

AWARENESS OF COPYRIGHT LAW AMONG RESEARCH SCHOLARS OF KARNATAK UNIVERSITY, DHARWAD: A STUDY

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Copyright Law is a legal right to protect literary work of authors from unauthorized usage. Knowledge of Copyright Law among academic community will help them safeguard their intellectual creativity. The present study aims to examine the awareness and perception of research scholars on Copyright Law at Karnatak University, Dharwad. Survey and interview methods were used in this study to collect primary data from research scholars of different streams. It is found that a good number of respondents are aware of copyright law. The study also indicates that perception of respondents on copyright infringement which differs from one another even though they are aware of the concept. The study findings reveal that some factors have led research scholars towards violation of copyright law and the study suggested that concerned authorities need to take initiative to enhance the awareness on copyright among research scholars.

Key words: Copyright Law, Copyright Infringement, Karnatak University, Library, Digital Piracy, Photocopy.

INTRODUCTION

Social and economic growth is based on innovation and no society can advance without it. Creators invest a lot of capital, time, effort, and energy into their intellectual properties. Copyright laws are enacted to provide minimum protections for their rights over their inventions, as well as to preserve and reward their imagination. Thus, the primary purpose of copyright legislation is to enable writers, authors, musicians, database designers, and others to produce original works by providing them with the exclusive right to use their work for financial gain for a set period of time. The copyright laws provide authors with protection, which enables them to create more intellectual property and encourages others to bring their inventions into concrete form for the good of society and future generations (Singh, 2007).

Any material produced for the purposes of education, knowledge, or entertainment, or for any other cause, must have been written by an

individual, a group of people, or an organisation whose right to the material must be protected from misuse by others. This means that apart from the intellectual property owner, no one else can benefit from it unless he obtains permission from the owner or his licensee (Okwilagwe, 1993).

The Present study focuses on copyright infringement and the determination of awareness of copyright law and infringement among research scholars of Karnatak University, Dharwad. An attempt is made to understand the perception of research scholars towards violation of copyright law during their research work.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Dryden (2013) conducted a two part research study to examine the knowledge of copyright among online users of institutional members of the Society of American Archivists (SAA), and to investigate the ways in which American archives to educated their online users about copyright. The findings reveal that respondents were generally aware of copyright matters, but in practice their knowledge is often messed up and not entirely correct. Most of the respondents opined that copyright largely in terms of citing sources. In the second part 82% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement “It is our professional duty to educate our patrons about copyright.” The archivists believe it is their responsibility to educate users about copyright. Vasudevan and Suchitra (2013) investigated the copyright awareness of doctoral students in Calicut University campus, Calicut, Kerala. The results reveal that majority i.e., 70.2% of science

respondents were aware about the importance of copyright, whereas A few 21.1% of them are less aware. The study also found that majority i.e., 54.5% of non-science respondents were also aware about the importance of copyright. Korletey (2015) determined the level of copyright awareness among students, teaching and administrative members at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology KNUST. The results show that exactly half of the respondents with 50%, have satisfactory knowledge about copyright and but it is noticed that students portrayed copyright as an instrument that prohibits others from using copyrighted works without the authors’ permission. Most of the students with 97%, expressed that they were aware of how to cite sources of information they used in their academic works.

Aboyade et. al. (2015) examined the Copyright infringement among students and teachers in Federal Universities in South-West Nigeria. The study indicates that both students and teachers infringe the copyright by taking photocopy but it is for learning not for their benefits. Also, the study found ignorance was the main reason and lack of awareness among respondents led them towards copyright infringement and suggested that concerned authorities should educate them by conducting workshops, seminars and, other user awareness programs on copyright law and infringement. Di Valentino (2015) has conducted an online survey among university faculty at Canadian university to explore the awareness and perception of copyright. The study found that though respondents were aware of copyright policy but

only few participants know their institute provides copyright training. The study suggests that faculty members should ask permission or guidance while share their print materials to students. Glover et. al. (2016) investigated the awareness of copyright among students, teaching faculty and deputy registrar and university librarian at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology Kumasi, Ghana. The results reveal that KNUST does not have document related to copyright policy and due to lack of awareness among students were involved in copyright infringement and plagiarism. The study also highlights the good practices on preventing plagiarism, copyright infringement following by the University and inclusion of subject on plagiarism and other copyright issues which is made available at all students on admission.

