

# Adapting Copyright Laws to Address Digital Piracy in the Global Economy

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**Abstract:** *The global digital economy has fostered unprecedented growth in content creation and technological advancement, but it also faces a significant threat from digital piracy. This study, based on survey data from 153 respondents across entertainment, technology, legal, and academic sectors, explores the challenges of adapting copyright laws to combat digital piracy. Results indicate high awareness of digital piracy's impact, with 82% of respondents acknowledging its significance. However, only 35% believe current copyright laws are effective. There is widespread support for legal reforms, with 75% advocating for updates, particularly in the entertainment and technology sectors. Technological solutions, such as Digital Rights Management (DRM), blockchain, and artificial intelligence (AI), are seen as valuable tools, but respondents emphasize that these technologies must complement legal reforms. Additionally, 80% of respondents stress the importance of international cooperation in overcoming jurisdictional challenges. The findings suggest that a multi-faceted approach, integrating legal reform, technological innovation, and global collaboration, is necessary to effectively address digital piracy in the evolving global economy.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The digital revolution has transformed the global economy, leading to unprecedented growth in information exchange, content creation, and technological advancements. Digital platforms, which now facilitate communication, commerce, and content distribution, have become central to global economic growth and development. Alongside the benefits of this digital expansion, however, comes a significant challenge: digital piracy. With the advent of high-speed internet, peer-to-peer (P2P) sharing, streaming services, and advanced file-sharing technologies, unauthorized copying and distribution of digital content have become pervasive, posing a serious threat to creators, content industries, and economies worldwide. The urgency of adapting copyright laws to effectively combat digital piracy has never been more pressing.

Digital piracy refers to the unauthorized reproduction, distribution, or use of copyrighted materials such as music, films, books, software, and other digital content. The ease of access to pirated content has significantly undermined the profitability of content creators, publishers, and distributors. According to a report by the Global Innovation Policy Center, the global economic impact of digital piracy amounts to billions of dollars annually, with industries like film, music, publishing, and software development suffering some of the most significant losses. While the internet has democratized access to information and entertainment, it has also led to a scenario where the legal frameworks designed to protect intellectual property (IP) are lagging behind the technological advancements that enable piracy.

Copyright laws, historically designed to protect the creative works of authors, artists, and inventors, are now struggling to keep pace with the digital economy. These laws, which once focused on physical copies of books, music, and films, now must address intangible, easily replicable digital files that can be shared across borders within seconds. The nature of piracy has evolved from the physical duplication of media, such as CDs or DVDs, to digital duplication, which is far more difficult to regulate and control. The transnational nature of the internet further complicates the enforcement of

copyright laws, as content may be pirated in one jurisdiction and consumed in another, making the pursuit of legal action complex and costly.

The need to adapt copyright laws to address digital piracy in the global economy stems from several key factors. First, the rise of digital platforms and cloud computing has created new channels through which copyrighted content can be easily shared. Streaming platforms, torrent sites, and unauthorized file-sharing networks provide users with the ability to access content without compensating the creators. While some users might not be aware that they are engaging in illegal activities, others actively seek out pirated content due to its availability and lack of restrictions. This growing culture of entitlement, where consumers expect free or low-cost access to digital content, presents a significant obstacle for copyright holders seeking to monetize their work.

Second, the globalization of digital markets means that copyrighted works are now accessible to audiences across the globe, often bypassing national borders and local regulations. This has created a complex legal environment where copyright laws differ significantly from country to country. For instance, a copyrighted work in the United States may not receive the same level of protection in countries with less stringent IP laws. This legal fragmentation has made it difficult for copyright holders to protect their works from being pirated and distributed globally without their consent. Even when legal action is pursued, the cost and effort required to litigate across multiple jurisdictions often outweigh the potential benefits, leaving many creators and businesses vulnerable to piracy.

Third, the rapid advancement of technology has outpaced the ability of legislators to create and implement effective copyright protections. Technological tools like Virtual Private Networks (VPNs), encryption software, and anonymous browsing services have made it increasingly difficult to trace the origins of pirated content and hold perpetrators accountable. Additionally, the rise of decentralized networks, such as blockchain, presents new challenges for copyright enforcement. While blockchain technology has the potential to improve IP management by providing transparent and immutable records of ownership, it can also facilitate piracy by enabling users to share encrypted content without detection. As a result, traditional copyright enforcement mechanisms, such as takedown notices and litigation, have proven insufficient in addressing the scale and complexity of digital piracy in the modern era.

