

# An Exploratory Study Of Copyright Infringement Of Digital Material In Mutah University.

Omar Lasassmeh

**Abstract:** This paper provides an exploratory study of copyright infringement of digital material in Mutah University. Copyright infringement levels in the educational organization have consistently ranked higher than other organizations, and this study finds that Mutah University is no exception. Almost a quarter of those surveyed appeared to not understand the legal issues involved in digital or electronic copyright infringement behaviour. However, a majority believe that downloading and sharing digital material illegally is unethical, but they justify piracy from a perception that individual software costs only pennies to produce and represents no harm. The roles of the university procedures in countering copyright infringement also studied. The respondents believed that the university has a responsibility to increase public awareness of copyright infringement issues, but the success of such efforts was limited. The paper summarized some suggestions on copyright infringement, including the use of computer application to detect plagiarism and cheating and the implementation of a unified marketing strategy to raise public awareness of the issue.

**Index Terms:** Digital Piracy, Intellectual Property Rights, Mutah University.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Mutah University is one of (12) public universities in Jordan. It provides a wide range of different undergraduate and postgraduate programs in different disciplines. The university intent on achieving a high-rank position through assuring education quality of students and professors' outcomes. However, as with many other educational schools in the world, copyright infringement has become an issue that must be dealt with. To date, there has been very little research into the digital copyright infringement problem in Mutah University, or any other university in Jordan. This paper documents an exploratory study of copyright infringement of digital material, focusing on descriptive statistics regarding the problem, and the attitude of copyright infringement users to the ways in which piracy awareness is being addressed by the government and media. The results provide insight into the copyright infringement problem in Mutah University and can be used as a starting point for further efforts to reduce illegal intellectual property rights (IPR) infringement. The propagation of easily accessible internet among students in schools and universities has extended the opportunity of plagiarism and to pirate software and electronic content. The autonomous and anonymous identity and asynchronous nature of communication have contributed to highly psychoactive experiences in the online world. Moreover, chances of detection, apprehension and prosecution over the internet are exponentially smaller [1]. The study aims at studying and exploring the propagation of copyright infringement in Mutah University, studying the relationship between student's awareness, copyright issues and the effect of penalties in reducing digital piracy.

## 2 RELATED WORK

Mutah University is one of the first universities established in Jordan (1981), located in the south of Jordan, Karak governorate. Currently, 20,000 students attend the university and over 700 professors working at Mutah University. In an effort to encourage foreign students and promote growth in the education level, Mutah university administration has

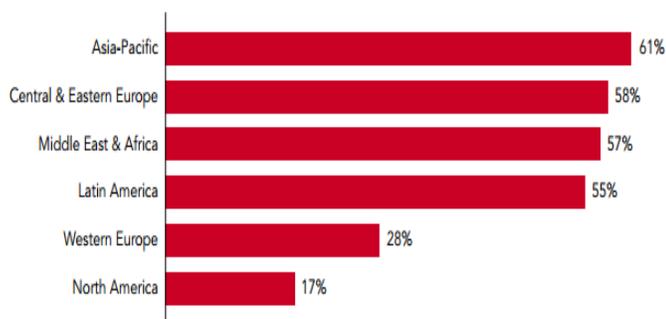
developed several plans to exploit the revelation of the information technology industry in education. In 2014, Mutah administration converted general service courses to be taught online. The extended use of electronic content through e-learning makes Mutah University considers various regulations to better protect intellectual property and copyrights. The university computer centre and Library Department have been given full responsibility for enforcing these instructions. Due in large part to efforts such as these, copyright infringement in Mutah University has seen a steady decline since 2000. The Internet and wireless connections development in digital technology have contributed about dramatic changes in the life quality and style for many individuals in the world, although these improvements have also provided the opportunity for discrepancy and crime [8].

