

Digital Piracy in India: The myth of socio-economic factors leading to piracy

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This paper analyzes behavioral trends of individuals who indulge in piracy. The issue of piracy is largely viewed in a singular manner, the assumption being that only those who cannot afford legitimate copies of software, music and movies or those who are not aware of the illegal nature of piracy indulge in the same.¹ Although there has not been enough research in India, there is, however enough in several other jurisdictions to suggest that piracy is based on cultural and social factors.² This paper, which forms a part of a project covering the theme of digital piracy examines behavioral trends of individuals who indulge in the act of piracy in India.

As a part of the research paper, a self-administered survey was carried out in the National Capital Region of Delhi. Following the stratified random sampling, a sample of 1000 respondents consisting of undergraduate college students were selected. It looked at various socio-demographic variables of the participants including gender, income level, educational qualifications, etc. and analyzed the correlations of the socio-demographic variables with a tendency/predisposition to indulge in piracy. It also studied whether higher/lower incomes influence pirating habits. The educational qualification was considered to assess whether respondents with higher qualifications demonstrate awareness of the illegal nature of piracy. Further the paper also looked at whether awareness of the legal sanctions act as a deterrent to digital piracy.

¹ *C.R. Crowell, D. Narvaez, & Gomberg, (2005), Moral Psychology and Information Ethics: Psychological Distance and the Components of Moral Action in a Digital World.*

² *M. Givon, V. Mahajan, & E. Muller, (1995), Software piracy: Estimation of lost sales and the impact on software diffusion. The Journal of Marketing, 29-37; L. S. Zhang, (2009), Examining digital piracy: self-control, punishment, and self-efficacy. Information Resources Management Journal, 22(1), 24-44.*

The paper observed significant differences across the 'educational qualification' variable with respect to awareness about piracy and a tendency to indulge in piracy. Whereas, similar responses were received across the 'income level' variable with respect to indulging in piracy.