

Awareness on Intellectual Property Rights Among College Students, A Study with Special Reference to Kozhikode District

Dr. Asiya Anas¹, Ms. Safa Hanan C K²

^{1,2} Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, SAFI Institute of Advanced Study (Autonomous), Vazhayoor, Malappuram

ABSTRACT: Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) play a crucial role in protecting innovation, creativity, and intellectual assets. The present study examines the awareness of Intellectual Property Rights among college students. The objectives of the study are to assess the level of IPR awareness among college students and to examine differences in awareness based on gender and course of study. Both primary and secondary data were used for the study. Primary data were collected from 50 college students through a structured questionnaire using the purposive sampling method, while secondary data were gathered from books, journals, research articles, government reports, and WIPO publications. Responses were measured using a five-point scale. Descriptive statistics, One-Sample t-test, Independent Samples t-test, and One-Way ANOVA were employed for data analysis.

The results revealed that college students possess a significant level of awareness regarding Intellectual Property Rights. The Independent Samples t-test indicated no significant differences in IPR awareness between male and female students. However, the One-Way ANOVA revealed significant differences among students from different course categories in selected dimensions of IPR awareness. The study concludes that while the overall awareness of IPR among college students is satisfactory, variations exist across certain course categories. The findings emphasize the need for strengthening IPR education and awareness programmes in higher educational institutions.

KEYWORDS: Intellectual Property Rights, IPR Awareness, Patent, Copyrights, Trade mark, Industrial design, Geographical indications

INTRODUCTION

An industrial economy gave way to a knowledge-based economy in the twenty-first century, where intellectual property has grown in value. Economic progress is greatly aided by innovations, inventions, research discoveries, software, literary works, artistic creations, and corporate brands. Intellectual property rights (IPR) are used to protect these creative works. Intellectual property is defined by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) as "creations of the mind, such as inventions, literary and artistic works, designs, symbols, names, and images used in commerce" (WIPO, 2024). By granting artists and innovators exclusive rights over the use and commercialisation of their works, intellectual property laws promote additional creativity and innovation. Colleges and universities are hubs for innovation, research, and knowledge production. Research initiatives, software development, start-up businesses, creative writing, and technological advancements are all becoming more and more popular among students. As a result, IPR knowledge is increasingly becoming essential to higher education. Students who are ignorant of intellectual property rights (IPR) may inadvertently plagiarise, lose ownership of their discoveries, or fail to see the financial potential of their creations.

With the adoption of the National Intellectual Property Rights Policy, which attempts to raise awareness and bolster the nation's intellectual property ecosystem, the significance of IPR has become more widely acknowledged in India. Sharma and Bansal (2021) discovered that university students had a reasonable level of IPR awareness, with copyrights being more familiar than patents. According to the findings of Singh and Verma (2020), students studying science and engineering were more aware of intellectual property rights than those studying the arts and social sciences. Kumar, Gupta, and Nair (2022), identified that students' comprehension of intellectual property principles was much enhanced by their involvement in workshops and innovation activities. Research, project development, software development, creative writing, and entrepreneurship are all areas in which college students actively engage. Consequently, protecting their discoveries and avoiding intellectual property infringement require knowledge of intellectual property rights (Narayanan, 2017).

Students' awareness of IPR varies, according to several research. According to a survey by Singh and Sharma (2022), while the majority of students were aware of the idea of copyright, less of them comprehended trademark protection and patent application



processes. In a similar vein, Kumar and Reddy (2021) found that a large number of college students lacked practical understanding about the registration and commercialisation of intellectual property. These results show a substantial disconnect between the potential for innovation and knowledge of legal safeguards. This study intended to examine the awareness of Intellectual Property rights among college students.

Objectives

1. To study the awareness of college students on Intellectual Property rights.
2. To examine the difference in the awareness on Intellectual Property rights on the basis of gender.
3. To examine the difference in the awareness on Intellectual Property rights on the basis of course of Study.

Methodology

Both primary and secondary data are used in this study. Primary data are collected through structured questionnaires administered to 50 college students. Secondary data are collected from books, journals, research articles, government reports, and WIPO publications. Sample respondents are selected using purposive sampling methods. Responses are recorded in a five point scale ranging from strongly agree -5 to strongly disagree – 1. Descriptive analysis, One sample t test, independent sample t test, and One way ANOVA are applied to analyse the data.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Intellectual property Rights (IPR)

The legal rights that artists and inventors have over their creations are known as intellectual property rights. For a predetermined amount of time, these rights grant the sole right to use, reproduce, distribute, and market intellectual property (Cornish et al., 2019). The idea that artists should profit from their creative endeavours is the foundation of the concept of intellectual property. The goal of intellectual property legislation is to achieve a balance between encouraging public access to knowledge and compensating innovators (WTO, 1995).