Social Culture is often considered as a factor in the difference in piracy rates between countries and then between universities [2]. Thus, their ethical development related to intellectual property is of particular concern. In a recent study (Al-Sheikh at the university) at the academic university, when respondents responded to the behavior of software piracy, 74% of them readily admitted to illegally copying digital material (79% of men, 57% of women)[3]. However, only 78% of respondents understood that piracy was illegal, and concluded that 22% of respondents either did not understand the current status of the legislation or were unaware of the existence of laws. Therefore, the actual number of people illegally copying software may be larger, as some may commit piracy as legal action. Moreover, 63% of respondents stated that piracy is immoral. While most respondents agreed that piracy was unethical and illegal, even though the majority is still committing the act, and 11% found piracy illegal, but ethical. Hopper stated that nearly half (48%) of primary and middle school students believe that software piracy is legal [4]. Kruger reported 40% of senior teachers to defend piracy within schools [5]. Not surprisingly, students' beliefs reflect those designed by their teachers, as many young people (88%) justify piracy from the perception that individual digital data cost only pennies to produce and do not represent any harm [5]. Because preventive measures and legal deterrence do not seem effective in the face of increasing losses [6], it is important to investigate the behavioral variables fundamental the phenomenon of piracy. Copyright infringement exists when someone who doesn't own the copyright to a work uses

• Omar Lasassmeh, Dept of Information System, Mutah University.

one of the rights without permission. Typically, it comprises a claim of illegal copying (pirating of the reproduction right) or claims of a new work based upon the original (the adaptation right), but it can also involve a violation of the other rights as well. Copyright infringement is a crime of piracy either on a physical or digital form that involves duplication of protected materials. This may involve the process of sharing a file or illegally downloading using peer to peer connections network [7]. The extended propagation of commercial use of the internet has increased the rate of digital piracy in recent years. Easy accessibility of the internet has enabled individuals to easily commit criminal activity due to the ability to connect anonymously. Moreover; the internet facilitates copyright infringement because the nature of the internet allows the action to take place away from the copyright holder, leaving the feeling that the act is legal. One of the most common implications of digital piracy is the use of unlicensed software by individuals or organizations as it is free software. The unlicensed software is often considered as malware software that disrupts computer or mobile operations, gathers sensitive information and gains access to private content. Figure 2 shows statistics by [8] of the use of unlicensed software all around the world. Statistics shows that the average ratio of unlicensed software use in the Middle East and Africa is (75%).

Average Rate of Unlicensed Software Use



**Figure 1:** The average rate of unlicensed use of software (2018).

Mutah University has observed the importance of intellectual property for a significant period. Given the importance of intellectual property to the university reputation, Mutah University takes the responsibility to apply the law and increases the awareness of piracy issues among students and workers. Mutah University conducts an annual Intellectual Property Week in cooperation with the National Library and the King Abdullah Center for Intellectual Property, where they have all participated in awareness campaigns. Plagiarism is a form of cheating by taking another person's writing, conversation, song, or even idea without citation and passing it off as your own. This includes information from web pages, books, songs, television shows, email messages, interviews, articles, artworks or any other medium. With the extent of the Internet and easy access to almost limitless written material on every conceivable topic, suspicion of student plagiarism has begun to affect teachers at all levels, at times diverting them from the work of developing students' writing, reading, and critical thinking abilities.

### 3 RELATED ISSUES

The issue of fair use, especially posed by digital media and the Internet, poses new differences in old problems. It is a complex and constantly changing minefield of exposure to any online company. Fair use of news stories has engaged in many legal battles over the years over what constitutes the fair use of copyrighted material and has once again emerged as a hot issue. Newspaper publishers, with revenue squandering due to competition on the Internet, in particular, are concerned about the widespread use of their content under the guise of fair use. The concern is that even small excerpts of republished news articles may discourage readers from buying newspapers or online subscriptions to read the full article. In some cases, websites that publish snippets of news stories are best optimized for search engines, meaning not buying a newspaper and thus reducing revenue [9]. Software, on an individual level, people may share programs with friends and family illegally. File and peer-to-peer sharing of files and programs through the networks may contribute to allowing the use of the software and files without the permission of the author. Companies may also infringe the copyrights of the software by making several copies of the software product rather than allowing it to be licensed. Also using crack circumvention on DRM features removes the expiry period of the limited time trial of the application. This is essentially the same, and illegal under the Digital Millennium Copyright Act [5]. Hyperlinks, a feature of the World Wide Web it is a Hypertext Link, or Hyperlink that contains a reference refers to a Web page, this page may contain material that violates copyright. Contributing to infringement of copyright, the emergence of social networking sites and Facebook has resulted in copyright infringement by publishing and sharing unauthorized texts, images and videos [4].

