



## Attitude and behavior towards copyright violations by Rangsit University undergraduate students

Priewpet Wongchun\* and Bruce Weeks

International Business, International College, Rangsit University, Thailand

\*Corresponding author: E-mail: priewpet.w59@rsu.ac.th

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### Abstract

This report shows student behavior regarding piracy and analyzes the causes of occurrences and also demonstrates the knowledge and understanding of students concerning the copyright. The objectives of this research are consisting of (1) To evaluate understanding and knowledge about copyright and plagiarism of undergraduate students. (2) To assess the possibility that students violate copyright without understanding. (3) To determine the cause of unknowing piracy of students, and (4) To propose solutions to initiate copyright understanding for the students. The research methods were based on quantitative research methods, by having students to take a questionnaire. The questions are divided into 2 parts, the first part consists of the basic questions regarding the understanding of copyright, while the second part contains questions with various simulated situations to evaluate the understanding of students. The questionnaire could be taken both online and offline with participants of 312 students from Rangsit University. The results of the data analysis confirm the sufficient amount of students in the duration of the research. The report shows that students at Rangsit University have copyright infringement both intentionally and unintentionally. The group of students who deliberately violated copyright was caused by three reasons: firstly, students believe that piracy such as copying other people's work from the internet to send to teachers is not a mistake at all since it is just an assignment to only collect points. Secondly, they are anxious that their work would not be achieved and they will get a low score. Consequently, the students copy the better works from others and send them to their teachers with the intention to get a better score. The third reason is that the copyright laws in Thailand are not very violent. Hence, people are not quite interested in studying the law. For the group of students who unintentionally violated copyright, it is due to the fact that they don't have enough understanding about copyright and unintentionally violated them. It is recommended to develop a serious punishment for copyright infringement for students to understand the mistakes of plagiarism and those who break them will have serious consequences. The report also investigates the fact that the analysis conducted has limitations. The limitations include a relatively short time to process the research leading to a small group of sample students. Although the number of students having analyzed in this research was quite appropriate for the given duration, it may be possible to receive more clear research results if the research time can be expanded.

**Keywords:** *Copyright violations, Copyright law, Undergraduate students, Piracy, Plagiarism, Intellectual property, Copyright infringement*

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### 1. Introduction

Copyright law is a law that provides protection for literary or artistic rights. Authors or owners of the work will be protected by this law. Anyone who publishes or translates the text into other languages or releases it without the consent of the author or the owner of the work will be legally violated. Copyright laws may vary from country to country, but they have the same purpose that is to protect the rights of authors or owners. In the past, copyright law may protect only literary or artistic works but from time to time until now copyright protection has extended beyond books to include works that are reproduced including drawings, photographs, music, motion pictures, architecture, and computer programs (Stim, 2000).

If talking about the word copyright, we all know what it means. If asked what the real understanding of copyright is, maybe not everyone can answer this. We have aimed to do this research on undergraduate students because most undergraduate students may see copyright as a far-reaching issue, but if we look carefully, it is not that far away, and most of the undergraduate students have previously infringed copyright without knowing it because they do not understand the scope of copyright (Tella & Oyeyemi, 2019). Most undergraduate students' copyright violations come from the loading of information from the internet without permission from the source of the data source. In Tella and Oyeyemi research said that the reason that students violate copyright by this method is that textbooks are too expensive and they do not know that downloading



content from the internet is a violation of copyright because they do not really understand about copyright right. Causing a doubt as to how many general students have an understanding of copyright. In order to be informed and to apply in the teaching and learning with students on copyright, and so students do not cause piracy without knowing it by any means.

According to Carnes's article, 'Types of copyright law'(Carnes, 2019) said that copyright protection law can be divided into four general categories. The first one is 'automatic copyrights'. Whenever you create an original work, you will immediately be the copyright holder of the work, for example, the original song recording of yours. Next, 'work for hire'. A work for hire copyright is created when one party agrees to create a work in exchange for payment from another party. The moment the work is created, it belongs to the party who paid for the work rather than the party who created it. Next is 'registered copyrights'. This type of law will protect the person from applying for registration with the relevant person or authorized organization. If the copyright registration has been completed, it will be considered a legal copyright holder. Finally, 'International Copyright Treaties'. This type of law is an agreement to protect copyright between one country and another. It can be easily described that our copyrights will be protected by another country that has a legal agreement with your country. All of this is talking about the type of copyright law by Carnes, which describes the type of copyright law in the United States of America. As we have previously said, copyright laws will vary from country to country. Next, we will talk about copyright law in Thailand. In Thailand, copyright law provides protection for 9 creative works as specified by law (Ministry of Commerce, 2015), including 1.literatures (books, speeches, etc.) 2. theatrical performance(choreography, etc.) 3.fine arts work(photograph, sculpture, painting, etc.) 4.music(melodies and lyrics) 5.sound recording work 6.audiovisual works 7.movie works 8. Broadcasting 9.any other work in the literature, science or art department. If wanting to register the copyright in Thailand, you must notify the Department of Intellectual Property to confirm the ownership of that copyright. The notification of copyright information to the Department of Intellectual Property does not guarantee the rights of the copyright owner in any way but it is only a notification to the government agency that they are the rights holder of the copyrighted work provided (Supasiripongchai, 2011). With the notifier having to certify themselves as the owner of the work that brought copyright information and the certificate issued by the Department of Intellectual Property does not certify that the informant is the copyright owner in any way. If there is an argument about copyright ownership, the informant needs to prove the ownership of that copyright.