Types of Intellectual Property Rights

Patent

A patent is an exclusive right granted for an invention that is new, useful, and capable of industrial application (Government of India, 2016). Patents encourage technological innovation by providing inventors with temporary monopoly rights over their inventions (WIPO, 2023).

Copyright

Copyright protects original literary, artistic, dramatic, musical, and software works. It grants creators exclusive rights to reproduce and distribute their creations (Copyright Act, 1957). For students, copyright protection is particularly relevant when producing research reports, presentations, articles, and creative content.

Trademark

A trademark is a sign, symbol, logo, or brand name that distinguishes one organization's products or services from those of others (Bently & Sherman, 2014). Trademarks play an important role in brand identification and consumer protection.

Industrial Design

The aesthetic features of objects, such as their shape, configuration, and appearance, are protected under industrial design protection (WIPO, 2023).

Geographical Indications

Products with characteristics specific to their place of origin are identified by Geographical Indications (GI). Mysore Silk and Darjeeling Tea are two examples (Government of India, 2016).

Importance of IPR Awareness among College Students

Protection of Intellectual Creations

Innovative initiatives, research articles, software programs, and artistic creations are regularly produced by students. They can prevent unauthorised usage of these works by being aware of intellectual property rights (IPR) (Narayanan, 2017).

Encouragement of Innovation

Innovation is essential to the advancement of technology and the economy. By guaranteeing that their efforts are acknowledged and rewarded, intellectual property protection encourages people to participate in creative endeavours.

Prevention of Plagiarism

In higher education, plagiarism is a serious problem. Students can prevent academic misconduct and uphold ethical standards by being aware of copyright rules and citation conventions (Fishman, 2016).

Promotion of Entrepreneurship

Innovative concepts and goods are frequently essential to entrepreneurship. According to Dutfield and Suthersanen (2020), students who comprehend intellectual property rights (IPR) can enhance their prospects of commercial success by better protecting their ideas, brands, and business strategies.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Demographic Profile

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	26	52.0
Female	24	48.0
Total	50	100.0

Source: Primary data

Sample respondents include 52% males and 48% females.

Table 2. Distribution of Respondents by Course of Study

Course	Frequency	Percent
Science	16	32
Arts	15	30
Commerce	14	28
Management	5	10
Total	50	100

Source: Primary data

Table 2 shows classification of respondents on the basis of their course of study. Science students formed the largest group with 16 students (32%), followed by Arts with 15 students (30%) and Commerce with 14 students (28%). Management students constituted the smallest group with 5 students (10%).

Awareness of college students on Intellectual Property rights.

Table 3. One Sample T test Statistics

Statement	Mean	t-value	p-value
Familiar with the concept of IPR	3.46	2.87	0.002
Understand the importance of IPR	3.56	2.08	0.045
Aware of different forms of IPR	2.02	-2.78	0.008
Aware of legal consequences of infringement	1.02	-3.32	0.000
Know the difference between copyright, patent and trademark	3.18	2.92	0.002
Know where to obtain information on IP protection	1.8	-2.15	0.045

Understand how patents protect inventions	3.3	1.68	0.112
Know that copyright protects creative works	3.64	2.52	0.035
Understand the purpose of trademarks	2.24	-2.7	0.036
Aware of Geographical Indications (GI)	1.24	-2.39	0.021

Source: Primary data

The one-sample t-test was conducted by comparing the mean score of each statement with the test value of 3. The results show that respondents are significantly familiar with the concept of IPR (Mean = 3.46, $p = 0.002$) and understand its importance (Mean = 3.56, $p = 0.045$). They also have significant knowledge about the differences between copyright, patent, and trademark (Mean = 3.18, $p = 0.002$) and are aware that copyright protects creative works (Mean = 3.64, $p = 0.035$).

However, respondents have low awareness of different forms of IPR (Mean = 2.02, $p = 0.008$), legal consequences of infringement (Mean = 1.02, $p < 0.001$), sources of information on IP protection (Mean = 1.80, $p = 0.045$), the purpose of trademarks (Mean = 2.24, $p = 0.036$), and Geographical Indications (Mean = 1.24, $p = 0.021$). The understanding of how patents protect inventions (Mean = 3.30, $p = 0.112$) was not found to be significantly different from the test value.