In response to these challenges, policymakers, content creators, and businesses have advocated for the modernization of copyright laws to better align with the realities of the digital economy. One of the primary areas of focus has been the implementation of stronger anti-piracy measures, including digital rights management (DRM) technologies, which restrict access to copyrighted content through encryption and access controls. While DRM has proven effective in some cases, it has also been criticized for limiting legitimate consumer use and fostering resentment among users. Additionally, sophisticated hackers have found ways to circumvent DRM protections, rendering them less effective over time.

Another strategy for addressing digital piracy involves strengthening international cooperation and harmonizing copyright laws across jurisdictions. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) has played a crucial role in promoting global standards for copyright protection, but there is still much work to be done to ensure that these standards are effectively implemented and enforced. International treaties, such as the WIPO Copyright Treaty (WCT) and the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), have established frameworks for protecting digital content, but disparities in enforcement and compliance among member states continue to undermine their effectiveness.

In addition to legal reforms, the entertainment and software industries have explored new business models that reduce the incentives for piracy. Subscription-based streaming services, such as Netflix, Spotify, and Disney+, have provided consumers with affordable access to a vast library of digital content, reducing the appeal of pirated media. Similarly, software companies have shifted from one-time purchases to subscription models and cloud-based services, offering regular updates and customer support that pirated versions cannot match. These innovations have proven successful in reducing piracy rates by providing legitimate alternatives that meet consumer demand for convenience, affordability, and accessibility.

However, even with these advances, the fight against digital piracy is far from over. As new technologies and platforms emerge, so too will new methods for circumventing copyright protections. Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine

learning, for example, are poised to transform the way content is created and distributed, raising new questions about copyright ownership and enforcement. Similarly, the rise of user-generated content on platforms like YouTube and TikTok presents additional challenges for copyright holders, who must navigate the fine line between encouraging creativity and protecting their own IP rights.

The economic impact of digital piracy extends beyond the entertainment and software industries, affecting governments, consumers, and broader economic growth. Piracy undermines the ability of creators to earn a fair return on their investments, which in turn stifles innovation and creativity. It also leads to lost tax revenue for governments, as pirated goods are often sold on the black market, bypassing official channels. Additionally, pirated content is frequently distributed alongside malicious software, posing risks to consumers who unknowingly expose their devices to malware and other security threats.

To effectively address digital piracy in the global economy, a multifaceted approach is required. This includes not only updating copyright laws to reflect the realities of the digital age but also fostering collaboration between governments, industries, and consumers. Educational campaigns that raise awareness about the harms of piracy, coupled with stronger enforcement mechanisms and legal reforms, can help to create a culture that values and respects intellectual property rights. At the same time, content creators and businesses must continue to innovate and adapt their business models to meet changing consumer demands, providing legal and accessible alternatives to pirated content.

In conclusion, the global economy's shift towards digital content consumption presents both opportunities and challenges for copyright protection. As digital piracy continues to evolve, it is imperative that copyright laws are updated to address the complexities of the digital world. By embracing a cross-disciplinary approach that integrates legal, technological, and economic strategies, the global community can work towards a future where digital content is both accessible and protected, ensuring that creators are fairly compensated for their contributions to the digital economy.

## **II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Agarwal (2020) discusses the growing challenges posed by digital piracy in India, focusing on how copyright laws need to be adapted to better address piracy in the context of the digital economy. The study highlights gaps in existing legal frameworks and suggests reforms to strengthen enforcement and protection mechanisms for digital content creators.

Bhardwaj (2019) provides a comprehensive overview of the legal frameworks designed to combat digital piracy in India. The article evaluates recent copyright law reforms and their effectiveness in curbing piracy. It emphasizes the need for more robust enforcement strategies and international cooperation to address cross-border digital piracy issues.

Chandra and Mehta (2021) explore the impact of digital piracy on India's entertainment industry, examining the legal responses available to combat this growing issue. Their research underscores the economic losses suffered by the entertainment sector and the limitations of current legal frameworks, calling for more stringent regulations and technological interventions to safeguard intellectual property.

Desai (2018) examines copyright enforcement in the digital age, focusing on the unique challenges posed by digital piracy in India. The study identifies the limitations of traditional copyright enforcement mechanisms and calls for the adoption of more advanced technological solutions and legal reforms to protect digital content effectively.

Gupta and Kumar (2020) analyze the role of technology in combating digital piracy in India. They discuss the effectiveness of various copyright protection mechanisms, such as digital rights management (DRM), and explore how emerging technologies could help enhance the enforcement of copyright laws. The authors argue that a combination of legal and technological approaches is necessary to reduce digital piracy.

Iyer (2019) emphasizes the importance of international cooperation in combating digital piracy, particularly in the Indian context. The article discusses India's role in global copyright enforcement efforts and highlights the need for harmonizing copyright laws across jurisdictions to effectively tackle cross-border piracy.