## 2. Objectives

This research has 4 main objectives, aiming to understand the unconsciousness copyright violations behavior of undergraduate students that they are intentionally violating copyright or they are just lacking knowledge about copyright protection and plagiarism. The objectives of this research are consisting of :

1. To measure understanding and knowledge about copyright and plagiarism of undergraduate students
2. To assess the possibility that students will violate copyright without understanding
3. To find the cause of unknowing piracy of students
4. To find ways to create copyright understanding for students

## 3. Materials and Methods

### 3.1 Research Design :

This method used in this research is based on quantitative analysis by having a random group of people we choose to do a questionnaire. The questionnaire will be done by approximately 300+ students in Rangsit University randomly, both in Thai and International programs. The questionnaire will require the responder to specify some general information, such as gender, age, nationality, faculty of study in order to get clear and accurate information. The main reason for choosing quantitative analysis is because we want to know the exact number and type of people that have or not have an understanding of copyright in order to achieve the objectives of this research. The distribution of the questionnaire will be done both online and papers for the students at Rangsit University to do. The amount of the people we choose to ask is quite suitable for the duration of research (1-2 months), which will make this research the most effective. The



questionnaire will randomly ask both Thai and foreign students at Rangsit University, in order to also analyze the differences in the understanding of Thai and foreign students about copyright.

### 3.2 Hypotheses :

3.2.1 Students who do not recognize copyright protection are more likely to infringe copyright than students who understand copyright protection

3.2.2 Students intentionally violate copyright rather than unknowingly violating copyright

3.2.3 Students who recognize what qualifies for copyright protection value honestly than students who do not understand what qualifies for copyright protection

These hypotheses were established in accordance with the objectives of this research. The purpose of this research has 4 items as mentioned above. Three hypotheses were set up to find the answer to objective 1-3. To achieve the fourth objective, it came from analyzing the answers of all 3 hypotheses together.

### 3.3 Population and Sample:

The population is undergraduate students at Rangsit University because this research is focused on the student. Since the research duration is limited and we want the results to come from a variety of students, we, therefore, do it at random. Our sample group is 312 students from different faculties. This calculation is quite appropriate for the limited time to achieve all 4 objectives of this research. According to the research topic set, we, therefore, intend to focus on students.

### 3.4 Data Collection :

Data collection will be based on the use of quantitative research methods. Data collection will be done by using questionnaires. The questionnaire will be distributed in two ways. First, the offline questionnaire will be distributed in classes and on campus for students to do it. Second, online questionnaire, it will be an online form sent as a link for a larger target audience and online methods will be able to reach more people. The questionnaire will be divided into two parts. Both will ask for a basic understanding of copyright. The first part is the multiple-choice questions. The second part is an example of statements and the respondents will be answered in the choice of true or false.

### 3.5 Ethical Consideration :

In this type of research, there are some considerations that should be done, for the research to be as smooth and accurate as possible. First, the questionnaire will not specify the name and identity of the responder so that they can express their opinions freely and clearly without fear of judgment or embarrassment. This is important to keep in mind because some people do not want to reveal their identity no matter what the questionnaire is about. Next, The respondents have the right to do or not do the questionnaire. The providers have no right to compel them to do if they do not want to do it.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### Results

The following findings will be from the questionnaire distributed. All results are from students who are the main target group in this research. The results of this research are from a questionnaire distributed to both online and offline target groups.

