



### A STUDY ON THE AWARENESS AND PERCEPTION OF ANTI-PIRACY LAWS IN INDIA AMONG INDIVIDUALS RESIDING IN DOMBIVLI SUBURB

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#### Abstract:

*Intellectual property rights play a crucial role in safeguarding creative works, yet digital piracy remains a persistent challenge in India. This study explores the awareness and perception of anti-piracy laws among individuals residing in the Dombivli suburb. Using a mixed-methods approach, data was collected through surveys and interviews to assess respondents' knowledge and awareness of Cinematograph Act and Copyright laws, their attitudes toward piracy, and their compliance with legal frameworks. The findings indicate that while a significant portion of the population engages with pirated content, awareness of anti-piracy regulations remains limited. Moreover, socio-economic factors and accessibility to legal content influence public perception and ethical considerations surrounding piracy. This study highlights the need for stronger enforcement mechanisms and awareness campaigns to promote legal consumption of digital content. The research provides valuable insights for policymakers and content creators to enhance anti-piracy initiatives and foster a culture of intellectual property protection in suburban Mumbai.*

**Keywords:** Anti-piracy laws, Awareness, Perception, Copyrights Act, Cinematograph Act.

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#### Introduction:

In the digital age, the issue of piracy has become a significant challenge for governments, businesses, and content creators worldwide. Piracy, which refers to the unauthorized reproduction and distribution of copyrighted materials, affects various industries, including film, music, literature, and software. In India, digital piracy is widespread, despite the existence of stringent anti-piracy laws. The rapid advancement of technology and the increasing accessibility of high-speed internet have further exacerbated the problem. This study aims to explore the level of awareness and perception of anti-piracy laws among individuals residing in the Dombivli suburb of Thane district, Maharashtra, India.

India has a well-established legal framework to combat piracy, including the Copyright Act of 1957, the Information Technology Act of 2000, and various amendments that strengthen intellectual property rights. Additionally, the country has ratified international agreements such as the Berne Convention and the TRIPS Agreement, which emphasize the protection of copyrighted works. However, despite these legal provisions, piracy remains rampant, often due to limited enforcement, lack of awareness, and societal attitudes that view piracy as a victimless crime. The availability of pirated content through websites, peer-to-peer sharing, and illegal streaming platforms makes it difficult for authorities to curb its proliferation effectively.



Dombivli, a rapidly developing suburb of Mumbai, presents an interesting case study for understanding the awareness and perception of anti-piracy laws. With a diverse population that includes students, working professionals, and business owners, the suburb provides a representative sample of urban Indian consumers. The affordability and accessibility of digital content play a crucial role in shaping individuals' attitudes toward piracy. Many residents of Dombivli, like those in other urban areas, may engage in piracy due to financial constraints or a lack of legal alternatives. This study seeks to assess whether people are aware of the legal consequences of piracy and whether they perceive it as an ethical or legal concern. Several factors contribute to the prevalence of piracy in India, including economic disparities, cultural attitudes, and the inefficacy of legal enforcement. Many individuals justify piracy as a means of accessing content that would otherwise be unaffordable. Additionally, the perception that piracy does not directly harm creators or the economy, contributes to its normalization in society. While efforts have been made to educate the public about the negative impact of piracy on industries and employment, there remains a gap in awareness and enforcement.

The objective of this study is to gauge the level of awareness among residents of Dombivli regarding anti-piracy laws and to understand their perception of piracy as a legal and ethical issue. By conducting surveys and interviews, this research will provide insights into the effectiveness of existing laws and highlight the need for stronger awareness campaigns. The findings of this study will be valuable for policymakers, legal authorities, and content creators seeking to devise more effective anti-piracy measures tailored to urban Indian populations.

Ultimately, this research will contribute to a broader understanding of digital piracy in India and the factors

that influence consumer behaviour. By identifying gaps in awareness and legal enforcement, the study aims to propose solutions that promote legal content consumption while addressing the challenges faced by individuals who rely on pirated content. Through a comprehensive analysis of attitudes and knowledge, this study will help shape future anti-piracy initiatives and legal reforms in India.

### Need for the Study:

As per “The Rob Report” published by E&Y, India’s entertainment industry suffers annual losses of Rs. 22,400 crores due to piracy, with 51% of consumers accessing pirated content. Further, the report states that, Rs. 13,700 crore losses are suffered from pirated content from movie theatres while Rs. 8,700 Cr losses from OTT platforms. The report also states that piracy is most common among individuals aged 19 – 34 years.

### Review of Literature:

**Gunjan Chawla and Nidhi Buch, 2023**, in their paper Impact of Online Digital Piracy on the Indian film industry have observed that majority of the users of piracy content were convinced that the probability of them facing legal consequences was quite low.

**Stratton 2019**, Technological advancements, including P2P file sharing and torrent sites, have facilitated large scale unauthorised distribution of digital media.

**Smith and Telang (2012)** found that movie piracy significantly reduces box office sales.

**Anderson, 2009**, argued that piracy can serve as free advertising, potentially leading to increased sales of digital content

### Objectives:

- (1) To study the relationship between educational qualification and awareness about anti-piracy laws.



- (2) To study the relationship between educational qualification and awareness about anti-piracy laws.
- (3) To analyse whether low-cost options would discourage people from using pirated content

**Research Methodology:**

**Universe of Study:** Individuals of all ages within the locality of the suburb of Dombivli in Thane district from Maharashtra state.

**Sample size:** Data were collected from 171 respondents

**Methods of data collection:** Both primary and secondary data are collected. Primary data was collected through questionnaires towards the target samples using Random sampling method. Secondary data was gathered from websites, newspaper reports, journals, etc.