Bamgbose et. al. (2017) investigated the level of awareness on copyright and knowledge of copyright infringement among undergraduate students at selected universities (Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomoso (LAUTECH) University of Ibadan, Ibadan and Ajayi Crother University, Oyo) of Oyo State, Nigeria. The results reveal that lecturers were collaborators in the act of copyright infringement. The study observed that students involved in taking photocopy of materials and scanning of textbooks was high. The study recommended that government of Nigeria should invest more interested in education and provide subsidy to publishers so that reasonable cost of books should be available to students. Tella and Oyeyemi (2017) examined the knowledge of undergraduate students on copyright infringement at the

University of Ilorin, Nigeria. The study reveals that a good number of respondents were aware of copyright infringement and they agreed that copyright infringement is a form of illegal or intellectual dishonesty. The authors also highlight the reasons that lead them towards infringement of copyright such as the high cost of books, lack of proper information sources, poor performance and lack of awareness. This study suggested that increase in awareness regarding copyright law helps in reducing the high cost of textbooks and make proper arrangements to reduce the rate of copyright infringement. Ismail and Zakuan (2018) have conducted a survey to determine the legal awareness among tertiary students of higher education institutions of Malaysia regarding copyright. It is noticed from the study that though students were well aware of copyright law and its protection the improper implementation of copyright courses by the governing authorities did not assist more in enhancing their level of awareness on copyright protection.

Babu (2018) investigated the awareness of faculty members of PG departments of Tumkur University. The results reveal that 97.30% of assistant professors, 93.75% Associate professors, absolute number of professors and 66.67% of guest faculty have are aware of copyright. Regarding copyright policy awareness 51.6% said that they have “Good” knowledge about copyright, and 21% opined “very good” awareness towards copyright policies irrespective of their designation. Regarding awareness on type of the copyrighted material concern the Assistant professors rated highest of 29.0% Literary. Majority of respondents with

67.7% voted that they are aware of on Indian copyright act 1957. Saunders and Estell (2019) examined LIS student's awareness and perception on various aspects of copyright and knowledge about copyright law at USA. The findings show the students reported the highest levels of familiarity with areas such as fair use, national copyright law, and Creative Commons, National Copyright law etc. 83% of students reported being familiar with fair use guidelines, followed by 71% who were familiar with Creative Commons licenses, and 66% who reported being familiar with national copyright law and also it is clearly suggested through this study that a need for increased training in these areas in order to increase knowledge and overall familiarity and comfort with these topics. Gecer and Topal (2019) examined the level of awareness of academic and postgraduate students of various universities across Turkey (Kocaeli, Istanbul Technical, Marmara, Pamukkale, Sakarya, Bilecik, Seyh Edebali, Selçuk, Karadeniz Technical, Amasya, Munzur, Özyeğin, Dokuz Eylül, Cukurova, Sivas Cumhuriyet, Yıldız Technical, and Mersin). The study shows that moderate level of knowledge on various concepts of copyright such as copyright regarding digital products, license Agreement, and Fair Use and majority i.e., 78.7% of participants in the study agreed with the statement "I use software downloaded from the Internet without paying its price" and 66% of the respondents stated "I use programs with serial numbers I obtained from my friends/Internet". The study reveals that due to lack of information among academics and PG students lead them towards copyright infringement and the

study suggested that through workshops and seminars on copyrights regarding digital products should be arranged to increase the knowledge and prevent copyright infringements.

Thanuskondi (2020) examined university faculty awareness and perceptions on copyright at Tamil Nadu. The results show that due to lack of copyright awareness policy in academic institution to effective maintenance and protect its intellectual property, and also preserve its teaching, learning and research activity. It is also found that majority of the respondents i.e., 50% belongs to age group of 25 and age group of 26-30 years respondents used copyrighted information with seeking permission from copyright owners. An average number of respondents i.e., 37.5% and 24.4% stated they crediting original author/authority'. Adu and Walt (2021) determined the awareness and understanding of LIS Professionals at Ghana. The study reveals that while respondents had a high degree of awareness of copyright law which was not influenced by their educational background but the level of understanding was lower. The study also found that the amount of understanding was considerably influenced by work experience, work schedule and current position of staff. Due to lack of understanding of copyright laws among library professionals particularly when it comes to fair use and creative commons license, is a worrying development for copyright administration in academic libraries in Ghana. Reddy (2021) examined the librarian's awareness regarding copyright law and copyright trends in India. The results found that majority of academic librarians with 90.70% were aware of copyright laws and

