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STUDENTS' LEGAL AWARENESS AND COPYRIGHT COMPLIANCE IN ACADEMIC E-BOOK USAGE

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aims to analyze the influence of students' legal awareness on copyright compliance in the use of e-books and digital academic works within the university environment.

Research Design & Methods: This study employs a quantitative approach using an explanatory research design through a cross-sectional survey. The study sample consisted of 350 students from several public universities on the island of Java, selected using stratified random sampling. Data were collected via a Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using multiple linear regression with the aid of SPSS version 26. The independent variables consisted of legal knowledge, legal understanding, legal attitudes, and legal behavior patterns, while the dependent variable was copyright compliance.

Findings: The results of the study indicate that legal awareness has a positive and significant effect on students' legal compliance. Among the dimensions of legal awareness examined, legal knowledge and legal attitudes were found to be the most dominant factors influencing student compliance, followed by legal understanding, which also had a significant effect. Meanwhile, legal behavior tendencies did not show a significant influence on legal compliance. In general, the level of legal awareness and student compliance fell into the moderate category, with legal knowledge being the relatively lowest aspect.

Contributions: This study makes a theoretical contribution to the development of the concept of legal awareness in the context of the digital academic environment and enriches the literature on copyright compliance in higher education settings in developing countries, particularly Indonesia. Practically, this study provides recommendations for universities to strengthen legal literacy and copyright protection policies within the digital academic ecosystem.

Novelty: The novelty of this study lies in its specific focus on legal compliance with copyright in the use of e-books and digital academic works, as well as the modeling of legal awareness as a multidimensional construct encompassing knowledge, understanding, attitudes, and behavior within the context of higher education in Indonesia.

Keywords: Legal Awareness; Legal Compliance; Digital Copyright

JEL codes: K11, K42, I23

Article type: research paper

INTRODUCTION

The rise of the digital age has fundamentally transformed the way individuals, including students, access, use, and distribute information and intellectual works. The transformation of information and communication technology, particularly through the internet and digital platforms, has rapidly expanded access to various sources of knowledge—such as e-books, scientific journals, and academic works—on a massive scale and across national borders. This digitization offers significant benefits for enhancing global access to education; however, it also presents serious challenges regarding the protection of intellectual property rights, particularly copyright infringement in the digital environment. International organizations such as the World Intellectual Property Organization highlight that the development of digital technology significantly increases the complexity of copyright protection due to the ease of unauthorized reproduction, distribution, and exchange of digital works.

The phenomenon of digital copyright infringement has become a global issue affecting not only developing countries but also developed nations. Practices such as the illegal downloading of e-books, the unauthorized use of scholarly works, the sharing of digital files through unofficial platforms, and the redistribution of academic works without regard for licensing are forms of infringement commonly found in higher education settings. Several international studies indicate that students are a group particularly prone to engaging in digital copyright infringement due to the high intensity of technology use and the perception that digital content is easier to access

and share compared to physical works. Research by [Jaramillo et al., \(2023\)](#) found that students tend to view digital copyright infringement as an act of lesser severity compared to other forms of legal violations. This phenomenon indicates a shift in legal perceptions within the digital ecosystem that has the potential to influence compliance with copyright regulations.

The protection of copyright has evolved globally through various international legal instruments, including treaties administered by WIPO and national regulations in various countries. In Indonesia, the protection of intellectual property is governed by Law No. 28 of 2014 on Copyright, which guarantees creators exclusive rights over scientific works, written works, books, and other digital works. In the academic environment, the existence of such regulations is crucial, given that universities are the primary producers of scientific works and sources of digital knowledge. However, the existence of formal regulations is not always accompanied by a high level of legal compliance.

One factor believed to influence compliance with copyright law is legal awareness. According [Soekanto \(1977\)](#), legal awareness is a state in which individuals understand, internalize, and accept applicable legal norms, thereby influencing their legal behavior. In the context of the use of e-books and digital academic works, legal awareness encompasses not only knowledge of copyright rules but also an understanding of users' rights and obligations, attitudes toward legal rules, and actual behavior in complying with legal provisions. Previous research indicates that legal awareness has a positive relationship with compliance behavior across various regulatory fields ([Fibrianti et al., 2023](#); [Phau & Ng, 2010](#); [Yoon, 2012](#)). However, research findings on digital copyright have been inconsistent, particularly within technology-based academic environments.

