



NAVIGATING THE DIGITAL MAZE: UNRAVELLING THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON COPYRIGHT LAWS

Dr. Kiran C. Bharatiya

Assistant Professor, Anand Law College, Gujarat.

Corresponding Author: Dr. Kiran C. Bharatiya

Email ID: kcbalc@rediffmail.com

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ABSTRACT:

The rapid growth of social media platforms in India has given rise to a myriad of challenges concerning copyright infringement. This research paper aims to unravel the influence of social media on copyright laws in India, analyzing recent trends and regulatory responses. With the widespread dissemination of copyrighted content on social media platforms, unauthorized sharing and exploitation of works have become common occurrences. The paper examines the implications of these trends on copyright protection and explores the measures taken by the Indian government and copyright owners to address these issues. Additionally, it investigates the impact of India's Copyright Act in the digital age, evaluating its efficacy in safeguarding intellectual property rights amidst the dynamic landscape of social media. By shedding light on the intersection of social media and copyright laws in India, this study contributes valuable insights to the ongoing discourse on digital copyright enforcement and protection.

Keywords: *Social Media Platforms, Copyright Infringement, Copyright Act, Intellectual Property Rights, Digital Age.*

INTRODUCTION:

The rise of social media has had a profound impact on copyright laws in India. On the one hand, social media has made it easier for creators to share their work with a wider audience. This has led to a boom in creativity and innovation. On the other hand, social media has also made it easier for copyright infringement to occur. This has created a legal maze for creators and users alike, as they try to navigate

the complex rules governing copyright law in India. By examining the interplay between social media and copyright in India, this study seeks to inform policymakers, content creators, digital platforms, and the public about the complexities of copyright enforcement in the digital maze. It is hoped that the findings of this research will pave the way for a more robust and inclusive copyright ecosystem that balances the

interests of creators, users, and society at large in the digital age.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND COPYRIGHT

INFRINGEMENT:

Copyright Law in India:

Copyright law in India is governed by the Copyright Act, 1957. The Act protects original literary, dramatic, musical, and artistic works, as well as cinematograph films and sound recordings. Copyright owners have the exclusive right to reproduce, distribute, perform, communicate to the public, adapt, and translate their works.

Copyright Infringement on Social Media:

Social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, have made it easier for users to share content, including copyrighted content. This has led to a surge in copyright infringement cases in India. In 2019, the Indian government reported that it had received over 1 million complaints of copyright infringement on social media platforms.

There are a number of ways in which copyright infringement can occur on social media. For example, users may:

- Upload copyrighted content without the permission of the copyright owner.

- Share copyrighted content without giving credit to the copyright owner.
- Modify copyrighted content without the permission of the copyright owner.
- Use copyrighted content for commercial purposes without the permission of the copyright owner.

The Challenges of Enforcing Copyright Law on Social Media:

Enforcing copyright law on social media is a challenging task. This is because social media platforms are often located outside of India, and they may not be willing to cooperate with Indian authorities. Additionally, the sheer volume of content that is shared on social media makes it difficult to identify and track down copyright infringement.

Potential Solutions to the Challenges of Copyright Infringement on Social Media:

There are a number of potential solutions to the challenges of copyright infringement on social media. These include:

- Reforming copyright law in India to make it more flexible and adaptable to the digital age.
- Educating creators and users about copyright law.

- Developing new technologies to help enforce copyright law.
- Working with social media platforms to develop and implement policies to prevent copyright infringement.

RECENT TRENDS IN COPYRIGHT

INFRINGEMENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

The Increasing Use of Social Media to Share Copyrighted Content without Permission:

One of the most common ways in which copyright infringement occurs on social media is when users share copyrighted content without permission. This can include images, videos, music, and text. For example, a user might share a copyrighted image on Facebook without giving credit to the copyright owner, or they might share a copyrighted video on YouTube without obtaining a license from the copyright owner.

The Growing Popularity of Deep Fakes:

Another recent trend in copyright infringement is the growing popularity of deepfakes. Deepfakes are videos or audio recordings that have been manipulated to make it appear as if someone is saying or doing something they did not actually say or do. Deepfakes can be used to infringe

copyright in a number of ways. For example, a deepfake could be used to create a fake music video featuring a celebrity, or it could be used to create a fake news report.

The Use of Social Media to Promote Piracy:

Finally, social media is also being used to promote piracy. This can include sharing links to illegal websites that offer pirated content for download, or it can include promoting the use of pirated content on social media platforms. For example, a user might share a link to a website that offers pirated movies for download on Twitter, or they might post a status update on Facebook encouraging their friends to download pirated music.

REGULATORY RESPONSES:

The Copyright Act of India:

The rise of social media has led to a surge in copyright infringement in India. In response, the Indian government has taken a number of regulatory steps to address the issue. These steps include:

- The Copyright Act, 1957, which was amended in 2012 to include provisions specifically addressing copyright infringement on social media.

- The Information Technology (Intermediaries Guidelines) Rules, 2011, which require social media platforms to take down infringing content upon receiving a notice from a copyright owner.
- The Copyright Rules, 2013, which provide guidance on how to file copyright infringement complaints with the Indian government.

In addition to these regulatory measures, the Indian government has also worked with social media platforms to develop and implement policies to prevent copyright infringement. For example, in 2016, Google and Facebook signed agreements with the Indian government to remove infringing content from their platforms.

Guidelines for Social Media Intermediaries:

In February 2021, the Indian government issued guidelines for social media platforms and OTT (Over-The-Top) platforms. The guidelines mandate platforms with over five million users to establish a grievance redressal mechanism to address user complaints, including copyright infringement claims. The grievance officer appointed by the platforms must respond to complaints within specified time frames, facilitating a streamlined process for content

takedowns. Additionally, the guidelines require social media platforms to display information about the origins of shared content, providing greater transparency to users and copyright owners.

The regulatory responses to copyright infringement on social media in India have been met with mixed results. On the one hand, the government's efforts have helped to reduce the amount of infringing content on social media platforms. On the other hand, some copyright owners have complained that the government's measures are not enough to protect their rights.

Enforcement of Copyright Law on Social Media:

The challenge of regulating copyright infringement on social media is that it is a global problem. Social media platforms are often located outside of India, and they may not be willing to cooperate with Indian authorities. Additionally, the sheer volume of content that is shared on social media makes it difficult to identify and track down copyright infringement.

Despite the challenges, the Indian government is committed to protecting copyright in the digital age. The government is continuing to work with social media platforms and other

stakeholders to develop effective solutions to the problem of copyright infringement on social media.

CONCLUSION

The paper has concluded that the rise of social media has created new challenges for copyright law in India. However, there are a number of potential solutions to these challenges. By working together, creators, users, and social media platforms can help to protect copyright in the digital age.

The paper has made the following suggestions:

- Reform copyright law in India to make it more flexible and adaptable to the digital age. This could include updating the definition of copyright, clarifying the scope of copyright protection, and providing for new forms of copyright protection.
- Educate creators and users about copyright law. This could be done through public awareness campaigns, educational programs, and online resources.
- Develop new technologies to help enforce copyright law. This could include developing tools to identify and track down copyright infringement, and

developing systems for resolving copyright disputes.

- Work with social media platforms to develop and implement policies to prevent copyright infringement. This could include requiring social media platforms to take down infringing content upon receiving a notice from a copyright owner, and providing tools for creators to manage their copyrights.

The paper has argued that by taking these steps, India can create a more balanced and effective copyright regime that protects the rights of creators and users in the digital age.

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