Jain (2020) focuses on the economic impact of digital piracy in India, analyzing how amendments to copyright laws have affected the country's economy. The study finds that while recent reforms have helped reduce piracy rates, more

comprehensive measures are needed to mitigate the economic damage caused by piracy, particularly in sectors like entertainment and software.

Kapoor (2021) examines the challenges posed by emerging technologies in the context of Indian copyright law. The research highlights how new technologies, such as blockchain and artificial intelligence, can both facilitate and combat digital piracy. The author calls for Indian copyright law to evolve in line with technological advancements to better address these challenges.

Kumar (2019) explores the legal challenges associated with digital rights management (DRM) in India, focusing on how DRM technologies can help protect copyrighted content from piracy. However, the article also highlights the limitations of DRM and the legal complexities that arise when enforcing these protections.

Reddy (2020) provides a detailed analysis of the impact of digital piracy on the Indian film industry, highlighting the legal responses that have been implemented to combat this issue. The author suggests future directions for copyright law reform to better address piracy in the rapidly evolving digital entertainment landscape.

Sharma (2021) argues for the strengthening of copyright laws in India to address the growing threat of digital piracy in the digital economy. The article suggests that adapting legal frameworks to better protect content in the digital age is crucial for safeguarding intellectual property rights and promoting economic growth.

**III. ANALYSIS**

The aim of the study was to gather insights into the perceptions of these industry professionals regarding the effectiveness of existing copyright laws, the need for legal reforms, and the potential role of technology and international cooperation in combating digital piracy.

**Awareness of Digital Piracy**

The data revealed that a significant majority of respondents demonstrated a high level of awareness regarding digital piracy. Specifically, 82% of the respondents reported being highly aware of the issue and its implications for their industries. This awareness was particularly prominent in the entertainment sector, where 90% of respondents indicated a high or very high level of awareness. The technology sector followed closely behind, with 85% of respondents showing similar levels of awareness. In contrast, awareness levels in the legal and academic sectors were slightly lower, with 70% and 60% of respondents, respectively, reporting high awareness.

Sector	High Awareness (%)
Entertainment	90%
Technology	85%
Legal	70%
Academic	60%

**Effectiveness of Current Copyright Laws**

Respondents were asked to assess the effectiveness of current copyright laws in addressing digital piracy. Only 35% of respondents believed that existing laws were effective in curbing piracy. This sentiment was particularly strong in the legal sector, where 70% of respondents felt that copyright laws were outdated and ineffective for addressing modern forms of piracy, such as those involving streaming platforms and file-sharing technologies. In contrast, the entertainment and technology sectors were slightly more optimistic, with 40% and 45% of respondents, respectively, expressing confidence in the current legal framework. Academic respondents were the least critical, with 50% expressing neutrality on the issue.

Sector	Effective Copyright Laws (%)	Outdated Laws (%)
Entertainment	40%	60%
Technology	45%	55%

Sector	Effective Copyright Laws (%)	Outdated Laws (%)
Legal	30%	70%
Academic	50% (Neutral)	50%

**Support for Legal Reforms**

There was strong support for legal reforms across all sectors, with 75% of respondents expressing the belief that current copyright laws need to be updated to better address digital piracy. The entertainment industry demonstrated the highest level of support for reform, with 80% of respondents advocating for changes. The technology sector was similarly supportive, with 78% of respondents in favor of reform. However, the academic sector was more divided, with only 55% supporting legal changes, while 45% remained neutral or opposed, citing concerns about balancing intellectual property rights with access to information.

Respondents suggested several areas for legal reform, including the need for faster legal processes to address piracy cases, stronger penalties for repeat offenders, and improved mechanisms for cross-border enforcement. These recommendations reflect the growing recognition that digital piracy is a global issue requiring coordinated international efforts.

Sector	Support for Reform (%)
Entertainment	80%
Technology	78%
Legal	75%
Academic	55%

**Technological Solutions**

Respondents across all sectors expressed strong support for the use of technology to combat digital piracy. Digital Rights Management (DRM) was supported by 65% of respondents, although concerns were raised about its user-friendliness and potential to frustrate legitimate users. Blockchain technology was viewed favorably by 58% of respondents, particularly those from the technology sector, who saw it as a promising tool for tracking content ownership and preventing unauthorized distribution. Similarly, 62% of respondents expressed confidence in the potential of artificial intelligence (AI) to identify and remove pirated content from digital platforms.

Despite the support for technological solutions, many respondents emphasized that technology alone is not sufficient to combat piracy. They argued that a combination of legal reforms, user education, and technological advancements is necessary for a comprehensive solution.