Although previous studies have extensively examined digital piracy and copyright infringement, most have focused on entertainment-related content such as software, music, and films. Empirical studies specifically investigating copyright compliance in the use of academic e-books and scholarly digital resources remain limited. Moreover, existing studies generally examine legal awareness as a unidimensional construct, providing limited understanding of how different dimensions of legal awareness influence compliance behavior. In the Indonesian higher education context, where digital resource utilization is rapidly increasing while legal literacy remains uneven, empirical evidence regarding the relationship between multidimensional legal awareness and copyright compliance is still scarce. Therefore, this study addresses this gap by examining legal awareness through four dimensions—legal knowledge, legal understanding, legal attitudes, and legal behavior patterns—and analyzing their respective influences on students' copyright compliance.

This study addresses the gap in the literature by examining students' copyright compliance within the academic digital ecosystem. Unlike previous research that primarily focuses on digital piracy in entertainment or general media contexts, this study investigates the use of academic e-books and scholarly digital resources that are directly related to learning and knowledge production. Legal awareness is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct encompassing legal knowledge, legal understanding, legal attitudes, and legal behavior, enabling a more comprehensive analysis of factors influencing copyright compliance. The Indonesian context, characterized by rapid digital technology adoption alongside ongoing challenges in legal literacy, provides a relevant setting for exploring these issues.

Given the increasing reliance on digital learning resources in higher education, understanding the relationship between legal awareness and copyright compliance is particularly important. Universities play a central role not only in knowledge creation but also in fostering academic ethics and a culture of legal compliance. Higher levels of legal awareness are expected to encourage more responsible and ethical use of intellectual property, thereby supporting the development of an integrity-based academic environment. The novelty of this study lies in its examination of legal awareness as a multidimensional construct in explaining academic digital copyright compliance among Indonesian university students, with a specific focus on academic e-books and scholarly digital resources rather than general forms of digital piracy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Theory of Legal Consciousness

Legal consciousness refers to an individual's awareness, understanding, attitudes, and behavioral orientation toward legal norms and institutions ([Soekanto, 1977](#)). Legal consciousness seeks to explain how society recognizes the existence of the law and regards it as something that must be respected and voluntarily followed. Legal consciousness is not merely about understanding the content of regulations but also reflects an individual's level of acceptance of the values and objectives inherent in the law itself. A person with a strong sense of legal consciousness generally does not obey rules merely out of fear of sanctions, but rather because of a belief that the law is necessary to maintain order, justice, and a harmonious social life. Thus, legal consciousness serves as a crucial foundation in shaping law-abiding behavior that stems from internal awareness, rather than merely external pressure.

The model of legal awareness is also closely linked to the social and environmental influences in which individuals are embedded, including the social norms that develop within society and the role of state institutions in disseminating the law (Salins & Aithal, 2023). Legal awareness is not merely the result of formal education, but also a product of social interaction, customs, and shared values that lead to compliance with the law. The family environment, educational institutions, the media, and social groups play a crucial role in shaping an individual's perspective on the law. Individuals tend to learn from behaviors frequently observed in daily life; thus, an environment that demonstrates respect for rules can foster a higher level of legal awareness. Conversely, if legal violations are viewed as commonplace or even tolerated within a social environment, an individual's level of compliance may also decline.

Legal awareness is a multidimensional concept that has been extensively studied in legal science and the sociology of law. Soekanto (1977) identified four main indicators of legal awareness, namely: (1) knowledge of the law, which refers to an individual's understanding of the content and substance of legislation; (2) comprehension of the law, which reflects a person's ability to interpret legal norms accurately; (3) legal attitude, which is the tendency to accept or reject legal norms based on an individual's judgment; and (4) legal behavior pattern, which is the concrete implementation of legal awareness in daily actions.

