

# LEVEL OF AWARENESS ON COPYRIGHT ISSUES IN MEDIA EDUCATION STUDENTS: SURVEY RESULT IN UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT

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## Abstract

**Introduction:** Free media inform and educate society in an honest and fair way. This is one side of journalism. The other side is related to the authors of media content and their role as authors of knowledge, information, and culture for society. They are artists and, accordingly, they are copyright holders, their work is literature, science, culture and as such deserves respect. But in today's digital world, everyone creates media products and uses journalistic materials every minute. Few people think about the copyright protection of copyrighted articles on the Internet. This is a significant problem with regard to the rights of journalists as authors of articles in the media, but also with regard to the obligations of users of media content. There is a tendency of free use of copyrighted media material for commercial purposes - both intentionally and unintentionally, out of ignorance. To overcome this fact, it is necessary to create targeted training in intellectual property in higher education in order to copyright literacy and compliance with the laws in media.

**Methodology:** The following specific methods are used to achieve the purpose of the research and to solve the research tasks: statistical method, surveys, synthesis, graphic representation and tabular presentation of the processed and summarized information.

**Presentation:** This report aims to reveal students' attitudes towards teaching in disciplines related to copyright and related rights. The importance of the development is due to the growing influence of the media in the international aspect, especially social and online media in the XXI century. The survey includes questions that examine how young people use media products that are subject to intellectual property. At this stage, copyright as part of intellectual property, which arises automatically, is fragmented in university curriculum. The gap in training is a fact. This makes the research extremely relevant in the new time, when the world is living online, mass culture is changing, society is governed by information products and online knowledge. The scientific interest in the issue is provoked by the lack of scientific research related to copyright aspects in the media in a university environment.

**Results and Conclusion:** The media world is transforming. Knowledge of the current legal framework, existing copyright rules, including the exceptions and limitations of copyright for libraries, educational institutions, museums, and archival institutions, requires high copyright competence of students who are preparing to be managers and specialists in media.

**Keywords:** Media, education, copyright holders, media products, copyright literacy.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The media play an extremely important role in the daily dynamic world. The information society of the XXI century is accelerating the pace of development of human intellectual activity. Unique creative results in industry, science, literature and art are created. The audience has potential access to an unprecedented set of sources of journalistic material. The legal rights of authors of creative products in the media are intellectual property rights, which are required to be considered as objective and subjective law, academic discipline, and as science. [1]

Free media inform and educate society in an honest and fair way. This is one side of journalism. The other side is related to the authors of media content and their role as authors of knowledge, information, and culture for society. They are artists and, accordingly, they are copyright holders, their work is literature, science, culture and as such deserves respect. But in today's digital world, everyone creates media products and uses journalistic materials every minute. Few people think about the copyright protection of copyrighted articles on the Internet. This is a significant problem with regard to the rights of journalists as authors of articles in the media, but also with regard to the obligations of users of media content. There is a tendency of free use of copyrighted media material for commercial purposes - both intentionally and unintentionally, out of ignorance. [2] To overcome this fact, it is necessary to create targeted training in intellectual property in higher education in order to copyright literacy and compliance with the laws in media.

Improving copyright literacy among students in higher education will increase the quality of intellectual property protection of copyrighted materials in the media, respectively journalists.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

In the conditions of digital environment, the media culture of society is changing. The future is oriented towards transcultural thinking, positive educational environment and effective career development. [3, 4] In the context of interaction between education, economy, and innovations, of particular importance for their successful implementation is intellectual literacy, i.e., knowledge of copyright and related rights by students in the educational qualification degree "Bachelor" who study in the professional field of "Public Communications and Information Sciences" at UniBIT and other similar specialties in other universities. Within the project "Model for Research and Increase Copyright Literacy at the Media in the University Environment", funded by the National Science Fund at the Ministry of Education and Science in Bulgaria, a study was conducted related to the formation of copyright literacy in the university environment. The survey includes indicators that monitor the level of awareness and attitude of students to issues related to copyright and related rights, when they use the media in their daily work as future journalists, communicators and just users of media content. In general, the study examines the legal protection of intellectual property in the media and the media industry, analyses the awareness and attitude of students to the use of intellectual property in modern media in Bulgaria. The following specific methods are used to achieve the purpose of the research and to solve the research tasks: statistical method, surveys, synthesis, graphic representation and tabular presentation of the processed and summarized information.