### 4 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY IN JORDAN

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan was interested in property rights. The first interest was in 1958 when the Trademark Protection Law was issued, and the copyright law came into effect in 1992. After Jordan joined the Berne Convention in 1998, the Law on Property Rights was amended several times to meet international standards. Jordan has become a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) since 2000. All laws dealing with property rights, trademarks and patents have been issued. These laws must be registered in the National Library of the Ministry of Culture. Patents must also be registered with the Ministry of Industry at the Registrar of Patents and Trademarks. Jordan changed its patent and trademark laws in 2007 in order to accede to the Madrid Protocol on the Registration of Marks and the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT). As a result of Jordan's improvement in the application of Jordanian property rights, Jordan became according to the Global Information Technology Report Issued by World Economic Forum's in 2013 was among the lowest in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region in IP violations and it is ranked as 47th out of 144 countries. The Jordanian government is conducting a continuous survey of these laws. In 2014, 460 cases were referred to the Jordanian judiciary relating to violations of intellectual property rights. The government continues its efforts to implement strict penalties and introduce new instructions stemming from existing laws.

## 5 METHODS

The study used an exploratory questionnaire developed by the author. Likert's basic measures were used to measure respondents' opinions on the topics under investigation. Table 1 provides the elements used in the questionnaire, as well as the results. The questionnaire also contained several questions about demographics (college, gender, grade, etc.) and asked respondents to identify their own copyright infringement behavior themselves. The questionnaires were submitted to a small group of colleagues and students for comments, and minor modifications were made to improve the visibility of some questions. Questionnaires were distributed to several available groups: evening classes at graduate level at Mu'tah University in Karak, Jordan, undergraduate classes and professors in several different colleges. This sample was selected because it provided an available group of current and future Jordanian business professionals with the ability, opportunity and knowledge to use computer technology. Total of (225) questionnaires were disseminated, with (198) valid surveys returned, having a valid response rate of (88.8%). SPSS package has been used to analyse data using the tools of descriptive analysis.

## 6 RESULTS:

The frequency of demographic data was as follows: (65%) of the respondents were male and (35%) females. Portion of 48% of the respondents were from the scientific faculty, and 52% from the faculty of humanity. While, (88%) of respondents are studying bachelor's degree, and 12% of graduate students. And (89%) of respondents have advanced knowledge in the use of computer applications, the Internet, or some other areas related to IT, with another 11% specializing in IT. When asked about their software piracy behavior, 89% freely admitted to copying software inadvertently. However, 89% of respondents understood piracy as illegal, meaning that 11% of respondents either did not understand the current status of the legislation or were aware of the existence of laws even. Despite this finding, the actual number of individuals illegally copying digital material is likely to be higher, and surprisingly (65%) justify piracy from the perception that individual digital data cost only pennies for production and do no harm. Regarding the role of university action in combating copyright infringement, several questions were asked to determine the views of respondents. Likert 5-point measures were used to measure respondents' opinions (1 = strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neutrino, 4= agree and 5= strongly agree). Table 1 shows the standard means and deviations for the various questions asked.

**Table 1**  
*Respondents answers*

All questions used a 5-point Likert scale (1=Do does not agree, 5=Agree)		
Question	Mean	Std.Dev.
The university administration has a responsibility to conduct an awareness campaign through the media to combat software piracy	3.96	1.02
The university administration keeps considering the importance of countering copyright issues.	3.5	1.04
The university provides students and faculties with licensed software.	1.8	1.02
The easy accessibility of the internet has extended the act of plagiarism.	4.6	0.99
The university uses special software to detect plagiarism (Both Arabic and English based).	1.8	1.02
The university literally applies the law regarding copyright infringement cases.	2.6	1.01
Pirate software by downloading or sharing without a license is illegal acts.	4.5	1.05
It is ethically to cite other's writings or ideas when you refer to.	3.5	1.06
You always cite the references used in your writing.	2.9	1.09
Pirate software or copyrighted material cost lesser than licensed ones.	4.5	0.96
Students' awareness of the risks of software piracy is increased.	2.88	1.13
Faculties in their classes aware students about the implication of electronic piracy.	1.6	1.23
Currently, copyright infringement is decreasing.	2.3	1.11