their practice, followed by 63.27% librarians have only a basic level of copyright knowledge. Based on the results, the study suggests that advanced level copyright education at the library schools and continuous opportunities in the form of conferences, workshops, and seminars, etc.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The drastic developments in Information Communication Technologies and the availability of Information in various forms and formats has changed the dimensions of scholarly communication. Academic community engaged in serious research sometimes ignores the copyright issues particularly related with digital information, inviting serious legal problems resulting from copyright infringements at the later stage. The ignorance may be due to lack of awareness or lack of paper knowledge of copyright laws. Therefore, this study can be helpful to understand the level of awareness of copyright laws among research scholars and suggest measures to enhance the awareness of copyright laws, so that the copyright infringements can be minimized.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are as follow

1. To understand the issues of copyright law in academics
2. To assess the level of awareness on copyright law among the research scholars
3. To determine the perception of research scholars on copyright infringement
4. To study how Copyright laws are being infringed by research scholars?
5. To find out the major factors that lead research

scholars to infringe copyright

6. To determine the ways to reduce infringement of copyright law by research scholars

METHODOLOGY

The major aim of this study is to gain insights of copyright infringement among research scholars of Karnataka University, Dharwad. Survey method was adopted to conduct the study. Questionnaire and interview techniques were used to collect the data from the respondents. The questionnaire was designed with the study's objectives in mind. The questionnaire is divided into three sections: the first section focuses on demographic details such as gender, age, and discipline; the second section focuses on access to information sources, basic knowledge of copyright law, and level of awareness of copyright infringement; Questions about respondents' perceptions of copyright infringement, ways that contribute towards copyright infringement, factors that influence copyright infringement, and ways to mitigate copyright infringement were included in the third part.

SAMPLING SIZE

$$s = \frac{x^2 NP(1 - P)}{d^2(N - 1) + x^2 P(1 - P)}$$

Where:

s = required sample size;

X² = the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level (3.841);

N = the population size;

P = the population proportion (assumed to be 0.50 because this would provide the maximum sample size); and

d = the degree of accuracy expressed as a p (i.e. margin of error _ 5.0 per cent).

The sample size is determined using the *Krejcie and Morgan (1970) model*, with a total strength of 650 regular research scholars among all the departments. The required sample size is 242 (degree of accuracy/margin error 0.05 and confidence 95%). As a result, the sample population is rounded up to 250 respondents. Questionnaires were distributed among a total of 250 research scholars from departments of science, social science, humanities, and management science at random with 250 properly filled questionnaires were returned by the respondents with the respondent rate of 100%. The data collected is analyzed using SPSS for Windows Version.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Demographic profile of respondents

The demographic distribution of respondents is shown in table 1. The table shows the gender-wise, age-wise, and department-wise distribution of respondents. It is found that the majority of the respondents are male with 64.4% and female respondents constitute 35.6 are selected from science, social science, humanities and management. Among 250 respondents, majority of the respondents i.e., 60% belong to the age group of 26-30 years, 20.8% of respondents belong to the age group of 31-35 years and 12.4% of respondents belong to the age group of 20-25 years, followed by a less percent i.e., 2.0% of respondents from the age group of 40 and above. The department-wise distribution of respondents shows that majority i.e., 42.8% of respondents are from Social science, 39.2% of respondents

are from Science, 14% of respondents are from Humanities and 4% of respondents are from Management.

Table 1: Demographic distribution of respondents

Demographic details (n=250)			
Gender	Male	161	64.4
	Female	89	35.6
Age	20-25	31	12.4
	26-30	150	60.0
	31-35	52	20.8
	36-40	12	4.8
	41 and above	5	2.0
Department	Science	98	39.2
	Social Science	107	42.8
	Humanities	35	14.0
	Management	10	4.0

Sources of Information accessed

The Table 2 indicates the sources of accessing information by the respondents. It is observed from the below table that most of the respondents i.e., 43.2% access the information through the ‘internet’, while 39.2% of the respondents borrowed information from the library, followed by 16.8% of respondents getting information from their respective departments, whereas the least percent i.e., 0.8% of respondents access information from other sources. It is clear from the table that the internet is the most accessible source as compared to other sources.