**Table 1** Number of respondents by nationality

Nationality	Figure	Percentage
Thai	211	67.63%
Chinese	61	19.55%
Burmese	19	6.09%



Others	21	6.73%
Total	312	100%

In this questionnaire, we received 312 participants in total. As you can see, Thai students have the highest number of participants in this survey, which is calculated as 211 people, or 67.6% of the total. Since our research was distributed to students at Rangsit University. This is a university in Thailand, therefore making the calculation of the students who participated in the questionnaire mostly are Thai people. The rest are international students studying at this university. Including Chinese, Burmese, and others.

**Table 2** The age criteria of the survey participants

Age	Figure	Percentage
18 years old or under	58	18.59%
19-23 years old	241	77.24%
24 years old	13	4.17%
Total	312	100%

The age criteria of the questionnaire are quite affecting the research because people of different ages may learn differently in each age range. Therefore may have different knowledge and understanding in various matters. We have divided the age criteria of the survey participants into three types: students aged 18 years old and under, students aged 19-23 years old and students aged 24 years old and over because our research is research about university students. The average age of university students is approximately 19-23 years old. The 18 years old and under group were set up due to the fact that we consider some groups of students who may enter the university earlier than usual. Similarly, the age group 24 years old or older was set up for students at some faculties that take a longer period of time to study. For example medical students or pharmacy students. The responses of our survey respondents follow the expectation that most of the undergraduate students are between the ages of 19-23 years old. The results show in the table that there are 241 students in this age group from 312 respondents.

**Table 3** Respondents major area of study

Major area of study	Figure	Percentage
Communication arts	84	26.92%
Business	65	20.84%
Hospitality and tourism	62	19.87%
Dentistry	59	18.91%
Engineering	27	8.65%
Others	15	4.81%
Total	312	100%

As we are doing research about undergraduate students, their major area of study is one of the important factors of students to understand about copyright protection. In each major area of study are completely different. For example, the students that study in the faculty of law should have an understanding of copyright protection and plagiarism more than the students that study in another faculty



because copyright protection is the thing that doing with the law which is matched with the students that study about the law but for other students that studying in the different faculty might not understand the copyright protection at all. According to the table, most of the respondents are in the faculty of communication arts which can be counted by 26.9%, followed by business students at 20.8%, followed by Hospitality and tourism, dentistry, engineering in order.

**Table 4** Type of high school attended of respondents

Type of high school	Figure	Percentage
International program	89	28.52%
English program	52	16.67%
High school in my native language	154	49.36%
Others	17	5.45%
Total	312	100%

From our point of view, the type of high school attended is quite important to the understanding of copyright protection because each type of high school has different teaching courses. For example, the students that attended international program high school tend to have better English skills than the student that attended normal course high school and some high school might have taught students about the copyright protection while some schools did not teach about copyright protection. As you can see in the table, most of the respondents were attended 'High school in my native language' which can be counted as 49% of all the respondents. Almost half of the respondents have attended this type of high school.

**Table 5** Respondents academic year of study

Academic year of study	Figure	Percentage
Pre-college course	0	0.00%
1st-year undergraduate	53	16.99%
2nd-year undergraduate	74	23.72%
3rd-year undergraduate	102	32.69%
4th-year undergraduate	76	24.36%
5th year or higher at undergraduate	7	2.24%
Total	312	100%

In different academic years, there are different types of education. Even if you are studying at the same major but living in different academic years, the teaching courses are naturally different. Our survey this time was done randomly. It will not specify students in any academic year to see the differences between students' knowledge in each year and how they differ. If looking at the table, calculations of students in each year that we have surveyed can be seen that in all groups that we have divided have quite similar amounts. This is a good result as we will be able to analyze the differences between students in each year more precisely.

**Table 6** Basic understanding of copyright

Examples	Copyright	Patent	Trademark	Registered Designs	Total
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Creative work such as a photo	203	38	51	20	312
The visual appearance of something such as computer mouse	144	23	25	120	312
A brand name or logo	152	19	135	6	312
An invention such as a low-cost water filtration system	162	91	34	25	312

The result in this table based on the questionnaire of 'How do you think the following things can be protected by the law?'. The result shows that most of the respondents answered copyright. It is assumed that the respondents may think that the term copyright covers everything. In addition, it can be assumed that most people do not understand the true meaning of patents, trademarks, and registered designs. Since the number of choices to answer these three things is less than the answer that copyright in every topic.

