

## **An Analysis of the Impact of the YouTube ban on Business, Education, Learning and Research in Pakistan**

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### **1. Background**

On 17<sup>th</sup> Sep 2012, the Government of Pakistan banned all access to YouTube in the country, after an independent film maker posted anti-Islamic content through the video sharing site. This was the third time that the Government had restricted access to YouTube in the country, following the earlier bans in 2008 and 2010.

Two months later, the ban on the most popular video sharing site continues indefinitely in the country, while students, professionals, consultants, educationists, researchers and entrepreneurs bear immense losses to knowledge creation, sharing and revenue due to the ban. This short survey report analyses the impact of the YouTube ban on education, research, knowledge creation and dissemination and overall business in Pakistan.

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### 2. Methodology

An online survey was created and circulated online to a random sample. The survey consisted of 1 closed and 2 open ended questions:

- Have you been impacted by the YouTube ban? (Yes/No)
- How has the YouTube ban affected your work/business/studies?
- Do you have an estimate of revenue loss to your organization due to the ban?

### 3. Demographics

We received 134 responses for our online survey, with 52% of the respondents from the IT sector, 13% from Education, and the rest split between other sectors such as Engineering, Finance, Journalism, Marketing and the Social Sector.

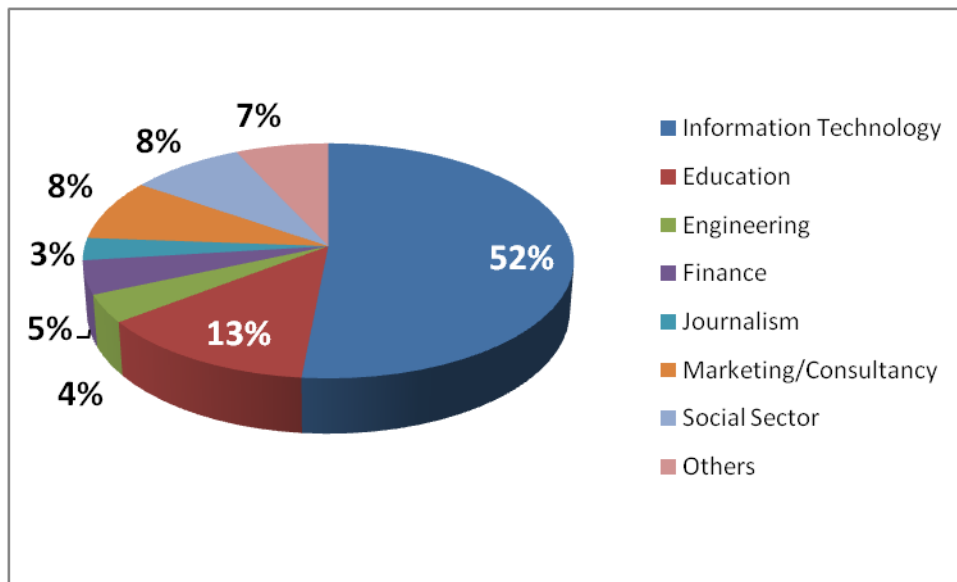


Figure 1: The field of work for the respondents to the online survey

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**4. Have you been impacted by the YouTube ban?**

79% of the respondents agreed that their work/business or studies had been impacted by the YouTube ban in Pakistan.

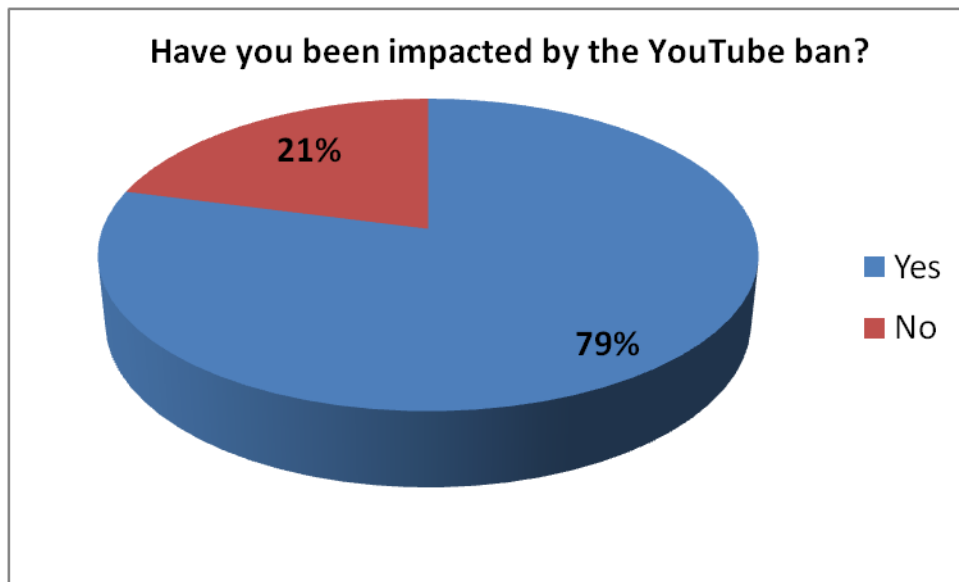


Figure 2: Respondent's opinion of the impact of the YouTube ban on their work/studies

