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Patrolling the Web for Pirated Content

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Abstract:

The study is an attempt to get the insights on attitudes and behaviour of people in the changing media landscape. The study highlights the online piracy of videos, games, movies, slides, mash-ups etc and addresses the impact that piracy is laying upon on the mindsets of users who are indulged in such activities. The study also signifies the reasons behind piracy, the frequency of doing so, modes of accessing, and likelihood of discontinuing the same. The study is one of its kinds which can be used as a means of awareness against the mass infringement cases which can help in recognizing the need of addressing copyright trolling and thus protecting the unauthorized movement of bits around the internet.

Key words: Digital Piracy; Kashmir; User behaviour.

Introduction

The Information Communication Technology has made available a wide variety of information content to the consumers. Today's consumers access mass varieties of movies, videos, and television shows—on multiple platforms—faster than ever before at their fingertips. The recent developments fuelled by access to better manufacturing technologies have paved new opportunities to the people for illegal stealing of digital products (software, audio, video, games etc) on internet known as digital piracy. Digital piracy is a global phenomenon for the masses and is being committed at an alarming rate. It has become a threat to industries, firms, organizations and institutions all across. A number of factors contribute to the phenomenon of committing piracy. These encompass the contrast between personal and corporate; the ethical neutrality of downloading; situational factors; personal factors; economic factors etc. **(Williams, Nicholas and Rowlands, 2010)**. This research is therefore such an attempt to identify the key factors that lead to piracy amongst the people who are enticed of doing so.

Objectives:

i/ To find out the modes of accessing the contents by pirates.

ii/ To know the reasons for using pirated internet websites.

iii/ Likelihood to pirate the contents.

iv/ To know the willingness of pirates for discontinuing the piracy

Scope: The scope is limited to the general respondents from Srinagar District of Kashmir region between the age group of 18- 40 who had acknowledged their participation in online piracy.

Methodology: To explore the topic a multi-question online survey was deployed by random stratified sampling technique among 25 participants to ascertain various facts on piracy, followed by online interactions which helped to mine the data more coherently. Further the data collected is analysed in the form of tables and charts.

Review of literature

Digital piracy continues to be an act for the youth worldwide. There are a lot of factors that contribute to pirating content. **Phau and Liang (2012)** in a study found self-efficacy, affect and moral judgments having a significant influence upon attitudes towards downloading pirated games from the internet. Conversely, habits, facilitating conditions and social factors do not have significant influences upon attitudes towards downloading pirated games from the internet. It is also found that the level of internet usage, the level of internet time spent and the internet speed do not moderate the relationship between attitudes and intention to download pirated games from the internet. In a sample of 280 students, **Cronan and Al-Rafee (2007)** examined factors to determine an individual's intention to pirate digital content including software, media, etc. The authors conclude from the responses that on average 50.7 per cent of the subjects felt more guilt or moral obligation that pirating was not right, while 23.6 per cent felt pirating was all right and acceptable behaviour. When comparing men and women, both groups felt that pirating was not right (54 per cent and 46.5 per cent, respectively). Cost is another factor pushing consumers to commit software piracy **(Lau, 2006)**. In a study on

people's ethical behaviours, **Lysonski and Durvasula (2008)** formulated scenarios which presented different situational factors, and respondents indicated their likelihood of committing piracy under those circumstances. The scenarios included: stealing a CD from a music store with 100 per cent certainty of not getting caught; stealing a CD from a music store with some risk that an invisible security camera might observe them; and not paying for downloading music

In a survey of 309 students, **Cohen and Cornwell (1989)** found that software piracy is viewed as acceptable and normative behaviour. The findings of **Solomon and O'Brien (1990)** reveal that 71 per cent of students consider illegal copying of software as a socially and ethically acceptable behaviour. A survey of 201 respondents was used to test the model of software piracy by individuals in the workplace. The results indicate that individual attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are significant precursors to the intention to illegally copy software **(Peace, Galletta and Thong, 2003)**. In a study by **Van Belle, Macdonald & Wilson (2007)** at least 45 percent of the respondents consider piracy to be acceptable whereas approximately 30 percent regard it to be unacceptable. Besides, the authors conclude that music piracy is most acceptable with 58 percent of the respondents feeling that it is acceptable to pirate against only 28 percent who feel that it is unacceptable. Furthermore sixty percent of respondents indicate that they would probably pirate videos whilst 73 percent and 75 percent indicate an intention to pirate software and music respectively.