**Table 7** Copyright recognition I

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
It is important for students to know about intellectual property during his or her time at university	38	47	176	49	2	312
It is very important for students to be taught about Intellectual Property during his or her time at university	29	61	144	67	11	312
If I copy and paste information obtained for the Internet for my class assignments or projects I should be punished by my teachers or advisor.	70	101	124	13	4	312
If I use copyrighted material it is plagiarism.	66	82	139	20	5	312
I should be punished if I cheat on a test.	71	153	79	5	1	312
It is wrong to photocopy textbooks used in my course of study	40	52	152	65	3	312

This table is research about recognition and understanding of copyright. The topics will be assigned to the survey participants to do by choosing to answer from strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree. This is how we want to know what students think. Our aim is, for example, we want to know if the student violates the copyright and should be punished or not. The research results in the table show that the students feel quite passive. This can be seen from the table in which the answer 'neutral' is chosen as the most calculated. According to the table, we can assume that most students choose not to be interested in understanding copyright. The research results in this table are linked to the results in the next table. Since the majority of students are neutral, looking at the number of responses that are the most respondents answer 'neutral' out of 5 items in 6 items, it can be concluded that the understanding and interest in understanding the piracy of that student is relatively low.

**Table 8** Copyright recognition II

Statements	True	False	Don't know	Total
An author of copyrighted material has a monopoly in the copyrighted material	74	87	151	312



If it is on the internet it is not copyrighted.	46	99	167	312
Downloading songs, videos, and images from the Internet is against the law.	90	63	159	312
Copyright can last forever.	50	115	107	312
Buying Pirated software or DVDs is against the law.	108	49	155	312
If I use someone's copyright is it a crime.	104	36	172	312
If I copy and use something copyrighted but I do not charge for it - it is not wrong.	81	113	118	312
Sending information like movies or songs with a file-sharing program is wrong.	121	38	153	312

As mentioned before, the results in this table related to the previous table. This table is asked the respondents to choose to answer true, false, or don't know, to analyze together with the previous table. The previous table is research about how students understand about copyright protection and piracy. This table is an in-depth analysis of the information from the previous table which we received the results from the previous table that students choose not to be interested in understanding copyright. This table will emphasize the answer that students are actually choosing not to be interested in understanding copyright. When we get the results from the previous table, we will then continue to analyze in this table, which, when students are not interested in understanding copyright, does it mean they already know what copyright is and how it works. Therefore make them not interested in understanding it or that most students do not know about it and see that it is not important to learn. The questions in this section will give the topic and the respondents choose to answer whether true or false or don't know. Looking at the results, it can be seen that most of the respondents are mostly ignorant, since the number of 'don't know' responses is the most in almost every topic. Therefore, we can conclude that the students do not have enough knowledge about copyright and they see that it is not necessary to learn. This may be the reason why some groups of students have inadvertently violated copyright because they do not understand that what is being done is copyright infringement because they do not understand what is a copyright infringement and do not know the extent of their actions.

**Table 9** Copyright recognition III

Statements	Yes	No	Total
I know about Code of Student Conduct of Rangsit University regarding cheating.	103	209	312
I have used anti-plagiarism programs such as Turnitin or Grammarly to avoid plagiarism.	137	175	312
I have studied intellectual property (copyright, patents, trademarks) subjects in high school.	78	234	312
I have studied intellectual property (copyright, patents, trademarks) subjects in university.	144	168	312
In high school, did you write a research paper for a school assignment?	132	180	312
In university, did you write a research paper for a college assignment?	153	159	312
In high school, I studied the APA or MLA Formatting and Style Guide for research papers.	84	228	312
In university, I studied the APA or MLA Formatting and Style Guide for research papers.	149	163	312

This table is an analysis of the understanding of copyright by analyzing whether the respondents have learned about copyright. This table has only two answers, which are yes and no. If looking at the results of the research in the table, then Result shows that most respondents choose the answer of 'no', so we can briefly conclude that most respondents have never learned about copyright.

**Table 10** A way to learn about copyright from a student's perspective



	Figure	Percentage
In the course of each class	46	14.7%
In an individual course on intellectual property / copyright	55	17.6%
A range of these 2 methods	94	30.2%
Total	117	37.5%

This table is the analysis of the students' perspective of how copyright things should be taught. According to the table, most of the respondents' answers 'don't know' the most at 117 respondents which can be counted as 37.5% of the total respondents, followed by the answer of 'A range of these 2 methods'. The 2 methods mean 'in the course of each class' and 'In an individual course on intellectual property/copyright'. If referenced from the research results in the table we can assume that most students don't know how copyright should be taught, the result in this table is related to Table 7 which the result at that table is students do not have an interest in understanding copyright because they think it is not important which makes them don't know how it should be taught because most of the students are not interested in so it means they don't want to understand it which make them feel that they don't know where to add this type of education to, since they may have subjects that may be more important to them than they need to study.