## 7 DISCUSSION

The results provide some suppressing discussion points. Notably, the copyright infringement and digital piracy problem in Mutah University is large. The result shows that the acts of pirating software or intellectual property are not decreasing at all. As the mean score of the question "Currently, copyright infringement is decreasing" was (2.3); that indicates students still looking for an easy source to get their work done even they know that their activities are illegal. This may refer to the uncertainty of receiving punishment after pirate software or electronic data. Moreover, they think that the cost of pirating electronic data is lesser than the licensed one with a mean score of (4.5). The surprising fact that (89%) of respondents indicated that they understand or had knowledge of the laws regarding piracy, but (65%) of them justified piracy from a

perception that individual software costs only pennies to produce and represents no harm. As the sample consisted of students and professionals who work at Mutah University, this implies that the university has work to do, and they have to make software users aware of the problem. Even the university has undertaken great efforts in the recent past to increase awareness of copyright issues, including an annual IP Week, though, more work needs to be done. One another negative result, a large percentage of respondents with mean score (3.2) clearly pointed out that the university doesn't use special software for plagiarism detection in both Arabic and English scripts. And the university uses unlicensed software to its information technology facilities and services. This consequently, encourages students to illegally use other's work and pretend as their own work. Results also reveal that

students don't care about citing their work when referring to other recourses. Also, respondents pointed out that the easy accessibility of the internet has extended the act of plagiarism. This can be justified by the nature of internet space were Easy accessibility, autonomous and anonymous identity and asynchronous nature of communication have contributed to highly psychoactive experiences in the online world. Moreover, chances of detection, apprehension and prosecution over the internet are exponentially smaller. The result shows that the university has taken the effort to build awareness of the copyright issue, but still need to do more as the phenomena are extended especially the act of stealing other's writings, book, ideas, research and other media.

## 8 IMPLICATIONS

The results of the study announce the need to counter and reduce the problem of copyright infringement in all universities in Jordan. As stated in western universities, part of their strategy and regulations have been to increase student awareness as to the nature of the problem, and various Jordanian universities have undertaken awareness campaigns since IPR (Intellectual Property Regulations) legislation was passed in the 1990s. This study gives support for this course of action. A significant percentage (65%) of the respondents was aware of the laws regarding software piracy, but they consider the cost is not harming to justify pirate software. These people need to be educated as to the laws surrounding IPR – piracy is clearly illegal in Jordan, and people need to be made aware of that fact. Simply educating these individuals could lead to a decrease in illegal copying. Mutah University as other universities worldwide, looking for a good reputation and high rank in education, thus the process of countering and reducing digital piracy and copyright infringement is a priority. The quality of research and scientific achievement greatly harmed without monitoring the infringement of intellectual property.

## 9 CONCLUSION:

Like many universities around the world, copyright piracy and software in Jordan is a serious problem that needs to be addressed. This study reveals the magnitude of the problem in Jordanian universities and supports the results of BSA (Business Software Alliance, 2016). The use of unauthorized programs at universities will affect the educational process and hinder developments in the use of IT facilities. An interesting finding is that most students (89%) believe that digital piracy is illegal and immoral behavior, but (65%) admit that they can hack software. Mu'tah University should consider

making an extra effort to combat the copyright issue by resolutely enforcing the law and using special programs to detect plagiarism and fraud in both Arabic and English.

## 10 RECOMMENDATIONS:

As previously noted, the phenomena of copyright infringement must take the lead considerations by adopting plans and actions that include the following: Support innovation to combat piracy. Follow-up of national IP protection frameworks. Use a special program to detect plagiarism (based on Arabic and English). Literally apply the law on copyright infringement cases. Provide an awareness campaign through the media to combat software piracy.

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