The findings of **El-Sheikh, Rashed and Peace(NA)** reveal that a troubling 80% of the respondents use illegally copied software with 61% of the respondents listing the cost of software as the main reason for committing piracy. A further 18% responded that they simply saw no reason for paying when the software was available for free. 78% stated that they were satisfied with their decision to pirate software, while the remaining 22% admitted to some dissatisfaction or guilt associated with their choice. rice plays a key role to convey individuals to buy pirated products **(Haque, Htibi and Rahman, 2009)**.

Results & Discussions

I. **Involvement in Web Piracy:** Majority of the users (51%) report pirating content where they share/ copy/ download materials illegally in hope of snagging the contents.

Table.1

Frequency of piracy	Response Percent
Frequently	51.0%
Sometimes	49.0%

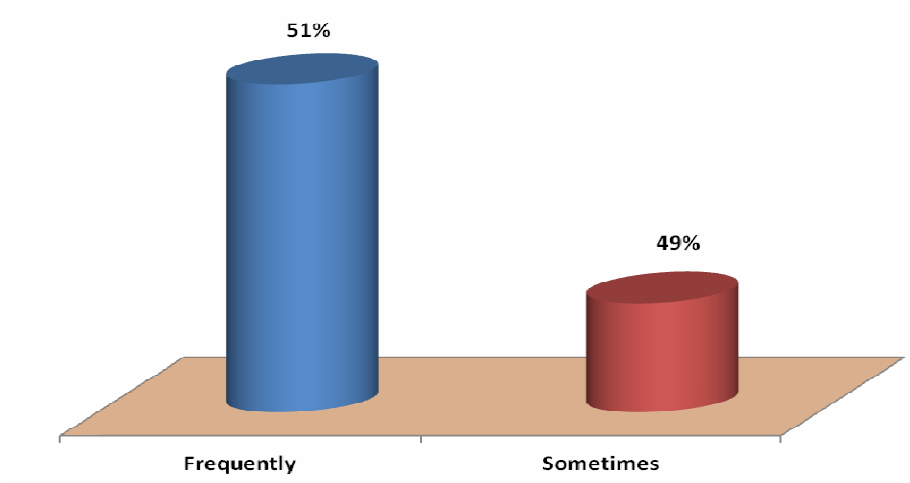

Fig.1 Frequency of Piracy

II. **Modes of Piracy:** As it's evident from the facts that users mainly pirate the contents via downloading (76%), however in some cases streaming is also considered (24%). The main reason behind is that downloading suggests ownership, where as the streaming is temporary.

Table.2

Mode of accessing the contents	Response Percent
Streaming Media	24.0%
Downloading Media/ other contents	76.0%

Media include: Slides, Mash-ups, You Tube Video's, Games, and Movies etc. (68 % of the users showed their consent on using 4shared file sharing site for downloading, followed by pirate bay (22 %) and rapid share (10 %).