The working hypothesis of the research is: The lack of knowledge about copyright and related rights and the increasingly compelling trend for free use of journalistic materials in the digital space for commercial purposes provoke the need to fill some gaps related to intellectual law aspects in the media and the specific manifestations of interaction between the creators of media products and the users of media content, as well as the need for educational programs and courses in higher education on the issue. The study shows the role of the university environment as an opportunity to emphasize the role of journalists as authors of knowledge, information, and culture for society and to overcome the digital divide and isolation, all of which is linked to respect for copyright and related rights in the media to continue to be an integral part of the cultural, educational and information infrastructure of modern society.

For greater specificity in the search for the scientific and practical significance of the study, the research is carried out under certain permissible limitations, allowing framing in the mentioned problems of the multifaceted understanding of the concept of "copyright literacy in the media", emphasizing the organization and training of copyright issues connected to copyright law and related rights to media products, the fruit of journalistic work in traditional and electronic media.

This report aims to reveal students' attitudes towards teaching in disciplines related to copyright and related rights. The importance of the development is due to the growing influence of the media in the international aspect, especially social and online media in the XXI century. The survey includes questions that examine how young people use media products that are subject to intellectual property. At this stage, copyright as part of intellectual property, which arises automatically, is fragmented in university curriculum. The gap in training is a fact. This makes the research extremely relevant in the new time, when the world is living online, mass culture is changing, society is governed by information products and online knowledge. The scientific interest in the issue is provoked by the lack of scientific research related to copyright aspects in the media in a university environment.

The issues related to copyright literacy in the media were studied among students of journalism, public relations, print communications, library and information management, archiving and documentary, library science and bibliography, information resources of tourism, communications and information, public policies and practices. Respondents to the study are students from universities where journalism, law, media law, intellectual property, public relations, etc. are studied.

The questions from the survey reach 2800 respondents. Of these, 449 correctly completed the survey, i.e., 20% of the surveyed students answered, which proves their interest in the researched issues. All questionnaires are fully completed. The data was collected through the online survey "Google Survey", which is part of the virtual environment for creating forms - Google Forms.

The sample includes students enrolled in the bachelor's degree stream in five universities - University of Library Studies and Information Technologies (ULSIT), South-West University "Neofit Rilski" - Blagoevgrad (SWU), Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" (PU), Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts (AMDFA), Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski” (SU), St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo (UVT).

The results are analyzed on the basis of the answers of 449 effectively surveyed adult Bulgarian citizens studying about professions that have to do with media and media content and their curricula correspond to the range of knowledge and competencies that form copyright competence in students.

*Table 1. Distribution of the surveyed persons by demographic characteristics*

<b>Demographic variables</b>		<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Sex</b>	Male	158	35,2
	Female	291	64,8
<b>Education</b>	Bachelor's	357	79,5
	Master's	61	13,6
	PHD	31	6,9
<b>Educational facility</b>	UVT	5	1,1
	SWU	8	1,8
	ULSIT	220	49,0
	AMDFA	48	10,7
	PU	107	23,8
	SU	52	11,6
	Други	9	2,0

The questionnaire consists of four panels. The first panel is aimed at establishing the knowledge and awareness of the respondents on the issues of copyright of journalistic materials and intellectual property in the media. The second panel covers questions registering the attitude of the respondents to the practical application of copyright policy in the media. The third panel covers issues related to the proposed academic and continuing education on the issue. The fourth panel covers questions aimed at acquiring demographic information and information about the educational and professional experience of the respondents.

The survey was conducted to ensure the anonymity of the respondents. They are informed about the purpose of the survey, the procedures for data collection and storage, the protection of the information provided, the disclosure of the results and participate voluntarily.