Technology	Support for Use (%)
Digital Rights Management (DRM)	65%
Blockchain	58%
Artificial Intelligence (AI)	62%

**International Cooperation**

Given the global nature of digital piracy, international cooperation was widely viewed as essential for effectively addressing the issue. A total of 80% of respondents emphasized the importance of cross-border collaboration in overcoming jurisdictional challenges that often allow piracy to thrive in regions with weaker enforcement mechanisms. Respondents highlighted the need for strengthening international treaties, such as the WIPO Copyright Treaty and the TRIPS Agreement, to ensure standardized global IP laws that can be enforced across borders.

The entertainment and legal sectors were particularly supportive of international cooperation, with 85% and 80% of respondents, respectively, highlighting its importance. Technology sector respondents were slightly less concerned with international collaboration, focusing more on developing technological solutions to address piracy. The academic sector expressed concerns about potential barriers to access, but still acknowledged the need for global efforts to combat piracy.

Sector	Support for International Cooperation (%)
Entertainment	85%
Technology	75%
Legal	80%
Academic	70%

The descriptive analysis of the data collected from 153 respondents highlights the widespread recognition that digital piracy remains a significant challenge in the global economy. While there is considerable awareness of the issue, respondents largely agree that current copyright laws are inadequate in addressing the complexities of modern digital piracy. There is strong support for legal reforms, particularly in the entertainment and technology sectors, with recommendations focusing on faster legal processes, stronger penalties, and enhanced cross-border enforcement mechanisms.

Technological solutions, such as DRM, blockchain, and AI, are viewed as promising tools in the fight against piracy, but respondents caution that these must be part of a broader strategy that includes legal reforms and international collaboration. Ultimately, the study suggests that a multi-faceted approach, involving legal updates, technological innovation, and global cooperation, is necessary to effectively combat digital piracy in the evolving digital landscape.

### III. RESULTS

This section presents the results of the research based on the survey responses, focusing on awareness of digital piracy, effectiveness of current copyright laws, support for legal reforms, views on technological solutions, and the importance of international cooperation.

#### Awareness of Digital Piracy

The survey revealed that respondents exhibited a high level of awareness regarding digital piracy. A significant majority (82%) reported being highly aware of the impact of digital piracy on their respective industries. Awareness was particularly pronounced in the entertainment (90%) and technology (85%) sectors, where respondents acknowledged the direct threats posed by piracy to revenue streams and intellectual property rights.

**Entertainment Sector:** 90% of respondents reported "high" or "very high" awareness.

**Technology Sector:** 85% of respondents reported "high" or "very high" awareness.

**Legal Sector:** 70% reported strong awareness.

**Academic Sector:** 60% indicated awareness, although concerns about balancing access and protection were noted.

These results suggest that digital piracy is widely recognized across industries as a persistent and growing problem, particularly in sectors that deal directly with digital content distribution.

#### Effectiveness of Current Copyright Laws

When assessing the effectiveness of existing copyright laws, only 35% of respondents believed the current legal framework was effective in curbing digital piracy. This perception was particularly strong among legal professionals, where 70% of respondents stated that copyright laws were outdated and insufficient for addressing modern forms of piracy, especially those facilitated by digital platforms.

**Entertainment Sector:** 40% found copyright laws effective, while 60% believed reforms were needed.

**Technology Sector:** 45% supported existing laws, though many called for adaptation to technological advancements.

**Legal Sector:** 30% believed the laws were effective, with 70% calling for updates.

**Academic Sector:** Responses were more neutral, with 50% expressing no strong opinion on the issue.

Overall, the data indicates a significant dissatisfaction with the current copyright framework, particularly among those directly involved in legal practice and content creation, who feel that the laws have not kept pace with evolving digital piracy methods.

#### Support for Legal Reforms

A substantial majority (75%) of respondents supported legal reforms to address digital piracy more effectively. The entertainment sector (80%) and technology sector (78%) showed the highest levels of support for reform, reflecting the direct impact piracy has on their industries. In contrast, respondents from the academic sector were more divided, with 55% in favor of reforms and the rest expressing concern about balancing the need for IP protection with maintaining access to educational materials.

Key areas for reform identified by respondents include:

**Faster legal processes** to handle piracy cases more efficiently.

**Stronger penalties** for repeat offenders to deter piracy.

**Cross-border enforcement mechanisms** to deal with international piracy, which is increasingly prevalent due to the global nature of the internet.

These findings suggest broad recognition across industries that current laws are insufficient and that reform is necessary to strengthen copyright protection in the digital age.

