike.

**CONCLUSION**

Udaari left audiences with a changed view on child sexual abuse, the strength to discuss it, the knowledge to take necessary precautions and if need be the guidance required to fight back. As a result of Udaari people and especially policy makers and opinion leaders began to give precedence to the issue of child sexual abuse. The importance of

**Are Dramas Important in Changing Social Perceptions**



women's economic independence was also highlighted and Kashf foundation gained appreciation for providing financial support to females and fighting against child sexual abuse.

Udaari has proved that dramas can be used to reach the masses and to alter their perceptions. It has shown that dramas on social issues have the ability to stir people and make them take action. Udaari is

an example of the successful use of mainstream media for social advocacy and has paved the way for other dramas on social issues.



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<sup>i</sup> Aftab Associates is a leading market research firm based out of Lahore, Pakistan.