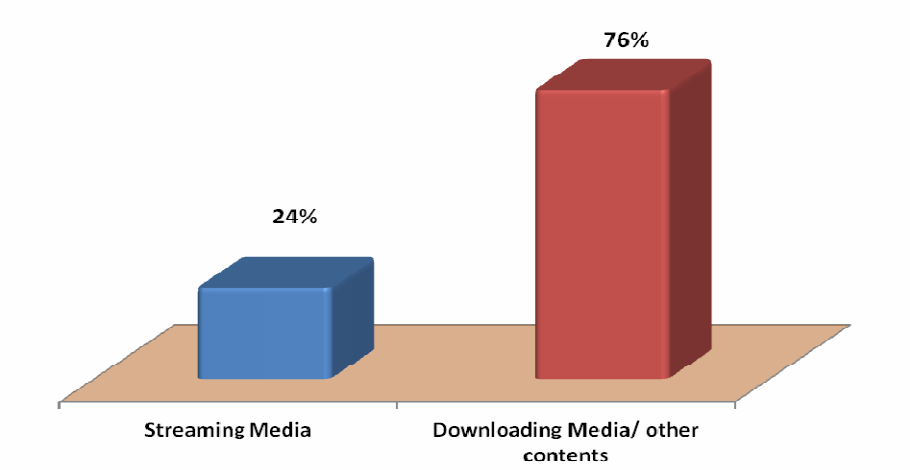

Fig. 2 Modes of Piracy

III. **Reasons behind Piracy:** Not surprisingly, the key motivator to pirate is the fact that it's "free" Where (85 %) of the users show their consent and majority of the users believe that hard copy buying has become too expensive and feel its un-necessary to buy one (80 %). Moreover, "Fast and free" drives a behaviour, and the ability to download freely is seen the prime reasons behind piracy (as revealed from table 2).

Table.3

Reasons for pirating Internet websites	Completely Agree	Somewhat Agree	Total Agreement
a. I heard about it and the idea that its free persuaded me	55.0%	30.0%	85.0%
b. The cost of paying for hard copy has become too much	50.0%	25.0%	75.0%
c. I get the access more faster and at any time	60.0%	20.0%	80.0%
d. I felt every one is doing it	10.0%	50.0%	60.0%
e.Who really needs a physical DVD	50.0%	30.0%	80.0%

IV. **Likelihood to continue piracy:** The vast majority 90% plan to continue piracy via online access and only 55% still pirate via physical copy* i.e.; Cd/Dvd.

Table. 4

Likelihood to continue piracy	Extremely Likely	Somewhat Likely	Total Likelihood
a. Piracy via online	15.0%	75.0%	90.0%
b. Piracy via obtaining a physical copy*	10.0%	45.0%	55.0%

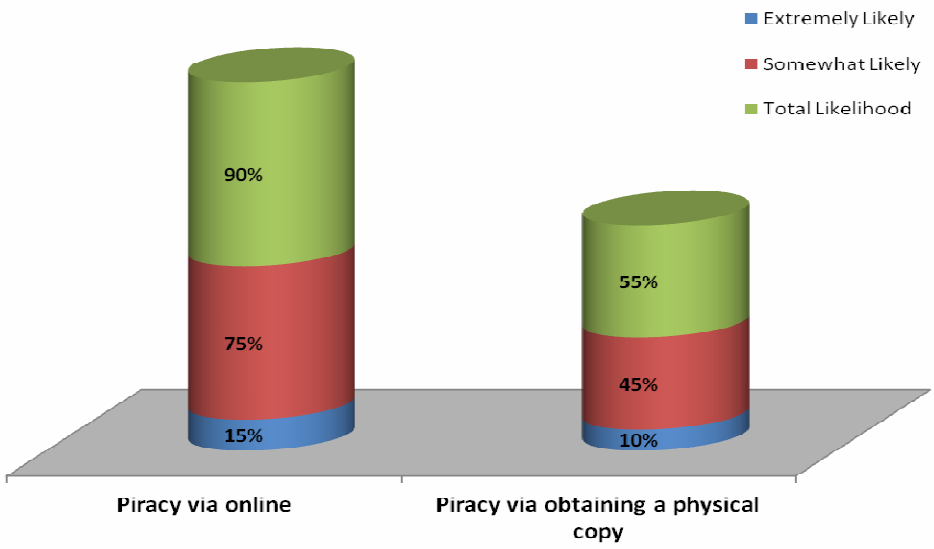

Fig.4 Likelihood to continue Piracy

V. **Willingness to discontinue Piracy:** The prevalent willingness to discontinue piracy is the possibility of obtaining the contents more quickly, where almost 98% of the users show their consent of discontinuing it, owing to the reasons below, moreover 88% percent of the users agree to the fact that all this will invite legal trouble to them.

