

The Awareness Level of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) at KSA Universities

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Abstract— This paper measures the awareness of the Saudi community, especially at universities, towards intellectual property. Therefore, in this study, we investigated the level of researchers' and publishers' awareness of IP in Saudi Arabia, using the online survey method. The survey contains demographic data along with 15 points divided into four sections: personal information, knowledge towards intellectual property, which reflects "Age group, profession, university and verification of understanding of the term IP (5 items); publishers awareness toward intellectual property, which demonstrates the extent to which publishers' rights have been violated and what are their actions towards this act (3 items); researchers awareness toward intellectual property, which reflects the extent to which researchers know the inclusion of references and copyright preservation (4 items); and Saudi Authority for Intellectual Property, which reflects knowledge of the existence of the Saudi Authority for IP and the suggestions (3 items).

Keywords— Awareness, Intellectual property, Copyright Preservation.

I. INTRODUCTION

Intellectual property (IP) is a set of national laws, international treaties, and agreements that grant the individual right to everything produced by the mind, whether it is an idea, image, invention, research, musical compositions, writing, etc. [1, p.220] [2].

These rights are preserved through four main mechanisms according to each type of these rights [3]:

- Patents (for inventions and innovations).
- Intellectual property rights (IPR) (for literary and artistic works).
- Trademarks (for logos and brand elements).
- Trade secrets.

On the other hand, some references¹ consider all of the following types under the IP umbrella (see Figure.1).

- Patents (for inventions and innovations).
- Copyrights
- Trademarks (for logos and brand elements).
- Trade secrets.

IPR give creative owners the ability to preserve their rights so that no one can steal or use them without acknowledging their primary source and also provide them with the right to sell or publish them on their terms. The importance of IP laws lies in property preservation in various environments such as economic, commercial, educational, etc. [2].

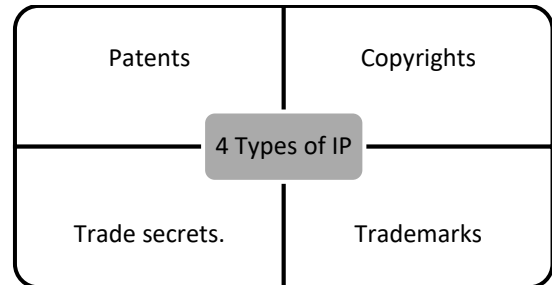


Fig. 1. The types of IP

This study will explore the awareness of Saudi society, specifically in universities, towards intellectual property, especially plagiarism, as it is one of the most important criteria that must be taken into account when writing research, article, scientific thesis, etc.

II. SAUDI VISSION 2030

The intellectual property (IP) system is an essential factor for the future growth of Saudi Arabia's economy [4].

The "Saudi Vision 2030" which is a strategic program to reduce Saudi Arabia's reliance on oil, establishes several goals, some of which are made possible via IP.

Saudi IP regulation stretches back to 1939 when the first Saudi IP law on distinguishing marks was enacted. Since then, Saudi leaders have tried to develop and enhance the country's IP system. Saudi Arabia joined the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in 1982 and has subsequently signed some international treaties overseen by WIPO [4].

Saudi Arabia emphasizes the significance of preserving IPR for inventors, artists, and innovative enterprises, large and small, to capitalize on the economic worth of their intangible assets. By encouraging innovation, creativity, and company growth in this manner, the general public will profit from easy access to new technology and innovative goods, as well as the benefits of a vibrant economy. The recent transformation of Saudi Arabia's IP ecosystem provides enormous advantages and is essential to attaining the Saudi Vision 2030 goals [4].

III. SAUDI AUTHORITY FOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The Saudi Authority for IP is a national body that maintains and supports IP through the administration of rules and regulations that limit IP infringement, as well as the issuance of a decision to grant IP rights, support IP activity, production, and use, and

¹ <https://boldip.com/difference-between-trademark-copyright-and-patent/>

protect the Kingdom's needs at the international level, to participate in supporting the competitiveness of the national economy [5].

Its most prominent services:

- Patent.
- Copyright.
- Trademark.
- IP Clinics.
- IP Agents Licensing.

In the covid-19 pandemic situation, they continue to provide their services remotely. Looking to the future, it will be "an integrated body of IP with a global standing and a major center for IP in the Middle East and North Africa region by 2030".

IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

Many research papers discuss Intellectual Property Rights in different fields. This section will review those papers.

In research [6] investigate do teachers and students know about IP, the authors proposed a survey to teachers and students in the field of technology to ascertain their knowledge of IP and relevant concepts, and their ability to differentiate between critical terms such as patent, copyright, and registered design. To gather the data, a written survey was sent out to 109 teachers and 39 students in technology departments in all secondary schools across New Zealand. The survey asked whether they were familiar with aspects of IP and asked them to write down what they thought each one meant. The survey found that they were incapable of correctly explaining the relevant IP law, and there was confusion between registered designs, patents, and copyright.

Moreover, in another research [7] about IP and eLearning at Saudi Universities, the author explored the availability and awareness of IPR of electronic material and resources at Saudi universities and reported students' and instructors' views of IP infringements, reasons for infringements, and misconceptions of proper use. Data were collected using questionnaire surveys and interviews. The participants were selected from King Saud University (KSU) and consisted of 267 students and 93 faculty members. The results revealed that there is a need for protecting electronic educational resources at Saudi universities. Most faculty and students surveyed have an idea about the concept of IPR of electronic material. Yet, their view of which electronic resources are copyrighted and which ones are not is poor. Results also revealed that Saudi universities do not have documented detailed (written) about IPR policies for electronic material and that faculty and students are ignorant of the IPR in Saudi Arabia and Saudi universities.

In addition, a study on a tertiary care hospital in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia explored the attitudes of a random group of people in a tertiary care hospital towards plagiarism [8]. They used a questionnaire for measuring attitudes towards plagiarism; the survey instrument was divided into three sections, one section for the perspective supporting plagiarism, the second the criticizing, and the third measures the views on the extent and acceptance. They collected responses from 237 participants and concluded that there is a group that looks at it positively and thinks that it is a harmless act that should not be punished by law. Therefore, this study concluded the importance of

spreading awareness among people about plagiarism and its damages, how we can fall into it, and how it can be prevented.

Moreover, a study about the awareness about IPR among the research scholars of Kurukshetra University in (India) has been done [3] to determine the level of awareness of IPR among the research scholars of Kurukshetra University in Kurukshetra. According to the findings of this study, a sizable proportion of respondents are unaware of IPR. Some academics, however, have a tenuous understanding of copyrights and patents. The authors proposed that IP training be promoted among Research Scholars. They proposed that to raise awareness, workshops, and seminars should be organized, reports on IPR should be included in the research program, and the practical knowledge of IPR should be provided to research scholars.

Active learning approaches to teach IPR using active learning techniques with students by implementing active learning methodologies and analyzing the results [9]. The analysis of achievement before and after implementing active learning methods shows that the dynamic learning approach enabled students to develop their ideas following IPRs. A student-centered active learning approach is a functional tool for educating future-oriented students. IP is critical to fostering creativity in engineering and is thus included in the engineering curriculum. The IPR course was taught using an instructor-centered methodology.

In fact, the Saudi Authority for Intellectual Property Concerns with Controlling the Infringing Facilities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's efforts to protect IPR [10]. The Saudi Authority for IP launched inspection campaigns throughout Saudi Arabia, stipulating the cessation of any commercial activity that violates IPR. During January 2021, 11620 items violating creative rights were seized, including electronics, computer programs, sound recordings, and printed works (student services).

The campaign was launched by conducting preliminary surveys and more than 440 visits of mystery shoppers to targeted areas. Not only did they inspect shops, but they also carried out another campaign to check websites. As a result of this campaign, more than 355 websites were inspected, of which 77 were proven to violate IP systems. Accordingly, these websites were blocked. The study showed that these campaigns are carried out periodically and in cooperation with the governmental and private sectors to preserve intellectual property, deter violations of rights, and punish violators through periodic awareness, inspection campaigns, detection of violators, and the application of legal punishment against them. The authority urged citizens and residents to support efforts to respect IP by communicating with the authority's official channels via social media, e-mail, and customer service numbers.

V. METHODOLOGY

In this research, 150 participants from Saudi universities have answered the online survey. The sample consisted of two groups of the following:

The first group consists of 112(74%) students 38(26%) academics.

