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## **Ethical Issues in the Utilization of Instructional Materials with Multimedia Contents: A Literature Review**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Digital technology has had a profound impact on education, with the widespread use of digital objects leading to a shift in traditional teaching methods. However, the use of multimedia content in instructional materials is often made without considering laws and ethical guidelines, such as copyright laws and fair use. This results in a lack of enforcement of these regulations, leaving the responsibility of compliance with the laws to the instructors, students, and government. This literature review article focuses on the use of instructional materials in education and the related legal concerns surrounding copyright infringement. The use of media such as texts, images, video clips, animations, sound, and music are widely utilized by teachers to facilitate creative thinking, innovativeness, and participatory learning. However, the creation of these instructional materials often involves sourcing materials from the internet, which raises questions about the legality of using copyrighted material. The article concludes that the use of copyrighted material as educational tools must be done within the bounds of the law, taking into consideration the purpose of use, nature of the work, substantial portion used, and its effect on the general public. This literature review serves as a guide for educators and researchers in ensuring the legality of their use of instructional materials.

**Keywords:** ethics, copyright, instruction, multimedia contents

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### **1. Introduction**

Education changed the world the same way the world changed education. Dating early in 1991, the public availability of the internet and its mass use in the field of communications, careers, and consumerism, has caused the exponential growth and visibility of digital objects, leading these things to interweave with our lives and how we live it (Grand-Clement, 2017). From personal finances, global economies, political engagement, and social involvement, the pervasive and ubiquitous digital technology has continued to transform the way we utilize information and grasp the concept of digitalization as a source of opportunities and innovation for journalism, social networking, and global businesses (Sueres, 2016).

The terrain that is our educational systems is a domain familiar with the changes that digital technology offered and continues to offer. The penetration of digital things to the process of learning has not only shifted the attention from traditional teaching methods, but also permeated the body that governs its laws and ethical guidelines (Grand-Clement, 2017). With international and national laws targeted to maintain the fair share of digitally-retrieved information placed in instructional materials, multimedia contents are expected to be distributed with accordance to laws and ethical guidelines (Lakhan & Khurana, 2008). However, in some cases, this requirement is often overlooked in various ways, whether intentional or not.

To judge if something is ethical, it must be lawful. The determination of whether multimedia contents in instructional materials are contrary to or are consistent with the laws are in the hands on the instructors, the students, the academe, and the government, alongside the responsibility to enforce copyright law and handle disputes (Neill, 2018). But with such a colossal number of materials created in a day within a country, investigations covering these violations and the application of the just apprehension, are reduced to actions so minimal and ineffective, like warning notices, that everyone in education became lenient and careless.

Some instructional materials that are often filled with multimedia content are PowerPoint presentations, audio-visual presentations, music, display of images, and even printed materials containing both text and visuals. PowerPoint presentations alone are notorious as instructional material often made interesting and appealing by the inclusion of multimedia objects (Krizo, 2017). Presenters are encouraged to show little text, and fill the empty spaces in their slides with images, clip-arts, and other visual objects associated with the topic under the slide (Culver, 2016). In other cases, PowerPoint presentations can be inserted with video files and audio records to add more cohesion to the discussion. While all these makeup for a visually-powerful presentation, the process of placing these multimedia items on the slides is made without consulting copyright laws and fair use that regulate this matter.

Some academic activities require the viewing of films. While most institutions have a large reservoir of educational movies, documentaries and the like, others, especially underfunded public schools, rely on the good faith of teachers or students who own copies of these films to shoulder the responsibility of providing the class with these resources (Berk, 2009). However, the conflict in this situation is to identify whether the films were legally purchased or

illegally downloaded, and unfortunately, it is usually the latter (Doctorow, 2011). Understandably, we can empathize with the financial incapacity to buy said films, but we also can't afford to compromise the rights of the people who created, promoted, and distributed the films.

### ***1.1 The Doctrine of Fair Use***

A doctrine is a brand of knowledge concerned with systems of beliefs or bodies of teachings formed to describe common laws and traditions of people (Articulo, 2005). In the laws on copyright, the fair use doctrine embodies exceptions to the copyright laws that apply to education in the digital realm.