Copyright in the Digital and Academic Contexts

Copyright is one of the main branches of intellectual property law that provides legal protection for original works in the fields of science, art, and literature. This protection aims to grant exclusive rights to creators or rights holders to reproduce, distribute, and exploit their works for a specific period, thereby encouraging creativity, innovation, and the sustainability of knowledge production (Waelde et al., 2013). Copyright is defined as the exclusive right granted to the creator or copyright holder to reproduce, publish, and use their work, as well as to derive economic benefits from it (Nasution et al., 2025).

The issue of copyright in an academic context has a more complex ethical dimension because scholarly works are fundamentally produced to support the dissemination of knowledge, yet they are also viewed as a form of intellectual property that requires legal protection. The development of digital technology and the internet has fueled a debate regarding the balance between conventional copyright protection and the principle of open access to scientific knowledge. The open access system emerged as a response to traditional publication models that restrict access through paywalls, with the aim of expanding the dissemination of research results to the public and the broader academic community (Esteve, 2024). This shift does not eliminate the role of copyright but rather transforms its mechanisms through licensing that allows authors to retain rights to their works while providing more open access to the public. Universities worldwide are beginning to adopt open access policies as a strategy to expand the dissemination of knowledge while maintaining respect for creators' rights and academic integrity (Suber, 2012).

The open access system does not eliminate copyright; rather, it redefines how it is used through open licenses such as Creative Commons. These licenses allow creators to specify the level of freedom in using their works—such as attribution, non-commercial use, or share-alike—thereby striking a balance between copyright protection and public access (Creative Commons Licenses). Thus, copyright in the digital age is no longer absolutely exclusive but is more flexible and adaptive to the needs of knowledge dissemination. At the global policy level, organizations such as UNESCO also promote the implementation of open science and open access as part of a strategy to accelerate global knowledge exchange and reduce information access gaps between countries (UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science). Meanwhile, in Indonesia, copyright protection is regulated under Law No. 28 of 2014 on Copyright, which affirms that scientific works, including books and academic articles, are legally protected and that unauthorized use carries legal consequences.

Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis Development

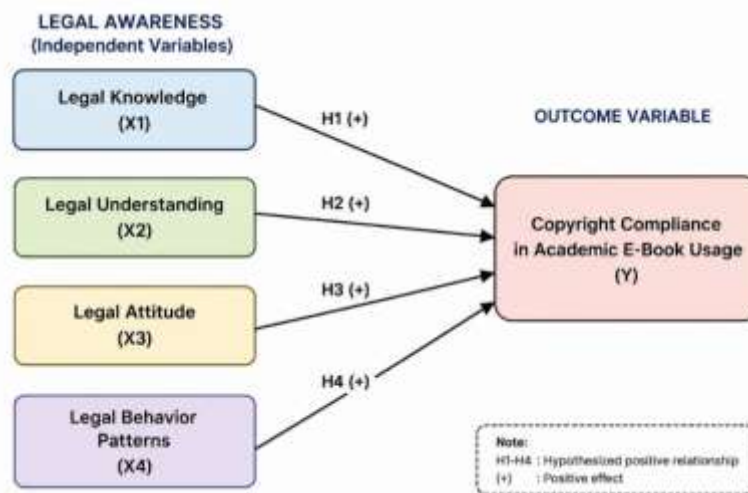


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

H1: Legal knowledge has a positive and significant effect on students' copyright compliance.

H2: Legal understanding has a positive and significant effect on students' copyright compliance.

H3: Legal attitude has a positive and significant effect on students' copyright compliance.

H4: Legal behavior patterns have a positive and significant effect on students' copyright compliance.

METHODS

This study employs a quantitative approach using a cross-sectional survey design. This method was chosen because it allows for the collection of representative data from a large population in a time-efficient manner, while also facilitating the testing of causal hypotheses through inferential statistical analysis. This study falls under the category of explanatory research, which aims to explain the causal relationship between the variables of legal awareness and legal compliance.

The study population comprised all active undergraduate (S1) students from several public universities on the island of Java, selected purposively based on regional representativeness and ease of access for the study. The universities were chosen to represent western, central, and eastern Java, thereby providing a more diverse picture of student characteristics. The total population is estimated to be approximately 45,000 students. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with a margin of error of 5%, resulting in a minimum sample size of 396 respondents. To account for potential data incompleteness and non-response rates, the study set a target sample size of 400 respondents. After the data cleaning process, 350 questionnaires were deemed valid and usable for analysis. The sampling technique employed stratified random sampling based on academic programs and cohorts to ensure a more proportional representation of respondents.