### 3 RESULTS

Information and communication technologies are developing at an extremely fast pace, following the growing needs of the modern media person. People today gain knowledge about what is happening in the world mainly through media content. Through the capabilities of the Internet and mobile telephony, it is spreading extremely fast and conquering ever larger territories. Air, cable, even satellite is inferior to the latest generation of tablets, mobile and digital devices. Journalism today reflects the world around us and the media play an extremely important role in the dynamically developing world around us. News circulates faster than any other period in human history because of the abundance of sources that spew photos and information about all sorts of events. Commentary texts and heated discussions on all issues generate traffic and attract audiences. The audience has potential access to an unprecedented set of sources of journalistic material.

According to legal theory, the state protects three types of interests: individual, national (public interests), universal (world-renowned humanistic rights and values). Therefore, the interests of journalists - the authors of journalistic materials, in the field of media must be protected without disturbing the balance between business, society, state. In this context, the relevance and importance of scientific issues are determined by the knowledge-based economy and the development of new market-oriented specialties in attractive fields of knowledge that require syncretic participation of various arts, media, technologies. On the other side is the need for adequate professional training of students in journalism, public relations, print communications and more on matters of copyright and related rights in the media.

The study presents many aspects related to the legal protection of copyright and related rights in the media, analyses the awareness and attitude of students to the use of intellectual property in modern media in Bulgaria. It is important for students to pay more attention to the new conditions facing intellectual property in the media, in particular copyright protection in information sources and the media; to be informed about the harm and damages caused by the illegal use of journalistic materials on the Web and

about the respective sanctions; to form clear criteria for the quality of media content and to increase their professional competencies.

The challenge facing all media users today is characterized by new phenomena and processes such as globalization, extremely fast information traffic on the one hand and on the other - the ways to apply an effective approach in sifting truth from lies, the essential from the insignificant in information sources of any kind. [5, 6] People have less and less time to check the content that arrives on their phones.

The survey shows that almost half of the respondents are critical of the media information they consume. As can be seen from Table 2. 46% of the surveyed students answered that they make a critical analysis of the media content that reaches them on a daily basis. In other words, they have realized the need to refract the world through their gaze, especially in the vast variety of the Internet. 28% of respondents focus on the quality of the information they receive every day, which speaks of the ability of today's students to engage in media hygiene and through the details to develop themselves as critical thinkers - a skill that Australian philosopher John Pasmore commented on in the middle of the twentieth century. [7] Thus, the media really play the role of a window through which everyone can peek into the magic of the world and be able to use every element of it.

Table 2.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Options</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
How often do you critically analyze and evaluate information and media content?	Everyday	209	46.5
	Every other day	126	28.1
	Twice a week	42	9.4
	Once a week	72	16.0

It is essential that the respondents are interested in the copyright of the materials in the media, as can be seen in Table 3. Although copyright is spoken and written about legally all over the world and copyright and related rights are not the subject of daily discussions, Bulgarian students are not indifferent to the rights of authors in the Internet space. Obviously, the problem of indiscriminate use of copyrighted materials on the Web is realized, although the use of copyrighted texts without interest in rights is a common phenomenon - Table 4. The results of this research show the importance of the problem and the need for educational policy towards copyright literacy among students in higher education in order to respond to the new realities in life. [8] And to put into practice the benefits of copyright protection on creative works. Moreover, it is not necessary to take any action, because copyright is automatic from the moment a work is placed in a specific form and is presented to the public. [9, 10]

Table 3.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Options</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Are you interested in copyright in the media you read on the Internet?	Not interested at all	49	10.9
	A little interested	112	24.9
	Neutral	93	20.7
	Rather interested	157	35.0
	Interested a lot	38	8.5

Table 4.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Options</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
How often do you download materials from the Internet without knowing if they are copyrighted?	Never	23	5.1
	Sometimes	117	26.1
	Haven't thought about it	117	26.1
	Often	118	26.3
	Very often	74	16.5

Today, intellectual property is more important than ever. Strengthening education on "intellectual property" and in particular "copyright" is necessary and will certainly have a positive effect on the dynamics of higher education. Respondents consciously claim that intellectual property issues are absent from the set of disciplines they study - Table 5. Copyright training - objects, protection, copyright protection and related rights, will contribute to the professional growth of young people and will increase their suitability in the new conditions of the labor market. The study shows that students report a lack of training on the issues discussed, which suggests that intellectual property and in particular copyright should find a place in the curriculum in higher education - Table 6. This process will change attitudes in support of respect for labor of journalists and authors of media content in the community. Copyright literacy will be a key competence in the new knowledge of the world around us, which in turn will stimulate the creative and entrepreneurial skills of young people.