The second group consists of 44(29%) publishers and 106 (71%) researchers.

Primary data was collected through an online survey to gather data about the awareness level of intellectual property. The survey had three sections; the first section is for the publishers where they were asked the following questions: (i) Have you ever been plagiarized? (ii) How did you know? (iii) If your intellectual rights are infringed, how do you act?

The second section is for the researchers where they were asked the following questions: (i) Do you know how to write references? (ii) Do you acknowledge the reference without the need to paraphrase? (iii) Did you know that there are several ways/styles to write references? (iv) Do you write the references in-text and in the references list?

The third section was for both publishers and researchers. The following questions were asked: (i) Have you heard about the Saudi Authority for Intellectual Property? (ii) How can you preserve your IP rights? (iii) Do you have suggestions for increasing intellectual knowledge? If yes, please suggest.

VI. DATA ANALYSIS

The online forms survey presented the following charts:

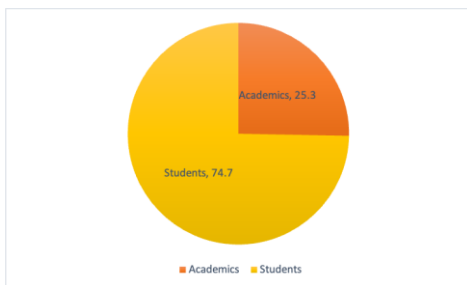


Fig. 2. Categories of responses Jobs (Academics/ faculty and Students)

Figure 2 shows that 112 (74.7%) responses are students and 38(25.3%) are academics/faculty.

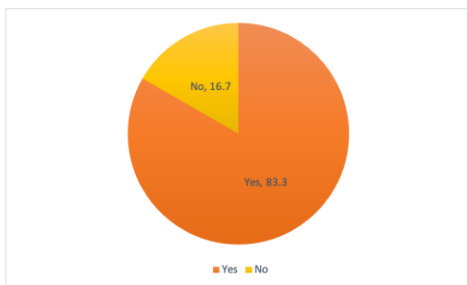


Fig. 3. Percentage of the answers to the question “Have you heard of the term Intellectual Property?”.

Figure 3 shows that there 125(83.3% of the participants) have heard of the term IP; While 25(16.7% of the participants) have not heard of it.

150 participants have answered this question. Figure. 4 shows the number of participants who have published research, studies or journal articles. There are 44(29.3%) who answered yes and 106 (70.7%) who answered No.

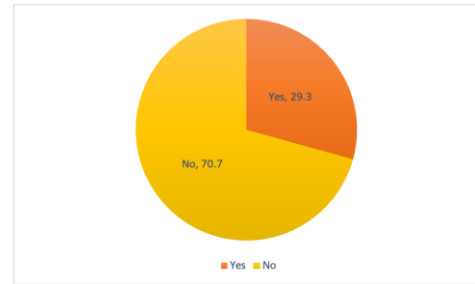


Fig. 4. Percentage of the answers to the question “Have you ever published a research/study/ journal article?”.

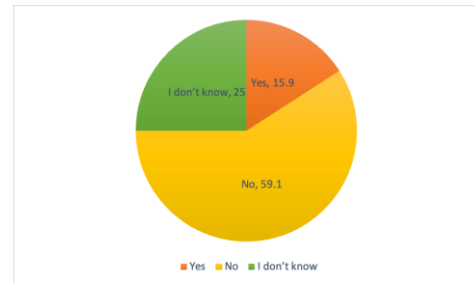


Fig. 5. Percentage of the answers to the question “Have you ever been plagiarized?”

Figure 5 shows the percentage of publishers whose work has been infringed without permission or documentation.

44 participants answered this question. 7(15.9%) answered yes, 11(25%) answered I do not know, and 26(59.1%) stated that they discovered their work had been stolen after finding it online. Some added that they do not know what action to take, while others have filed a complaint.

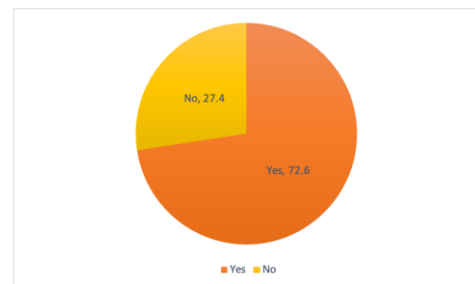


Fig. 6. Percentage of the answers to the question “Do you know how to write references in scientific research?”