Ethical principles were observed throughout the study. Respondents were informed about the objectives of the research, the voluntary nature of participation, the anonymity of their identities, the confidentiality of their responses, and their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without any consequences. Electronic informed consent was obtained from all participants before they proceeded to complete the questionnaire. The collected data were used solely for academic research purposes and were analyzed in aggregate form to ensure respondent privacy.

This study involves two main variables: the independent variable and the dependent variable. The independent variable is legal awareness (X), which is operationalized into four dimensions: legal knowledge (X₁), legal understanding (X₂), legal attitudes (X₃), and legal behavior patterns (X₄), based on Soekanto (2012) conceptual framework. Meanwhile, the dependent variable is copyright compliance (Y), measured through three aspects: compliance in the use of e-books, compliance in the citation of academic works, and compliance in the distribution of digital content.

The research instrument used is a questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale, ranging from a score of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to a score of 5 (Strongly Agree). The total number of items in this study is 42, consisting of 28 items for the legal awareness variable and 14 items for the legal compliance variable. Construct validity was tested using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) with a criterion of factor loadings ≥ 0.50 . The reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach's Alpha with a minimum threshold of ≥ 0.70 . The results of the instrument pilot test on 50 initial respondents showed that all items met the validity criteria with factor loadings ≥ 0.52 and Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from 0.79 to 0.86.

Data analysis was conducted in stages. The first stage consisted of a descriptive analysis to describe the characteristics of the respondents and the distribution of scores for each research variable. Next, classical assumption tests were performed, including a normality test using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov method, a multicollinearity test using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), a heteroscedasticity test using the Glejser method, and a linearity test. Hypothesis testing was performed using multiple linear regression analysis with the following equation model:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Notes:

Y = legal compliance;

α = constant;

β_1 – β_4 = regression coefficients;

X_1 = legal knowledge;

X_2 = legal understanding;

X_3 = legal attitude;

X_4 = legal behavior pattern;

ε = error term.

All analyses were performed using SPSS software version 26. The significance level was set at $\alpha = 0.05$.

RESULT

Respondent Characteristics

The respondents' characteristics were used to describe the profile of the students involved in the study. The study included 350 students from various academic programs and graduating classes at universities in the Java region. The characteristics analyzed included gender, graduating class, academic program, and behavior regarding the use of digital resources related to copyright. The results of the study show that the majority of respondents were female students at 58.6%, while male students accounted for 41.4%. By academic year, second-year students had the highest proportion at 29.1%, followed by first-year students (27.4%), third-year students (25.7%), and fourth-year students (17.8%). The distribution of academic programs was relatively even, with Law students dominating at 22.3%. In addition to demographic characteristics, the study also identified digital resource usage behaviors. A total of 78.9% of respondents admitted to having downloaded e-books or academic works from the internet. However, only 31.4% of respondents always pay attention to the copyright status of the sources they use. These findings indicate that the use of digital sources is quite high, but awareness of legality and copyright issues remains relatively low.

Table 1. Characteristics of Study Respondents (n = 350)

Characteristic	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	145	41.4%
	Female	205	58.6%
Year of Enrollment	First year	96	27.4%
	Second year	102	29.1%
	Third year	90	25.7%
	Fourth year	62	17.8%
Program	Law	78	22.3%
	Social Sciences and Politics	65	18.6%
	Education	70	20.1%
	Engineering and Science	68	19.4%
	Economics and Business	69	19.6%
Use of Digital Resources	Have downloaded e-books/academic works	276	78.9%
	Never	74	21.1%
Attention to Copyright	Always pay attention	110	31.4%
	Do not pay attention	240	68.6%

Levels of Legal Awareness and Compliance Among Students

A descriptive analysis was conducted to determine the levels of legal awareness and compliance with copyright law among students. The results of the study indicate that students' level of legal awareness had a mean score of 3.21 (SD = 0.64) on a 1–5 scale, which falls into the moderate category. Of the four dimensions measured, the legal attitude dimension received the highest average score of 3.45 (SD = 0.71), while the legal knowledge dimension had the lowest average score of 2.94 (SD = 0.78). These findings indicate that students tend to have a

positive attitude toward the importance of respecting copyright, but their understanding of copyright law's rules and substance remains suboptimal.