Table 5.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Options</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
To what extent is the issue of copyright in the media covered in the study content you study?	Very low	73	16.3
	Low	124	27.6
	Neutral	121	26.9
	High	107	23.8
	Very high	24	5.3

Table 6.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Options</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Do you think that the lecture courses on intellectual property contribute to an increase of your competence?	Do not contribute at all	11	2.4
	Rather do not contribute	28	6.2
	Neutral	95	21.2
	Rather contribute	192	42.8
	Completely contribute	123	27.4

The realized need for high quality educational products, in-depth research and effective use of their results in the long run, as well as the need to protect knowledge as intellectual property, are a prerequisite for universities to implement intellectual property policy in practice. It must follow the principles of a strategic approach to intellectual property and in particular copyright, which will add value and an opportunity to develop the potential of higher education institutions. The emphasis in this process are the research projects in which teachers and students together create new knowledge - with their different interests, expectations and activities, but applying a single reasonable and balanced approach. Although almost half of the respondents "cannot assess" how much they are ready to get involved in research projects during their studies, if given this opportunity, there would be benefits for both parties - Table 7. Because a team that works according to the rules of continuity and mutual respect, builds a sense of belonging, promotes trust, stimulates cooperation and creates success.

Table 7. Participation of students in research projects.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Options</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
During your training, would you be involved in research projects?	No	66	14.7
	Cannot assess	213	47.4
	Yes	170	37.9

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

The media world is transforming. Knowledge of the current legal framework, existing copyright rules, including the exceptions and limitations of copyright for libraries, educational institutions, museums, and

archival institutions, requires high copyright competence of students who are preparing to be managers and specialists in media.

Bulgarian media are an element of the cultural and creative industries in the new century. The media is the most important tool for promoting freedom of expression in the public sphere. They stimulate debate, provide space for its development, offer comments and opinions, shape public opinion, and often encourage the affirmation of certain values. The media present educational, entertaining, cultural and artistic forms of expression. [13] They also play an important role in the economy, creating jobs and generating income. Media content affects society. There is no discipline related to copyright in the media in the curricula of higher education institutions. To date, no study has been conducted in Bulgaria on copyright literacy in the media industry among students majoring in journalism, media, public relations, communications, and the establishment of copyright competence of professionals in this field. Observations show that this competence is not at the required level, there is a real need for additional knowledge and training. The existing models and good practices in Europe and the world are also unknown. New educational content is needed in the academic programs and a practical-applied model for its application in unison with the modern information environment and the specifics and needs. The analysis and summarization of current trends and achievements in the development of the modern information society, the development of intellectual law aspects in the media industry, the importance of issues related to copyright awareness and related rights in the educational qualification degree "bachelor" directs research interest to consider and create a model for increasing copyright literacy in the media in a university environment as part of an effective strategy for promoting intellectual property in the modern world. Copyright literacy in the media should be purposefully formed in the education of students - future specialists in journalism, public relations, print communications, etc., on compliance with copyright and related rights in the media. In order to create training courses, one must know the current copyright norms, including the exceptions and limitations of copyright for libraries, educational institutions, museums, archival institutions.

The role of the media in a democratic society does not change, but the concept of the media needs to change to respond to the changing multidimensional reality, to ensure a level of protection and to regulate duties and responsibilities in line with the norms of the Council of Europe. The main focus of the priority scientific infrastructure is to improve the quality of higher education in the Republic of Bulgaria, study of the media and cultural environment as one of the goals is to move the country to higher positions in the ranking of freedom, pluralism and democracy in the media.

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