The fair use doctrine has an open-ended structure that allows the system to be flexible enough to surmount conflicts that the infringement exceptions could not resolve. While this provides the opportunity and protection to educational use that did not expect the emergence of newer technologies, it frustrates educational systems that are compelled to supply its learners, librarians, educators, and students with well-founded and coherent rules for the legal use of copyrighted works (Fisher, 2009).

The provisions of Section 107 of the Copyright Act of the U.S., codified in 1976, state that the use of copyrighted work is not considered to be an infringement of copyright if the purpose of the use is for teaching, research, scholarships, news, and criticisms (USCO, 2016).

### ***1.2 Exceptions in Classroom Use***

Moraes (2019) discussed Section 110 of the Copyright Act, which states that the display of a work – audiovisual, images, and motion pictures – as well as a performance, is exempted from any copyright liability if said activities were done in a face-to-face classroom setting or in any place devoted to instruction. However, digital learning is an exception to classroom use exception. Outside traditional forms of teaching in a face-to-face setting, the classroom use exception bears no effect, therefore, digital learning even if considered extracurricular, is not exempted from copyright liability.

According to Fisher (2009), the immunity of teachers to being liable in displaying copyrighted materials gives them the prerogative of using a work as instructional material without the pressure of violating laws. However, this immunization does not cover reproduction rights. Incidental reproduction is common in digital platforms of learning, the most prominent example being when teachers insert an image in their PowerPoint presentations or other related materials. Under the doctrine of fair use, reproduction rights are protected, however, what would limit the effectiveness of classroom use exception is the omission of rights that were designed to uphold copyright laws.

Teachers are also allowed to show a copy of a film that was 'lawfully made'. However, if the copy was retrieved using unlawful methods, or any forbidden circumvention of laws like bypassing encryption in DVDs to create multiple copies, the protection provided by the classroom use exception is eradicated from the case (DMLP, 2019). Thus, the benefits of Section 110 do not apply to educational use made possible by circumventing laws and reproducing copyrighted content.

To address realities in technological transformations in education, the Congress of the U.S. proposed the Technology, Education, and Copyright Harmonization Act of 2001 or the TEACH Act. The TEACH Act repealed the earlier version of Section 110 and now offers more benefits and advantages to teachers. These include the permission to display almost all types of works, expansion of transmission locations, storage of transmitted content that was originally limited to educational institutions only, and the digitalization of analog works to facilitate digital transmissions (Peters, 2001). However, if the teacher fails to comply with the rigid requirements of the laws, these benefits remain unavailable. TEACH Act also requires accreditation of a non-profit institution, the institution of copyright policies in schools, a notice to students that instructional materials presented to them may be subject to copyright protection, and that digital information can only be transmitted from and to officially enrolled students in a course (Crews, 2003).

### ***1.3 Exceptions in Archives and Libraries***

Section 108 of the Copyright Act states the exceptions to copyright liability to ensure that archives and libraries can continue operating with their objectives of preserving content and transforming those content into accessible pieces to the public who needs it. For the purpose of replacing a lost or damaged copy or copies of a work, a library or archive has the right to make a limited number of copies. However, the law was discussed to be in need of amendment for there are sections that needed to be updated, particularly with defining qualified libraries and archives, the risk of loss in duplicated digital content, limitations on the allowed number of copies, and issued concerned in preserving web pages and sites (Fisher, 2009).

### ***1.4 RA 8293: Intellectual Property Code of The Philippines and its Role in Education***

From texts, images, video clips, animations, sound and music, all these types of media are used either individually or collectively to represent topics in class discussions, which teachers use fondly to facilitate creative thinking, innovativeness, and participatory learning (School, 2012). To allow this, teachers use a variety of methods such as PowerPoint presentations and audiovisual presentations. But the process of creating these instructional materials requires the sourcing of images, texts, video clips, and more, from, more frequently than not, the internet (Vaughan, 2010).