**Research Method:** Weighted Average Mean was calculated to check the average awareness levels. Chi-square test is used to test the association between

demographic data and awareness about anti-piracy laws.

**Hypothesis:**

$H_0$  – There is no significant relation between educational qualification and awareness about anti-piracy laws

$H_1$  - There is significant relation between educational qualification and awareness about anti-piracy laws

$H_0$  – There is no significant relation between Gender and awareness about anti-piracy laws

$H_1$  - There is significant relation between Gender and awareness about anti-piracy laws

**Limitations of the study:**

1. The data was collected randomly from individuals who showed interest in responding to the questionnaire.
2. The sample size is limited to 171 respondents.
3. Respondents bias could not be ruled out in questionnaire method

**Data Analysis and Interpretation:**

Demographic details:

**Table 1: Gender Details**

	No. of Respondents	%
Male	59	34.50
Female	112	65.50
Total	171	100

**Table 2: Educational qualification of respondents**

	No. of Respondents	%
Under graduate & below	143	83.62
Graduate	009	5.26
Post Graduate	016	9.36
Professional	003	1.75
Total	171	100


**Table 3: Inferential Analysis between Demographic factors and Awareness about Anti-piracy laws**

STATEMENTS	Not at all familiar	Slightly familiar	Somewhat familiar	Moderately familiar	Extremely familiar	WAM	
1) How familiar are you with the term "Digital Piracy"?	33	49	35	36	18	2.749	Less Familiar
	19.298	28.655	20.468	21.053	10.526		
	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>		
2) Do you believe digital piracy harms the economy and content creators?	7	10	69	64	21	3.480	Agree
	4.094	5.848	40.351	37.427	12.281		
	<b>Not at all aware</b>	<b>Slightly aware</b>	<b>Somewhat aware</b>	<b>Moderately aware</b>	<b>Extremely aware</b>		
3) Are you aware of the digital piracy and copyright infringement laws in India?	48	45	44	29	5	2.404	Lower Awareness
	28.070	26.316	25.731	16.959	2.924		

STATEMENTS	Not strict at all	Slightly strict	Somewhat strict	Moderately strict	Extremely strict	WAM	
4) Do you think Indian laws against digital piracy are strict enough?	36	67	46	17	5	2.345	Less Strict
	21.053	39.181	26.901	9.942	2.924		
	<b>Not at all effective</b>	<b>Slightly effective</b>	<b>Somewhat effective</b>	<b>Moderately effective</b>	<b>Extremely effective</b>		
5) Do you believe that enforcement of anti-piracy laws in India is effective?	29	89	5	39	9	2.473	Less Effective
	16.959	52.047	2.924	22.807	5.263		
	<b>Strongly oppose</b>	<b>Oppose</b>	<b>Neither oppose nor support</b>	<b>Support</b>	<b>Strongly support</b>		
6) Do you support government initiatives to block access to pirated content websites?	13	11	56	62	29	3.485	Positive Perception
	7.602	6.433	32.749	36.257	16.959		

STATEMENTS	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	WAM	
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7) Do you consider digital piracy as an unethical act?	5	27	64	62	13	3.298	Fairly Agree
	2.924	15.789	37.427	36.257	7.602		
	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>		
8) Do you think piracy can be justified if content is not easily accessible through legal means?	11	33	83	42	2	2.947	Less Agreement
	6.433	19.298	48.538	24.561	1.170		
	<b>Not willing at all</b>	<b>Somewhat not willing</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Somewhat willing</b>	<b>Very willing</b>		
9) Would you be willing to switch to legal alternatives if they were more affordable and accessible?	19	19	48	38	47	3.439	Somewhat willing
	11.111	11.111	28.070	22.222	27.485		

### Analysis results:

- 1) Respondents are **less familiar** with the term “Digital Piracy”
- 2) Respondents **agree** to the fact that piracy harms economy and content creators.
- 3) Respondents have **lower awareness** about digital piracy and copyright infringement law
- 4) Respondents believe that Indian laws against digital piracy are **not strict enough**.
- 5) Respondents believe that enforcement of anti-piracy laws in India are **less effective**
- 6) Respondents are **in support** with government initiatives to block access to pirated content.
- 7) Respondents **fairly agree** that digital piracy as an unethical act
- 8) Respondents **don’t feel justified** in engaging in piracy if content is not easily accessible through legal means
- 9) Respondents are **willing to switch** to legal alternatives if they were more affordable and accessible

**Table 4: CHI-SQARE Analysis results:**

Sr. No.	Hypotheses	p-value	Result
1.	There is no significant relation between educational qualification and awareness about anti-piracy laws	0.3045	$p > 0.05$ , Null hypothesis is accepted
2.	There is no significant relation between Gender and awareness about anti-piracy laws	0.362	$p > 0.05$ , Null hypothesis is accepted

Results of Chi-square test inferred that respondents that qualified individuals also engage in digital piracy due to convenience and low cost. Also, both genders show similar awareness about anti-piracy laws.



### Conclusion:

While the recent Cinematograph (Amendment) Act, 2023 will surely help to tackle film piracy, continuous technological advancements and stricter enforcement are necessary to protect the film industry from revenue losses. Authorities are actively blocking websites, prosecuting offenders, and raising awareness to fight this ongoing issue.

Digital piracy cannot be eradicated but at least we can minimize the loss suffered substantially.

All of us should pledge that we shall refrain from watching pirated content and would rather pay for watching cinematograph content, thus supporting the creative industry.

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### Cite This Article:

**Mr. Nair N.R. (2025).** A Study on the Awareness and Perception of Anti-Piracy Laws in India among Individuals Residing in Dombivli Suburb. In **Electronic International Interdisciplinary Research Journal: Vol. XIV** (Number I, pp. 103–108).