### Discussion

The goal of this research is to understand the copyright of undergraduate students. In the beginning, some assumptions were made and could be summarized as follows :

Students who do not recognize copyright protection are more likely to infringe copyright than students who understand copyright protection.

For the first hypothesis can conclude that students who do not recognize copyright protection are more likely to infringe copyright than students who understand copyright protection is not true. It's not true that students who do not recognize copyright protection are more likely to infringe copyright than students who understand copyright protection and it can be explained in Table 6 and Table 7. In Table 6, the results show that most of the students do not truly understand what is copyright and what is the difference between copyright, patent, trademark, and registered design. We can assume that one of the reasons that students violate copyrights is because they do not truly understand it and they might not know that the things they've been doing are infringement. At table 7, most of the respondents feel neutral about the statements given of violating copyright which we can conclude that most of the respondents feel neutral about violating copyright. At table 6, It is true that most of the students do not truly understand what copyrighted is because of the figure show in that table but the figure in that table also shows that there are some respondents that might understand copyright. Even though there are some respondents that understand copyright but the results in Table 7 shows that most of the respondents feel neutral about violating copyright which means they do not feel like violating copyright are that serious so we can conclude that even the students that recognize copyright protection also have opportunities as well as those who do not understand about copyright protection to infringe copyright.

Students intentionally violate copyright rather than unknowingly violating copyright.

This hypothesis can be explained in Table 7 as the results in Table 7 shows that most of the respondents feel normal about copyright statements given by the researcher. According to Table 7, the results show that most of the respondents choose to answer 'neutral' which means that they feel quite normal in violating copyright. The results show the figure of most students feels neutral but the rest of the figures are scattered out which means even though most of the students feel neutral about violating copyright but some students do not think like that. We can conclude that most of the students are intentionally violating copyright rather than unknowingly violating copyright.

Students who recognize what qualifies for copyright protection value honestly than students who do not understand what qualifies for copyright protection.

The results show that students who recognize what qualifies for copyright protection value honestly than students who do not understand what qualifies for copyright protection tend to be wrong. If looking at



various tables such as table 8, those who do not understand the meaning of copyright are the most calculated, but when combined with table 7 most people choose to answer 'Agree' rather than 'Disagree'. Therefore, from this research, it can be said that for students to value honestly, it's not about whether they understand or don't understand copyright at all.

After analyzing the research results, it can be summarised as follows:

First, from the assumption that we have set, some of the conclusions are based on the assumptions set and some are not as intended. Therefore, it can be concluded that understanding of copyright does not have much effect on students' behavior in their studies. But what is important to their study behavior is the feeling of doing or not doing it, whether it's right or wrong. Therefore, it can be said that consciousness and being cultivated during their growing period has more effect on studying than the understanding of things that they have studied.

Second, The method used in this research was the distribution of questionnaires randomly. Therefore, the research received from people from many groups. Which make resulting in a variety of details. The results may not be very accurate due to the limited time for doing this research, which makes the survey participants quite small. However, this calculation of the survey participants is quite effective in a limited time. If wanting to find a more accurate result, it may take more time to research and increase the number of survey participants which will make us see the overall results even more.

Third, This study helps to understand the misunderstanding of the copyright of undergraduate students that may cause copyright infringement. This research will be useful for many people including instructors in order to make a true understanding of copyright and plagiarism to students. This research also lets the students know that lacking understanding of copyright may have a negative impact. It may cause unintentional copyright infringement and students will be aware that piracy is a matter that very serious.

## 5. Conclusion

All of the objectives that were set up, in the beginning, were fully attained. Firstly, we have measured the knowledge and understanding of copyright and plagiarism of undergraduate students. It can be concluded that the undergraduate students in Rangsit university have low knowledge and understanding regarding copyright and plagiarism. Secondly, this research has achieved the observation of the students and learned that most students are intentionally violating copyright because of various factors that can be explained in the results part. Thirdly, the cause of unknowing piracy of students is because they do not have a true understanding of copyrights which sometimes causes them to violate copyright without knowing it. The last objective that we have achieved is that we have found a solution to create copyright understanding of students where most of the students who do not understand copyright and plagiarism should be taught in the course of each class and in an individual course on intellectual property/copyright.

The success of this research is to achieve all of the objectives that we have set. But the topic of this research is quite extensive. There are many more issues that can be researched further. For example, The concentration of copyright laws in Thailand affects the rate of copyright infringement. In a limited time, this research cannot cover all of this part since the copyright issue is a very big issue. The occurrence of piracy exists around the world with many different things such as the cause of the occurrence or the penalty. Therefore, research topics in the area can be further extended.

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