The questions surrounding the creation of these instructional materials begs the idea of legal means: is it lawfully acceptable to search, save, and use and image retrieved from the Google search engine, and use it in a PowerPoint, a blackboard display, or an accompanying image to a researched text that was also retrieved from the internet? In lectures, when discussing the public works of an investigator, is it fair for the creator? Is it legal to use a circulating copy of a film online, with no obvious legal binding, to show it to a class for academic purposes?

Under the Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines, the Copyright is granted automatically, at the moment of a work's inception, to the original author of the work, covering films, writings, visual arts, and computer programs. While the copyright is indeed for the protection of the creator, it is emphasized that the intellectual property system needs to be balanced in the interests of the owners of the intellectual property, and the general public who use it (IPOPIL, 2019).

To simply discuss what the copyright allows in the daily use of ordinary Filipinos if we use an original song by Jose Mari Chan for our Christmas caroling performance and did not pressure him into paying for him to see us perform, it is considered fair use. When reporting in front of a class, giving a speech, or even a eulogy, and we quote a famous person and gave credit to him or her in our delivery, that is fair use.

To further examine the use of copyrighted material as educational tools, an example of using films as educational material would be necessary, for it is one of the most prominent and most used forms of instructional material with copyrighted content that has a complex relationship with the laws, and exceptions to the exceptions, unlike typical PowerPoint presentations. To illustrate, a teacher, in good faith and intention showed a historical sequence to his students, and purchased an original DVD copy of a historical film, since their school does not own one. Is the teacher in violation of the intellectual property code for showing a film to his students?

Section 185 of RA 8293 states that the fair use of copyrighted material for classroom use, research, and any similar purpose, is not a copyright infringement. Determining the fair use of copyrighted materials includes several factors such as the identification of the purpose such as its commercial use, the nature of the copyrighted work, the substantial portion used in the wholeness of work, and its effect upon the general public (Acosta, 2016). Thus, if the teacher had used the films to generate profit or did not credit the creator and claimed the movie as his own, it is an infringement of copyright.

#### ***1.4.1 Copyrightable Materials***

Original intellectual works under the domain of artistry and literature are considered copyrightable materials. Works under these domains include books, periodicals, newspapers; dissertations; musical compositions; choreography; painting; design models; illustrations, maps; audiovisual and cinematographic works; pictorials; computer programs; and other analogous artistic and literary works. Derivative works are also protected as long as it has no effect on the copyright of original works. These include translation, adaptation, abridgment, arrangement, dramatization; literary and scholarly collection; data compilations; and other analogous derivative materials (Federis, 2019).

#### ***1.4.2 Works not covered by the Copyright Law***

Not everything that is considered to be artistic and literary has automatic grants of copyright. The following are excluded from the copyright law: idea, concept, principle, or mere data, even if it is explained, expressed, or embodied in a work; news of a day containing characterizations of items of the press; legislative, administrative, and legal texts; Philippine Government work, unless approved; and rules and regulations, speeches, dissertation, etc., read on the court for deliberative assemblies (Robles, 2019).

#### ***1.4.3 Constitution of Copyright Infringement***

When there is a violation of any of the moral and economic rights exclusive to the copyright owner only, this is copyright infringement. The IP Code also makes a person who possesses an article that he knows or is supposed to know, liable to copyright infringement if the work has been sold, loaned, traded; distributed; and exhibited to the public.

#### ***1.4.4 Fair use of Copyrighted Material***

In the IP Code, it is considered to be a fair use of copyrighted work if the purpose is for news reporting, criticism, or teaching – including the use of multiple copies for use in classrooms, research, and similar purposes that are not liable to copyright infringement. The reproduction of the code constituting the operability and independence of a computer program is also considered as fair use (Acosta, 2016).

#### ***1.4.5 Optical Media Act of 2003 in the Philippines***

According to Aumento IP Law Firm (2018), RA 9293 or the Optical Media Act of 2003 is an act dedicated to the regulation of optical media. It is also concerned with the organization of the videogram regulatory board's purpose, and the provision of penalties to those who violate the law.