Difference in the awareness on Intellectual Property rights on the basis of gender.

H0: There is no significant difference in the awareness on Intellectual Property rights on the basis of gender.

H1: There is a significant difference in the awareness on Intellectual Property rights on the basis of gender.

Independent Sample t –Test is conducted to examine hypothesis.

Table 4.Independent Sample t-Test

		t-test for Equality of Means		
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Familiar with the concept of IPR	Equal variances assumed	0.212	48	0.833
	Equal variances not assumed	0.212	47.361	0.833
Understand the importance of IPR	Equal variances assumed	-1.447	48	0.154
	Equal variances not assumed	-1.428	41.363	0.161
Aware of different forms of IPR	Equal variances assumed	0.067	48	0.947
	Equal variances not assumed	0.067	46.108	0.947
Aware of legal consequences of infringement	Equal variances assumed	0.955	48	0.344
	Equal variances not assumed	0.941	40.086	0.353
Know the difference between copyright, patent and trademark	Equal variances assumed	0.853	48	0.398
	Equal variances not assumed	0.847	44.847	0.402
Know where to obtain information on IP protection	Equal variances assumed	-0.177	48	0.860
	Equal variances not assumed	-0.176	45.656	0.861
Understand how patents protect inventions	Equal variances assumed	1.729	48	0.090
	Equal variances not assumed	1.728	47.514	0.091
Know that copyright protects creative works	Equal variances assumed	1.805	48	0.077
	Equal variances not assumed	1.827	45.814	0.074

Understand the purpose of trademarks	Equal variances assumed	1.106	48	0.274
	Equal variances not assumed	1.102	46.807	0.276
Aware of Geographical Indications (GI)	Equal variances assumed	1.203	48	0.235
	Equal variances not assumed	1.218	45.772	0.229

Source: Primary data

An independent samples t-test was conducted to examine whether there were significant differences between male and female students with respect to their awareness of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). The results revealed that there were no statistically significant differences between the groups for any of the IPR awareness statements, as all p-values were greater than the 0.05 level of significance and the null hypothesis was failed to reject.

Difference in the awareness on Intellectual Property rights on the basis of course of Study.

H0: There is no significant difference in the awareness on Intellectual Property rights on the basis of course of study.

H1: There is a significant difference in the awareness on Intellectual Property rights on the basis of course of study.

One way ANOVA is used to examine hypothesis.

Table 5. One way ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Familiar with the concept of IPR	Between Groups	19.525	3	6.508	4.107	.012
	Within Groups	72.895	46	1.585		
	Total	92.420	49			
Understand the importance of IPR	Between Groups	23.821	3	7.940	5.725	.002
	Within Groups	63.799	46	1.387		
	Total	87.620	49			
Aware of different forms of IPR.	Between Groups	7.032	3	2.344	1.811	.158
	Within Groups	59.548	46	1.295		
	Total	66.580	49			
Aware of legal consequences of infringement	Between Groups	12.781	3	4.260	5.664	.002
	Within Groups	34.599	46	.752		
	Total	47.380	49			
Know the difference between copyright, patent and trademark	Between Groups	5.728	3	1.909	1.482	.232
	Within Groups	59.252	46	1.288		
	Total	64.980	49			
Know where to obtain information on IP protection	Between Groups	2.088	3	.696	.419	.740
	Within Groups	76.412	46	1.661		
	Total	78.500	49			
Understand how patents protect inventions	Between Groups	2.454	3	.818	.544	.655
	Within Groups	69.166	46	1.504		
	Total	71.620	49			
Know that copyright protects creative works	Between Groups	3.470	3	1.157	.983	.409
	Within Groups	54.150	46	1.177		
	Total	57.620	49			

Understand the purpose of trademarks	Between Groups	10.092	3	3.364	2.455	.075
	Within Groups	63.028	46	1.370		
	Total	73.120	49			
Aware of Geographical Indications (GI)	Between Groups	10.501	3	3.500	2.536	.068
	Within Groups	63.499	46	1.380		
	Total	74.000	49			

Source: Primary data

One-way ANOVA was conducted to determine whether significant differences existed among college students from different course categories with respect to various dimensions of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) awareness. The results revealed significant differences among the groups in terms of familiarity with the concept of IPR ($F = 4.107$, $p = 0.012$), understanding the importance of IPR in protecting creativity and innovation ($F = 5.725$, $p = 0.002$), and awareness of the legal consequences of intellectual property infringement ($F = 5.664$, $p = 0.002$). Since the p -values for these dimensions were less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating that the level of awareness differed significantly among college students from different course categories.