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**5. The Impact of the YouTube Ban**

The online survey finds that the YouTube ban has affected Pakistani students, bloggers, entrepreneurs and business and IT community through 5 distinct ways:

- I. It has adversely impacted learning and education by causing a disruption in the access to educational videos such as online lectures and tutorials. 40% of respondents believe that their learning process had halted or suffered severe setbacks due to the ban.
- II. 33% of the respondents felt that they could not conduct research as freely, effortlessly or efficiently as they could on YouTube. These respondents belonged to diverse fields ranging from marketing, journalism, ICT to education and medicine.
- III. 17% of the respondents – mainly teachers, parents, companies and consultants felt that they could not easily disseminate information via videos or vlogs anymore.
- IV. 7% of the respondents felt that the ban had adversely impacted their business revenue: this ranged from the inability to promote one’s business on YouTube to having to bear the expense of transferring video content from YouTube to alternative sites so as to ensure the continuity of business.
- V. 3% of professionals and students felt that their creativity had adversely been affected due to the ban: these respondents used YouTube for finding creative inspiration to aid them in their professional lives.

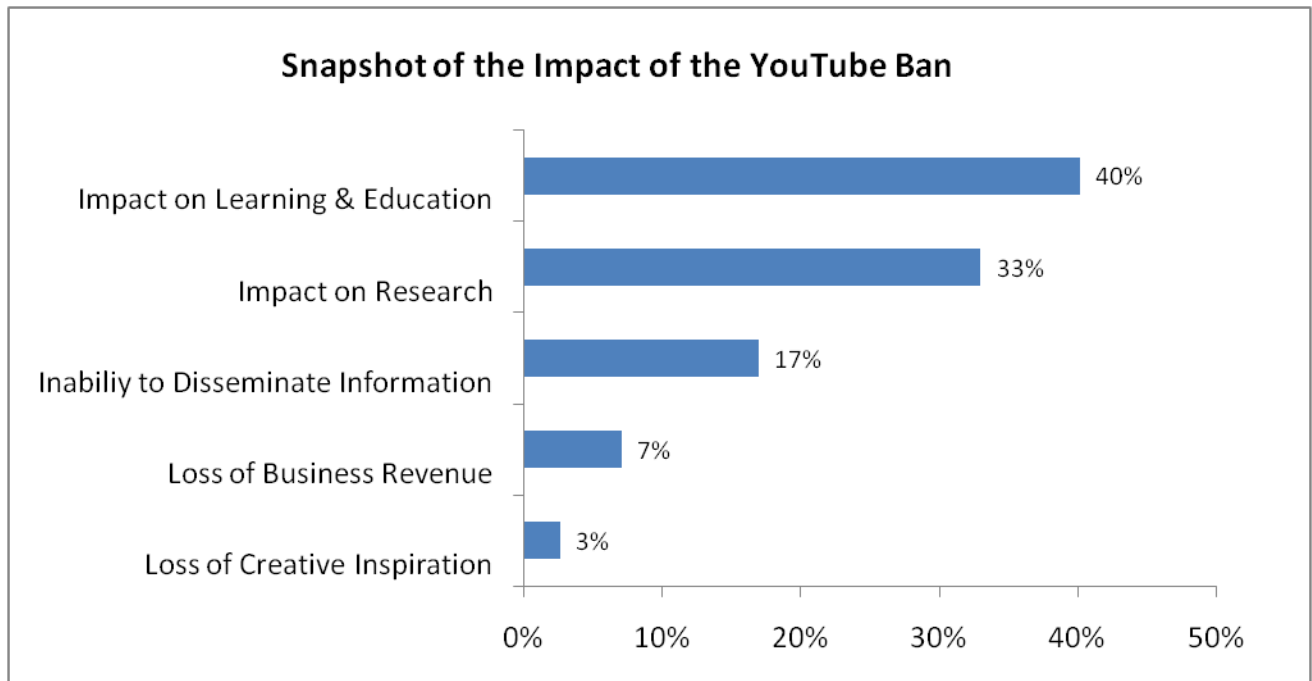


Figure 3: How the YouTube Ban has impacted Pakistan’s learning, research, knowledge dissemination, creativity and business revenue

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### **A. Impact on Learning & Education:**

The impact on halting learning and education was rated as the most adverse impact of the YouTube ban: 40% of the respondents felt that their educational needs could no longer be met without YouTube. The respondents included students, IT professionals, Marketing/Consulting professionals and professionals in research and development.