Meanwhile, students' level of compliance with copyright law also falls into the moderate category, with an average score of 3.08 (SD = 0.71). Based on the measurement aspects, compliance in citing academic works received the highest average score of 3.37 (SD = 0.68), followed by compliance in the use of e-books at 2.97 (SD = 0.75), and compliance in the distribution of digital content at 2.91 (SD = 0.82). The high level of compliance regarding the citation of academic works is likely influenced by the stricter implementation of anti-plagiarism policies within higher education institutions compared to practices regarding the use and distribution of digital content.

Table 2. Level of Legal Awareness Among Students

Dimension of Legal Awareness	Mean	Standard Deviation	Category
Legal knowledge	2.94	0.78	Moderate
Legal understanding	3.16	0.67	Moderate
Legal attitude	3.45	0.71	Moderate
Legal Behavior Patterns	3.29	0.59	Moderate
Overall Mean	3.21	0.64	Moderate

Table 3. Level of Students' Copyright Compliance

Compliance Aspects	Mean	Standard Deviation	Category
Compliance with e-book usage	2.97	0.75	Moderate
Compliance with academic citation	3.37	0.68	Moderate
Compliance with digital content distribution	2.91	0.82	Moderate
Overall Mean	3.08	0.71	Moderate

Based on these results, it can be concluded that both the level of legal awareness and compliance with copyright law among students remain at a moderate level. This indicates that while students have demonstrated a positive attitude toward the importance of copyright, strengthening legal understanding and implementing compliant behavior still require improvement through more intensive education and outreach within the university environment.

Classical Assumption Tests

Before testing the hypotheses using multiple linear regression analysis, classical assumption tests were first conducted to ensure that the regression model met the statistical requirements. The assumption tests performed included tests for normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity. The results of the normality test using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov method showed a significance value of 0.127 ($p > 0.05$). These results indicate that the residual values in the research model are normally distributed, thus satisfying the normality assumption.

Next, a multicollinearity test was conducted to determine whether there is a high correlation among the independent variables. The test results showed that all independent variables had Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values ranging from 1.24 to 2.87. These values remained below the critical threshold of $VIF < 10$, so it can be concluded that there is no multicollinearity issue in the research model. The heteroscedasticity test using the Glejser method showed that all independent variables had significance values above 0.05. These results indicate that there are no signs of heteroscedasticity; in other words, the residual variance is constant (homoscedasticity).

Table 4. Results of Classical Assumption Tests

Test Type	Indicator	Result	Criteria	Notes
Normality Test	Kolmogorov–Smirnov Significance	0.127	$p > 0.05$	Data are normally distributed
Multicollinearity Test	VIF X_1	1.24	$VIF < 10$	No multicollinearity
	VIF X_2	1.89	$VIF < 10$	No multicollinearity
	VIF X_3	2.87	$VIF < 10$	No multicollinearity
	VIF X_4	2.11	$VIF < 10$	No multicollinearity
Heteroscedasticity Test	Glejser Significance	> 0.05	$p > 0.05$	No heteroscedasticity

Based on these test results, the research model is deemed to satisfy the assumptions of normality, freedom from multicollinearity, and absence of heteroscedasticity; therefore, the regression analysis may proceed.

Results of Multiple Linear Regression

The research hypotheses were tested using multiple linear regression analysis to determine the influence of dimensions of legal awareness on students' compliance with copyright law. The analysis results indicate that the regression model is statistically significant overall, with an F-value of 47.83 and a significance level of $p < 0.001$. These results suggest that the variables of legal knowledge, legal understanding, legal attitudes, and legal behavior patterns simultaneously influence students' legal compliance.

Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.357 indicates that 35.7% of the variation in students' copyright compliance can be explained by the four dimensions of legal awareness examined in this study. The remaining 64.3% is attributable to factors outside the research model, suggesting that copyright compliance is a complex behavior influenced by multiple determinants. These may include digital literacy, moral norms, perceived behavioral control, peer influence, social environment, institutional policies and enforcement, as well as the accessibility of legal digital resources. This finding highlights the need for future research to incorporate these additional variables in order to improve the explanatory power of the model and provide a more comprehensive understanding of copyright compliance behavior within digital academic environments.

Table 5. Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Variable	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.
Constant (a)	0.842	0.198	4.253	0.000
Legal Knowledge (X1)	0.312	0.058	5.379	0.000
Legal Understanding (X2)	0.187	0.064	2.922	0.004
Legal Attitude (X3)	0.289	0.061	4.738	0.000
Legal Behavior Patterns (X4)	0.143	0.073	1.959	0.051

Based on the results of the regression analysis in Table 5, the legal knowledge variable has a positive and significant influence on students' legal compliance ($\beta = 0.312$; $p < 0.001$) and is the strongest predictor in the research model. The legal attitude variable also showed a positive and significant influence ($\beta = 0.289$; $p < 0.001$), followed by legal understanding, which significantly influenced student compliance ($\beta = 0.187$; $p = 0.004$). Meanwhile, legal behavior tendencies had a positive influence but did not reach statistical significance ($\beta = 0.143$; $p = 0.051$). Overall, the research results indicate that legal knowledge and legal attitudes are dominant factors influencing students' copyright compliance; therefore, enhancing legal education and fostering positive attitudes toward legal compliance should be a primary focus within the university environment.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study indicate that legal awareness has a positive and significant influence on students' compliance with copyright laws regarding the use of e-books and academic works. These findings reinforce the theoretical assumption that legal compliance is influenced not only by the existence of formal rules but also by the level of understanding and internalization of legal values among individuals. Individuals with a high level of legal awareness tend to be more inclined to act in accordance with norms because the law has become part of their behavioral orientation, rather than merely an obligation obeyed due to the threat of sanctions. In an academic context, legal awareness is a crucial aspect given that the development of digital technology has facilitated rapid access, distribution, and reproduction of scholarly works, thereby increasing the potential for copyright infringement.

The findings of this study indicate that increased legal awareness among students contributes to greater compliance with the legal use, downloading, and distribution of digital academic content. These results show that students who understand copyright rules tend to give more consideration to ethical aspects and legal consequences before engaging in actions that could potentially infringe on intellectual property rights. These findings align with the research by [Hati et al., \(2019\)](#) on the use of illegal digital content, which indicates that individuals with a better understanding of legal norms and the implications of infringement are less likely to commit digital copyright infringement.

The legal knowledge variable in this study proved to be the most dominant predictor of students' legal compliance ($\beta = 0.312$), with a greater influence than the legal attitude variable ($\beta = 0.289$). These findings indicate that cognitive aspects play a significant role in shaping students' compliance behavior regarding digital copyright. Legal knowledge is not only related to the ability to recognize applicable regulations but also encompasses an understanding of rights and obligations in the use of intellectual works, including the legal consequences arising from violations.

These findings differ slightly from several previous studies that identified attitudes as the dominant factor in predicting behavior. Within the framework of social behavior, attitudes are often viewed as the primary determinant of intention formation and actual behavior. However, in the context of this study, the dominance of legal knowledge can be understood through the characteristics of the Indonesian academic environment, which still faces limitations in digital copyright literacy. Students with better knowledge of the rules regarding e-book usage, plagiarism, and academic copyright tend to be more cautious in their digital activities. This indicates that knowledge serves as the foundation for behavioral decision-making before attitudes are translated into concrete actions. Research on e-textbook piracy also suggests that legal understanding and moral awareness are key factors in curbing academic piracy ([Hati et al., 2019](#); [Jannah & Kholid, 2020](#); [Uyun, 2023](#); [Zainiyah et al., 2024](#)).

The relatively low average score for legal knowledge ($M = 2.94$) indicates that students' understanding of copyright laws remains limited. This situation suggests that there is significant opportunity for higher education institutions to improve compliance through more systematic legal education programs. This low level of knowledge

may be a factor leading students to unknowingly commit infringements, particularly when using digital sources that are highly accessible.