However, no significant differences were observed among the groups regarding awareness of different forms of IPR ($F = 1.811$, $p = 0.158$), knowledge of the difference between copyright, patent and trademark protection ($F = 1.482$, $p = 0.232$), knowledge of where to obtain information on intellectual property protection ($F = 0.419$, $p = 0.740$), understanding how patents protect inventions ($F = 0.544$, $p = 0.655$), knowledge that copyright protects creative works ($F = 0.983$, $p = 0.409$), understanding the purpose of trademarks ($F = 2.455$, $p = 0.075$), and awareness of Geographical Indications (GI) ($F = 2.536$, $p = 0.068$). As the p -values for these variables exceeded 0.05, the null hypothesis was failed to reject, suggesting that college students from different course categories did not differ significantly in these aspects of IPR awareness.

CONCLUSION

The study examined the awareness of college students on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). The analysis revealed that college students possess a significant level of awareness regarding various aspects of Intellectual Property Rights. The findings further indicate that gender does not significantly influence the awareness of IPR among college students, as no significant differences were observed between male and female students across the dimensions of IPR awareness. However, the course of study significantly influences certain aspects of IPR awareness, particularly familiarity with the concept of IPR, understanding the importance of IPR in protecting creativity and innovation, and awareness of the legal consequences of intellectual property infringement. In all other dimensions, no significant differences were observed among students belonging to different course categories. The study highlights the importance of strengthening IPR education and awareness programmes among college students to enhance their understanding of intellectual property protection and its significance. Future research may be conducted to examine the reasons for the differences in IPR awareness among students from different course categories and to identify the factors influencing such variations and it may be conducted with a larger sample and broader geographical coverage to gain deeper insights into students' awareness of Intellectual Property Rights. The findings indicate the need for greater emphasis on IPR education and awareness programmes to improve students' understanding of intellectual property rights.

REFERENCES

- Bansal, R., & Sharma, P. (2021). Awareness of Intellectual Property Rights among University Students. *International Journal of Research in Education and Science*, 7(3), 45–56.
- Bently, L., & Sherman, B. (2014). *Intellectual Property Law* (4th ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Copyright Act, 1957, Act No. 14 of 1957, India. (1957). Government of India. https://copyright.gov.in/Copyright_Act_1957/index.html
- Cornish, W., Llewelyn, D., & Aplin, T. (2019). *Intellectual Property: Patents, Copyrights, Trademarks and Allied Rights* (9th ed.). Sweet & Maxwell.
- Dutfield, G., & Suthersanen, U. (2020). *Global Intellectual Property Law*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Fishman, T. (2016). *The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity*. International Center for Academic Integrity.



7. Government of India. (2016). *National Intellectual Property Rights Policy*. Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade.
8. Kumar, R., Gupta, V., & Nair, M. (2022). Role of Educational Institutions in Promoting Intellectual Property Rights Awareness. *International Journal of Innovation Studies*, 6(1), 101–112.
9. Kumar, R., & Reddy, S. (2021). Awareness of Intellectual Property Rights among University Students. *Journal of Educational Research*, 15(2), 45–58.
10. Narayanan, P. (2017). *Intellectual Property Law* (5th ed.). Eastern Law House.
11. Singh, A., & Sharma, P. (2022). Intellectual Property Rights Awareness among Higher Education Students. *International Journal of Legal Studies*, 10(1), 78–92.
12. Singh, A., & Verma, S. (2020). Intellectual Property Rights Awareness among Higher Education Students. *Journal of Educational Research*, 15(2), 78–89.
13. World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). (2023). *Understanding Intellectual Property*. Geneva: WIPO.
14. World Intellectual Property Organization (2024). *What is Intellectual Property?*
15. World Trade Organization. (1995). *Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)*.

Cite this Article: Anas, A., Safa Hanan C K. (2026). Awareness on Intellectual Property Rights Among College Students, A Study with Special Reference to Kozhikode District. *International Journal of Current Science Research and Review*, 9(7), pp. 3858-3864. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47191/ijcsrr/V9-i7-26>