The key issues in the impact on learning & education included:

- The inability to gain access to online lectures to assist in distance and/or self learning
- The inability to gain access to global knowledge on a field of expertise – e.g. medical videos related to patient examination, global HR consultant videos etc.
- The inability to gain access to online tutorials to enhance classroom learning
- The inability to gain knowledge of the usage of new IT tools and technology via online tutorials
- The inability to view work-related instructional or informative videos

### **B. Impact on Research:**

33% of the respondents felt that they could no longer carry out meaningful or productive research in their areas of interest or profession without YouTube. Respondents included journalists, bloggers, social activists, ICT professionals and professionals in education. The key issues highlighted were:

- The inability to access news videos, soundbites and global news
- The inability to conduct research on new technological trends via accessing new product reviews
- The inability to keep up to date with one's area of interest

### **C. Impact on Disseminating information**

17% of the respondents could no longer upload, share or disseminate knowledge without YouTube. Respondents included parents, teachers, IT professionals, entrepreneurs and social activists. Key issues were:

- The inability to download and share case studies or relevant videos for students
- The inability to showcase products or share training videos with clients and staff
- The inability to share interesting videos with young children

### **D. Impact on Business Revenue**

7% of the respondents felt that the YouTube ban had adversely affected their business revenues. Key issues were:

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- The inability to create video content for clients to run integrated 360 campaigns
- The inability to advertise on YouTube to gain more clientele
- The inability to earn from Google Adwords on owned YouTube channels
- The inability to function if the nature of business was closely related to video or interactive content creation
- The loss of revenue from loss of sales of products showcased on YouTube

Respondents were asked to estimate the revenue impact of the YouTube ban on their businesses. Below is a snapshot of the estimated revenue losses:

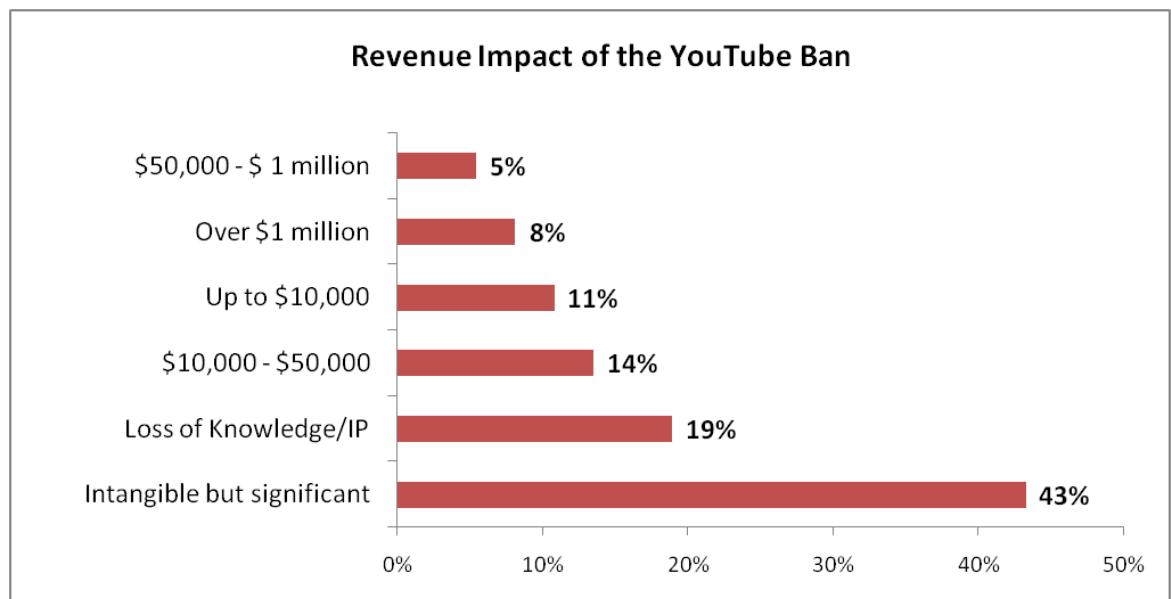


Figure 4: The Revenue Losses resulting from the YouTube ban

A majority – 43% - of the respondents felt that their revenue loss due to the YouTube ban was immeasurable, or intangible but significant.

Of the respondents who did quantify their losses, 11% felt that they had lost up to \$10,000 in revenue, 14% had lost up to \$50,000, 5% had lost up to \$ 1 million and 8% had lost over \$ 1 million since the initiation of the ban.

19% of the respondents also felt that the loss of knowledge that they could previously gain through YouTube was considerable.

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**E. Impact on Creativity**

3% of the respondents felt that the YouTube ban was adversely affecting their creativity at work. The key issue was the lack of inspiration mainly in the field of creative production and advertising.