Table 2: Place of accessing the information sources

Sl. No.	Place	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Department	42	16.8
2	Library	98	39.2
3	Internet	108	43.2
4	Other	2	.8
	Total	250	100

Awareness of Copyright law

The Table 3 indicates the awareness of copyright law among research scholars. Out of 250 respondents surveyed, 92.8 % of respondents were aware of copyright law, whereas the least percent i.e., 7.2% of respondents were not aware of copyright law. Based on the department-wise awareness regarding copyright law reveals that 38% of respondents from social science were aware of copyright law, while 37.6% of respondents were from science, followed by 22.2% from humanities and 4% of respondents were from management indicated their awareness towards copyright law.

Table 3: Discipline-wise Awareness of Copyright Law

Discipline	Awareness of Copyright law		Total
	Yes	No	
Science	94(37.6)	4(1.6)	98(39.2)
Social Science	96(38.0)	11(4.4)	107(42.8)
Humanities	33(22.2)	2(.8)	35(14.0)
Management	9(3.6)	1(.4)	10(.4)
	232(92.8)	18(0.7)	250(100)

Awareness of Copyright Infringement

The Table 4 shows the awareness of Copyright Infringement among research scholars. Out of 250 research scholars, 86.4% of respondents were aware of copyright

infringement and only 13.2% of respondents were not aware of copyright infringement. Based on the department wise awareness on copyright infringement reveals that 36% of respondents from science were aware of copyright infringement, followed by 34.4% of them were from social science, 21.4% of respondents were from humanities and 3.6% of respondents were from management shows their knowledge regarding copyright infringement.

Table 4: Discipline-wise awareness of Copyright Infringement

Departments	Awareness of Copyright Infringement		Total
	Yes	No	
Science	90(36.0)	8(3.2)	98(39.2)
Social Science	86(34.4)	21(8.4)	107(42.8)
Humanities	31(21.4)	3(1.2)	35(14.0)
Management	9(3.6)	1(.4)	10(.4)
	216(86.4)	33(13.2)	250(100)

Level of Awareness of Copyright Infringement

The data presented in Table 5 shows the level of awareness of copyright infringement among respondents. It is observed that most of the respondents i.e., 52.8% rated their level of awareness of copyright infringement as ‘Good’, whereas 24.8% of respondents rated as ‘fair’, 11.6% of respondents rated as ‘poor’, 8.8% of respondents rated as ‘excellent’ and the least 2% of respondents rated as ‘very poor’.

Table 5: Level of Awareness of copyright Infringement

Department	Level of Awareness of Copyright Infringement					Total
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor	
Science	12	43	32	11	0	98
Social Science	8	64	14	18	3	107
Humanities	1	22	11	0	1	35
Management	1	3	5	0	1	10
	22(8.8)	132(52.8)	62(24.8)	29(11.6)	5(2.0)	250

Perception of respondents on Copyright Infringement

Research scholars were asked to indicate their perception towards copyright infringement is presented in table 6. Majority i.e., 50% of respondents agreed that ‘using copyright materials is considered as a form of intellectual dishonesty’, while 17.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that ‘submitting another person’s work/ thesis as

my own, does not mean that I violate Copyright law’, followed by 15.6% of respondents strongly agreed that ‘not providing appropriate references does not mean that I have infringed/ violated Copyright law’. It is observed from the table that though respondents are aware of copyright law but they perceived copyright infringement from different point of view.

Table 6: Perception of respondents on Copyright Infringement

Sl. No	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Using Copyright materials is considered as a form of Intellectual dishonesty	83 (33.2)	125 (50.0)	20 (8.0)	20 (8.0)	2 (0.8)
2	For the Research purpose, I don’t need to acknowledge any author	25 (10.0)	53 (21.2)	42 (16.8)	73 (29.2)	57 (22.8)
3	By Paraphrasing the text it does not lead to Infringement/ Violation of the Copyright law	22 (8.8)	81 (32.4)	78 (31.2)	46 (18.4)	23 (9.2)
4	Submitting another person’s work/ thesis as my own, does not mean that I violate Copyright law	44 (17.6)	62 (24.8)	26 (10.4)	44 (17.6)	74 (29.6)
5	Not providing appropriate references does not mean that I have infringed/ violated Copyright law	39 (15.6)	80 (32.0)	28 (11.2)	64 (25.6)	39 (15.6)

Ways to lead respondents for Copyright Infringement

Research scholars were asked to mention the ways that lead them towards violation of copyright in their research is shown in table 7. Around 66% of respondents disagree that they ‘provide wrong

citation’ and same number of respondents disagree that they ‘take a photocopy of whole textbook without permission from the author’, whereas 57.6% of respondents agreed that ‘they paraphrase the text in a particular textbook’, while 54.8% of respondents mentioned that ‘they copy word to word from the textbook’.