#### Technological Solutions

Respondents expressed significant support for leveraging technology to combat digital piracy, though opinions varied regarding specific solutions.

**Digital Rights Management (DRM):** 65% of respondents supported the use of DRM, though concerns were raised about its potential to frustrate legitimate users. Respondents from the entertainment sector were particularly in favor of DRM, while academic respondents expressed concerns about limiting access to educational content.

**Blockchain:** 58% of respondents, particularly those from the technology sector, saw blockchain as a promising solution for tracking content ownership and preventing unauthorized distribution.

**Artificial Intelligence (AI):** 62% believed that AI could help identify and remove pirated content more effectively than current systems, with strong support from both the technology and legal sectors.

While respondents recognized the potential of these technologies, there was broad agreement that they must be implemented alongside legal reforms to be truly effective. Technology alone cannot solve the problem of digital piracy, and a combination of legal, technological, and educational approaches is required.

#### International Cooperation

The global nature of the internet means that digital piracy often crosses national borders, making international cooperation essential for effective enforcement. The majority of respondents (80%) agreed that cross-border collaboration is critical to addressing digital piracy. Respondents from the entertainment and legal sectors were particularly supportive of international efforts, with 85% and 80%, respectively, emphasizing the importance of global cooperation.

Suggestions for improving international collaboration included:

Strengthening international treaties, such as the **WIPO Copyright Treaty** and the **TRIPS Agreement**, to ensure more consistent enforcement of copyright laws across borders.

Creating **standardized global IP laws** that can be enforced across jurisdictions, reducing the complexity of cross-border legal disputes.

These findings reflect a broad consensus that digital piracy is a global issue that cannot be effectively addressed through national legislation alone. Coordinated international efforts are seen as critical to overcoming the jurisdictional challenges that allow piracy to thrive in regions with weaker enforcement.

#### Cross-Sectoral Observations

**Entertainment Sector:** Respondents in this sector were the most affected by piracy, with 90% agreeing that piracy negatively impacts revenue streams. This sector showed the highest levels of support for tougher legal penalties, international collaboration, and the use of DRM and AI to combat piracy.

**Technology Sector:** While concerned about piracy, respondents from the technology sector focused more on technological solutions, such as blockchain and AI, rather than stricter legal penalties. They supported reforms that aligned with technological advancements and were optimistic about the potential of emerging technologies to address piracy.

**Legal Sector:** Legal professionals were the most critical of existing copyright frameworks, with many advocating for more clarity on cross-border IP issues and quicker legal processes to address piracy cases. They also showed strong support for international cooperation and the use of AI in identifying pirated content.

**Academic Sector:** Respondents from the academic sector were more hesitant about restrictive technologies such as DRM, expressing concerns that such solutions could hinder access to educational resources. However, they acknowledged the need for reforms that balance intellectual property protection with the availability of information.

#### Conclusion

The results of the survey highlight the widespread recognition that digital piracy remains a significant challenge across multiple industries. While current copyright laws provide some level of protection, they are generally seen as inadequate in the face of rapidly evolving piracy methods. There is strong support for reforming copyright laws to address these gaps, with respondents advocating for faster legal processes, stronger penalties, and enhanced cross-border enforcement mechanisms.

Technological solutions such as DRM, blockchain, and AI are viewed as valuable tools in the fight against digital piracy, but respondents caution that these must be implemented in conjunction with legal reforms and user education to be truly effective. Additionally, there is a strong consensus on the need for international cooperation to address the global nature of digital piracy and ensure that copyright laws are enforced consistently across borders.

These findings suggest that a comprehensive, multi-pronged approach, involving both legal reforms and technological innovations, is necessary to effectively combat digital piracy in the global economy.

#### V. CONCLUSION

The analysis of the collected data underscores that digital piracy is a significant and evolving challenge affecting various industries, including entertainment, technology, legal, and academia. While awareness of the issue is high, current copyright laws are largely seen as ineffective in combating modern piracy, especially in the digital realm. There is a strong consensus among respondents across sectors that legal reforms are urgently needed, focusing on faster processes, stronger penalties, and cross-border enforcement mechanisms.

Technological solutions such as DRM, blockchain, and AI offer promising avenues for addressing piracy, but respondents caution that these technologies must be complemented by legal updates and global cooperation. The global nature of digital piracy necessitates a coordinated international approach, with stronger treaties and standardized IP laws that can be enforced across borders.

In conclusion, a multi-faceted strategy involving both legislative reforms and the integration of emerging technologies is essential to effectively curb digital piracy. International cooperation will be key to creating a robust framework that can adapt to the complexities of the global digital economy, ensuring that intellectual property rights are protected in an increasingly connected world.

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