Table.5

Willingness to discontinue piracy	Extremely Willing	Somewhat Willing	Total Willingness
a. If the hard copy is available at minimal price	45.0%	25.0%	70.0%
b. If the contents can be obtained more quickly	73.0%	25.0%	98.0%
c. The consciousness of illegal doing and that it may harm my image and I can land into trouble	68.0%	20.0%	88.0%
d. Downloading from these websites could infect my computer with a virus or malicious spy-ware	38.0%	22.0%	60.0%

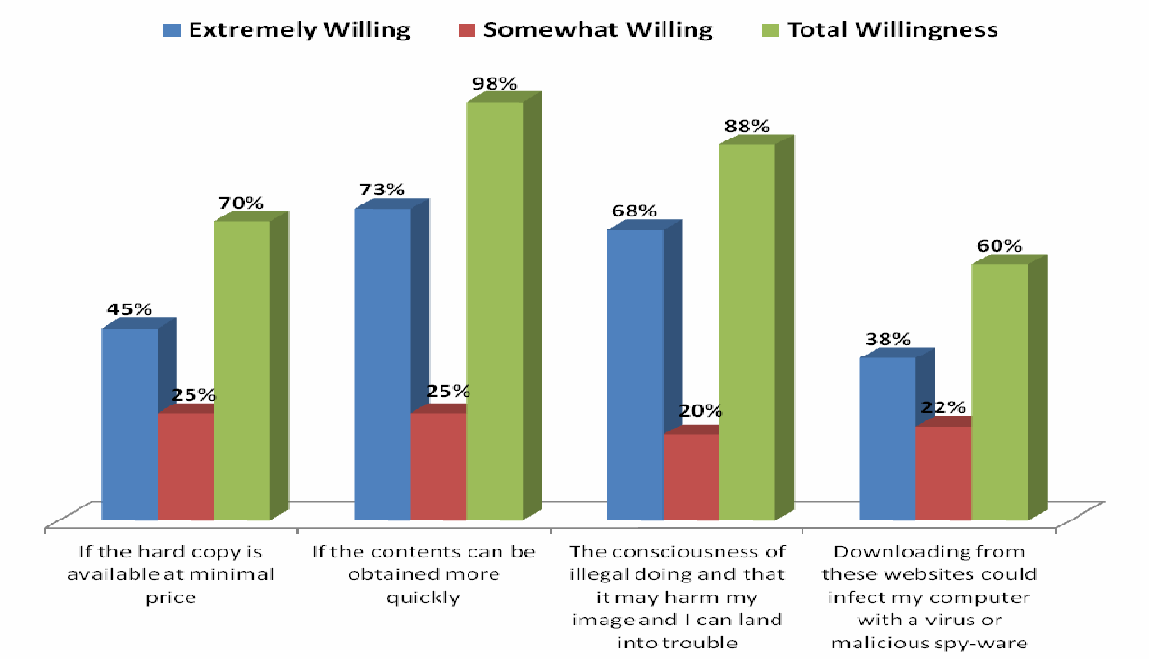

Fig. 5 Willingness to discontinue Piracy

Conclusion:

Conclusively the previous literature and the survey conducted have drawn major conclusions considering the piracy. The study conducted by British anti-piracy consultants **Envisional**- the authors analyzed data from several previous studies of Internet traffic and on the basis of the samples it concluded that nearly two-thirds of all the material being shared, the 11 percent of global Internet traffic — was clearly copyright-infringing. The copyrighted content being shared illegally included films, television episodes, music and computer games and software. The study under question also confirms the issue where many consumers who say they commit online piracy are tempted by free content. But other factors also contribute to the growing prevalence of piracy, including earlier access to content, price and a perception that "everyone is doing it". Ultimately, the electronic copying is rampant on the internet and hundreds or even thousands of plaintiffs are lumped together by the pirates.

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