Table 7: Ways to lead for Copyright Infringement

Sl. No	Statements	Yes	No
1	I paraphrase the text in a particular textbook	144(57.6)	106(42.4)
2	I copy word for word from the text book	113(45.2)	137(54.8)
3	I provide wrong citation	85(34.0)	165(66.0)
4	Taking photocopy of whole text book without permission from the author	85(34.0)	165(66.0)

Major Factors that lead research scholars to infringement of Copyright

The Table 8 shows the major factors that leads respondents towards copyright violation and it is clear from the table that majority i.e., 48.8% of the respondents agreed that ‘high cost of textbooks’ lead them for

violation of copyright, while 23.6% of respondents strongly agreed that ‘lack of awareness of copyright law’ lead them towards violation of copyright law, followed by 40.4% of the respondents agreed that ‘fear of poor performance’, while 34% of the respondents agreed that ‘scarcity of information materials in the library’ lead them towards infringe of copyright law.

Table 8: Major Factors that leads research scholars to infringement of Copyright

Sl. No	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	High cost of textbooks	56(22.4)	122(48.8)	29(11.6)	31(12.4)	12(4.8)
2	Lack of awareness of copyright law	59(23.6)	106(42.4)	42(16.8)	24(9.6)	19(7.6)
3	Fear of poor performance	28(11.2)	101(40.4)	70(28.0)	33(13.2)	17(6.8)
4	Scarcity of Information materials in the library	40(16.0)	85(34.0)	52(20.8)	54(21.6)	19(7.6)

Ways to reduce infringement of Copyright law

The Table 9 indicates the ways to avoid copyright infringement by the respondents. It is shown that the majority i.e., 66% of the respondents agreed that ‘Library should provide proper Information Sources to its users’, while

39.6% of respondents strongly agreed that ‘research scholars should be made more aware of IPR/ copyright law’, followed by 32.4% of respondents strongly agreed that ‘Library/ University Authorities should conduct regular User Awareness Programs on copyright issues.

Table 9: Ways to reduce infringement of Copyright law

Sl. No	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Research scholars should be made more aware of IPR/ copyright law	99(39.6)	148(59.2)	2(.8)	1(.4)	-
2	Integration of course on IPR at post graduate level Or incorporation of the course on IPR during the PhD course work syllabi.	70(28.0)	163(65.2)	15(6.0)	1(.4)	1(.4)
3	Library should provide proper Information Sources to its users	84(33.6)	165(66.0)	1(.4)		-
4	Library/ Management authorities should conduct regular User Awareness Programs on copyright issues	81(32.4)	161(64.4)	6(2.4)	2(.8)	-

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings of the study indicate the awareness of copyright law and perception of research scholars regarding copyright infringement. The study found various significant aspects with respect to the knowledge of research scholars in terms of copyright law. Firstly, the study found that 92.8 percent of respondents are aware of copyright law whereas the least percent i.e., 7.2 of respondents are not aware of copyright law. This indicates that the awareness of copyright law among respondents is high. Secondly, it is found that 86.4% of respondents are aware of copyright infringement and only 13.2% of them are not aware of copyright infringement. The majority i.e., 50% of respondents stated that using copyright materials is considered as a form of intellectual violation and it is observed from the study that though respondents are aware of copyright infringement but they differs significantly in their perception. The study found that most of the respondents reported 'high cost of textbooks' and 'lack of awareness of copyright law' were the main reasons for copyright violation. The study also observed other factors such as poor performance; lack of adequate materials in library are also leading them towards violation of copyright law. Most of the respondents have opined that library should provide the necessary information resources required by the users to avoid violation of copyright law and must create awareness among the academic community on copyright law by organizing workshops, seminar and other user awareness programs by library and university authorities. Therefore, it is felt necessary to integrate IPR and Copyright in the

syllabus of PhD course and also PG courses so that the students would be aware of the copyright law and the repercussions of copyright infringement before they join PhD or the other research endeavors.

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