

Awareness of Copyright Infringement Amongst Undergraduates of The State Universities in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Copyright infringement is known as the use of copyrighted works without the permission of the authors or creators. This is a form of dishonesty and a violation of the authors' economic and exclusive rights. In general, copyright infringement activity takes place in various ways such as theft, and plagiarism among students pursuing degree programmes in higher education institutions. In this backdrop, this study aims to identify awareness about copyright infringement among students pursuing basic degrees in state universities in Sri Lanka. The primary and secondary data have been used in the study. Primary data were collected by distributing self-administered questionnaires (SAQ) to about 356 of the selected participants based on the random sampling method. The selected students continue their education in the academic years from 2016/2017 to 2019/2020, including students pursuing general and honors degree programmes. All received questionnaires from the study samplings were analyzed in a descriptive way with the help of SPSS (Version-26) and the results were discussed by illustrating in the tables. According to the results, it was found that about 58.1% of participants were not aware of copyright infringement and copyright law which is enforced in Sri Lanka. 77.4% of the study samples proved that copyright infringement is a prohibited action in their own religion (Islam, Buddhism, Christianity and Hinduism). Moreover, the main factors that lead to copyright infringement of study samples were a lack of awareness of copyright law (38%), the high cost of textbooks (64.6%), and the fear of having low grades in the examination (77.4%). It is the high expectation of the researchers that the results of this study will strengthen the awareness of copyright infringements among students in the future.

Keywords: Copyright infringement, Copyright Law, Awareness of Copyright Law, Intellectual Property, Undergraduates, Sri Lanka

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