

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS IN SOFTWARE PIRACY AMONG STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The understanding of the degree of factors for the software piracy would have important implications for software producers for technology policy. In this paper I have studied one of the most controversial aspects of computer ethics which is unauthorized copying of software among students. The demographic piracy level reveals male students are more involved in the piracy than female. The percentage of the students involved in the piracy at the graduate and post graduate level is 23.40% and 78.09% respectively. The students who are well versed with the computer are involved more in piracy as compared to others. The percentage of the students of the computer science students involved in the piracy is 45.17%. Management and other discipline students involved in the piracy are 28.27% and 26.55% respectively.

1. INTRODUCTION

Software piracy may also be viewed as unauthorized transfer of technology and it is the most important unethical and unlawful computer crime on the Internet is software piracy. Software piracy is almost impossible to stop. Software companies are launching more and more lawsuits against the pirates. Now a day's most of the software requires some sort of online-registration but this does not stop software piracy. The process of online registration is inconvenient for users but it is not fool proof for the pirates. Issues in computer ethics are often difficult to solve because ordinary morality, social values and norms are not clear in computer technology [1]. Moor found that the conceptual muddles prevent the solving of problems. In the case of computer software, for example, policies do not give an unequivocal answer to the question of whether a program is a product, a service or an expression of an idea [2].

According to the Business Software Alliance nearly half of the software acquired globally is pirated [3]. For the protection of the software there are differences across the different countries [4]. Before adequate actions can be undertaken for the protection of the intellectual property there is a need for better understanding of the various factors that spur the piracy of software.

The current study focuses on software piracy by the students of the university. There are number of reasons for the proposed study for the academia's and researchers because piracy by the students can prove very detrimental in number of ways. If the students will not be stopped from the unlawful activity, it is presumed that the behavior of the software piracy will continue in

there working world. University students are targeted in the current study because honorable ethical values must be instilled and strengthened in the students. Piracy also undermines the integrity of the educational institution in which it takes place or from where the student is passed out. Therefore not protecting the intellectual property may then be reinforced and incorporated outside the academic environment. Being cognizant most of the students are still immersed in the unlawful activity which may count torment in the near future.

2. PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Researchers have found that college and university are breeding grounds for piracy. This is evidenced by the research findings on the subject of cheating and plagiarism [5, 6, 7], as well as on software piracy [8, 9, 10, 11]. Sameer Hinduja [12] conducted a quantitative study on students, and univariate and bivariate findings from the study are used to demonstrate the incidence, scope, and associated correlates of Internet piracy in a university setting. He also proposed the technological and ethical policy solutions that an institution might implement.

3. METHODOLOGY

A voluntary questionnaire was developed to collect the relevant data for the current study. The sampling frame was consisted of random selection of the students in Jammu University and an attempt is made to consider the students of different faculties. The questionnaire was distributed among 350 students in the form of hard copy or soft copy by using the mail-id. After the questionnaire

Table 1
Demographic Trends in Software Piracy

Demographic Statistics	Sample Percentage	1	2	3	4
Gender					
Male	58.62%	62.53%	3.01%	2.01%	3.09%
Female	41.37%	51.96%	0.1%	0.11%	1.06%
Education Level					
Graduation	24.13%	23.40%	1.01%	1.02%	1.50%
Post Graduation	75.86%	78.09%	2.09%	1.09%	3.90%
Discipline					
Computer Science	45.17%	84.06%	2.09%	1.06%	3.09%
Management	28.27%	61.91%	1%	1%	2.25%
Others	26.55%	31.16%	0.01%	0.01%	1.06%

1. I have downloaded/uploaded the software from internet or pirated it for/from someone.
2. How frequently do you pirate per week.
3. How often in last month you have pirated.
4. How often in the last year you have pirated.

received it is observed that only 290 questionnaire were relevant and complete and are used in analysis. The piracy analysis of the current study is mainly composed of the four important questions. These questions are, 1. I have downloaded/uploaded the software from internet or pirated it for/from someone, 2. How frequently do you pirate per week, 3. How often in last month you have pirated, 4. How often in the last year you have pirated.

4. OBSERVATIONS

Demographic statistics reveals that out of total 290 questionnaires analyzed, 58.62% are male and 41.37% are female respondents. The students up to graduation level are 24.13% where as post graduation level students are 75.86%. When discipline wise statistics was considered it is observed that computer science students involved in software piracy are 45.17%, management students are 28.27% and 26.55% are student from other streams. The demographic piracy level reveals that 62.53% students are male and female students involved in the piracy level are 51.96%. The student at the postgraduate level are involved more in piracy than the students at the graduation level. The percentage of the students involved in the piracy at the graduate and post graduate level is 23.40% and 78.09% respectively. The students who are well versed with the computer are involved more in piracy than other students. More observations on different issues are tabulated in the table 1.

5. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Internet users are increasing many folds in today's

world. Most of the computers in the world are online for one or other activity. Individuals are now reliant on internet particularly in case of students. Computers will perpetually be online and therefore server-side verification will help in combating the menace.

It is concluded that students who are well versed with the knowledge of the computer are involved more in the piracy as compared to other. Other aspects of the software piracy such as hard disk loading, OEM bundling, soft lifting etc. are in the active consideration for future study. Different demographic levels are also in the active consideration for future study.

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