The research findings also show that legal attitudes have a positive and significant effect on students' legal compliance ($\beta = 0.289$; $p < 0.001$). These results support the relevance of the Theory of Planned Behavior, which explains that attitudes are one of the main factors influencing an individual's intentions and behavior. A positive attitude toward the protection of intellectual property rights can increase a person's tendency to comply with rules because individuals view such behavior as morally and socially correct. Various studies on the use of illegal digital content indicate that attitudes toward copyright infringement have a significant influence on an individual's behavioral intentions (Li et al., 2024; Wang & McClung, 2011).

Interestingly, the average score for legal attitudes in this study was higher than that for other dimensions. This suggests that, in general, students hold a positive view regarding the importance of copyright protection. However, this high level of positive attitude has not been fully accompanied by consistent behavior. This situation indicates the presence of an attitude-behavior gap—a situation where individuals hold a favorable attitude toward a rule but have not yet fully translated it into concrete action. Studies on digital piracy behavior among students also show that a positive attitude toward copyright does not always automatically result in compliant behavior when other factors, such as habits, ease of access, or dominant social norms, are present.

Meanwhile, legal behavior patterns did not show a statistically significant influence on copyright compliance ($p = 0.051$). This finding is noteworthy because, theoretically, past behavior is often considered a predictor of future behavior. The absence of a significant effect suggests that prior behavioral tendencies alone may be insufficient to explain copyright compliance in digital environments, where compliance decisions are likely shaped more strongly by cognitive and attitudinal factors. Furthermore, this result may indicate a degree of conceptual and measurement overlap between legal behavior patterns and copyright compliance, as legal behavior patterns can be viewed as a manifestation of compliance itself rather than an independent causal factor. Therefore, further conceptual refinement is needed in future studies to clearly distinguish these constructs and better understand their respective roles in shaping copyright compliance behavior.

In addition, the characteristics of the digital environment may also explain these results. In the context of digital content use, behavior that appears compliant on the surface does not necessarily indicate actual compliance. Students may avoid overt infringing actions but still engage in infringing practices indirectly, such as accessing illegal sources through third parties or using digital materials without understanding their copyright status. Research by Koay et al., (2022) on the use of illegal digital content found that prior behavioral experience and the perceived ease of access have a strong influence on the tendency toward digital infringement.

The findings of this study have a number of practical implications for university administration. First, educational institutions need to develop copyright literacy programs that are integrated into the learning process, rather than relying solely on one-off awareness-raising activities. Materials related to intellectual property rights can be incorporated into courses on research methodology, academic ethics, and digital literacy. Second, university digital libraries need to expand access to legal academic resources so that students have alternatives for using sources that are easily accessible and comply with legal regulations. Third, policies regarding the use of digital content on campus need to be consistently communicated, accompanied by education on the legal and ethical risks of copyright infringement. These efforts are expected not only to improve formal compliance but also to foster an academic culture that sustainably values intellectual works.

CONCLUSION

This study successfully conducted an empirical analysis of the influence of legal awareness on students' compliance with copyright law regarding e-books and academic works. Overall, there is a positive and significant relationship between legal awareness and students' compliance with copyright law ($R^2 = 0.357$; $F = 47.83$; $p < 0.001$). Of the four dimensions of legal awareness examined, legal knowledge and legal attitudes are the most dominant and significant predictors. Students' levels of legal awareness and compliance with digital copyright laws remain in the moderate category, with legal knowledge being the weakest dimension. This situation highlights the need for systemic interventions, such as strengthening copyright legal literacy within the university environment, improving access to licensed academic resources, and fostering a culture of respecting intellectual property. This study has several limitations. First, the use of a cross-sectional design limits the ability to definitively establish causality. Second, the sample, which was limited to three public universities, may not be fully representative of the entire Indonesian student population. Third, self-report measures are susceptible to social desirability bias. For future research, it is recommended to use a longitudinal design, expand the scope of institutions, and integrate methods of observing actual behavior as a form of data triangulation.

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