106 participants have answered this question. Figure 6shows that 77(72.6%) of the researchers do know how to cite sources while 29(27.4%) unfortunately do not.

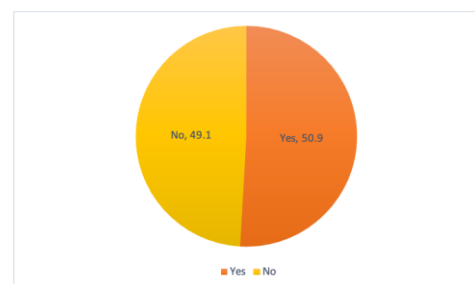


Fig. 7. Percentage of the answers to the question “Do you only acknowledge the reference without paraphrasing the information used?”

106 participants have answered this question. Figure 7 shows that 54(50.9%) of the participants simply provide the reference without paraphrasing. While 52(49.1%) acknowledge the reference after paraphrasing the information used.

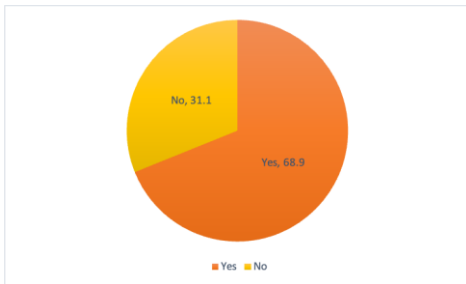


Fig. 8. Percentage of the answers to the question “Do you know that there are different styles of referencing?” 106 participants have answered this question.

Figure 8 shows that 31.1% of the participants do not know that there are different styles of references; While 68.9% have knowledge about different styles of references.

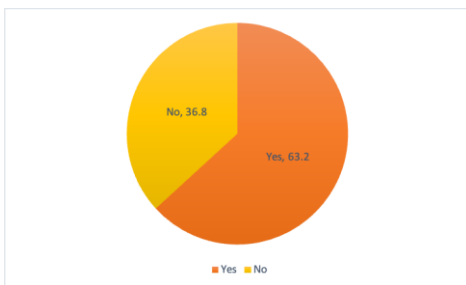


Fig. 9. Percentage of the answers to the question “Do you write the reference in two places, in-text and in the reference list?”. 106 participants have answered this question.

Figure 9 shows that 36.8% of the participants do not write the reference in two places, in-text and in the reference list, while 63.2% write the reference in two places, in-text and in the reference list.

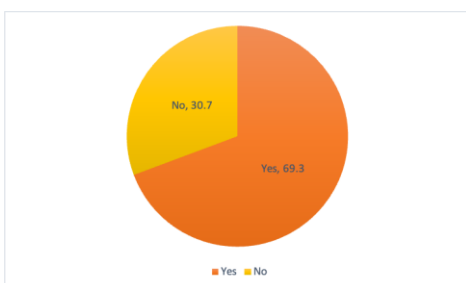


Fig. 10. Percentage of the answers to the question “Have you heard of the Saudi authority for intellectual property?”. 150 participants have answered this question.

Figure 10 shows that 30.7% of the participants do not know about the Saudi authority for intellectual property, while 69.3% do.

VII. CONCLUSION

This research paper was initiated to investigate the level of intellectual property rights awareness among students, academics, publishers, and researchers and it confirms what has

been found in the literature review about the lack of knowledge about IPR. Furthermore, according to the findings of this study, many respondents have heard of IPR. However, some of the publishers discovered their work had been stolen after finding it online. It was also found that many did not know what action to take to protect their work. Finally, the paper came up with several suggestions to increase the awareness of the Saudi community towards intellectual property:

Raise the awareness level within the community on IPR and how to preserve them.

Include IP awareness within the school curricula.

Participate in publishing publications or short videos on some sites or authorized accounts.

Register universities as support centers with the Saudi Intellectual Property authority.

Conduct courses and workshops for faculty members and students as well.

Encourage initiatives by the Intellectual Property Unit to shed light on the most prominent malpractices in universities.

VIII. REFERENCES

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