Section 3.I defines optical media as any medium of device that has the capacity to store information including software codes, sounds and video clips, that has been remastered and replicated for the purpose of storage and is only accessible through exposure to lens scanning or laser.

As declared in section 2, optical media is regulated by the state including its importation and exportation; replication; manufacturing; and mastering, performed in such ways that are unregulated by the law.

The Optical Media Act is another special act that protects copyright owners of their rights over their audiovisual works. If any of the unregulated acts mentioned above were performed and then displayed in educational settings, the violator will be penalized depending on the nature of the violation.

## 2. Literature Review of Works Related to Copyright and Fair Use in Education

There are prior studies related to the examination of copyright and fair use in various disciplines, particularly in art and literature, but there is very little number concerned specifically for copyrighted materials used in instructional materials and education as an entirety. Most of these related works are analyzed under the copyright law of the United States. Other cases concerning the interests of the Filipino public, whether as an international discussion or national case of copyright liability in education.

In their study entitled "Intellectual property, copyright, and fair use in education", Lakhan and Khurana (2008) extensively examined the copyright law of the U.S., discussing its inherent powers, purposes, limits, inclusion, and exclusions, exceptions, exceptions to the exceptions and penalties and liabilities to be faced by violators.

All these sections and faculties of the copyright law were applied in the settings of education, where there are definitions provided for classroom setting, distance learning, and digital modes of education. All these parts were analyzed with given examples to identify the copyright laws applicable in discerning whether an act labeled for academic purposes is or isn't an infringement of copyright.

Earlier sections of the study also gave light on the fair use of copyrighted materials used by libraries and students, which are closely similar to the earlier discussions on library and archive use exceptions in this paper. A case of the lawsuit was also presented in this section when rock band Metallica sued Yale University and the University of Southern California for allowing music to be obtained free of charge from a website called 'Napster' (Bay, 2001). This is only one of the examples where the researchers emphasized that the responsibility of educating students with adherence to the Intellectual Property Code, is in the hands on the libraries that serve to preserve these contents. According to the researchers, since it is clear that neither the teachers nor students have a profound understanding of intellectual property and fair use, it is the responsibility of the libraries to act as a mediator of contents and provide guidance to users of these contents.

The researchers also discussed the roles that students play in copyright law, most especially in cases where they obtain information from the internet. The concept of 'plagiarism' and 'copyright infringement' were considered to be of the same equal meaning by the researchers. In this sense, what is often considered plagiarism by teachers, when students copy and paste texts from the internet, is translatable to the legal liability of copyright infringement.

In another article written by the same researchers, Lakhan and Khuran (2007) wrote about the importance of the school's role in the education of copyright law and infringement. This, they argued, must be done in a way that preserves the interests of the educational institution by striking a balance between inculcating the knowledge among teachers in students, and preserving the educational system's integrity.

To establish the effect of copyright law on writers and the application of their works in educational institutions, the researchers provided a case study called "Stanford vs. James Joyce". The facts of the case discuss Carol Shloss, a Stanford University English professor who filed a case against the estate of James Joyce. Shloss found difficulty in citing references to Joyce's works, which were supposed to be included in her own book. Shloss argued that the materials were used in a transformative manner which means that not only is there an added value to the material, but there was also new information included in the original work. Shloss won the right to the material and has now permission to access other works by James Joyce online. Another example of using original materials in a transformative manner will also be discussed in the latter part of this section.

Lakhan and Khuran (2008) concluded their paper with a statement that seeks to provide a clearer meaning of copyright law within educational institutions. They emphasized the need for awareness of the law, which should be the responsibility of the people and institutions who have the authority to control original content.

In another study conducted by a Professor of Intellectual Property Law at Harvard Law School (Fisher, 2009) entitled "The Digital Learning Challenge: Obstacles to Educational Uses of Copyrighted Material in the Digital Age", the researcher discussed various subjects about copyright law in the U.S., other non-U.S. Countries and their implications and ramifications to the educational system.

The study was divided into three main parts. The first part is an overview of digital learning and how it is creating the pressure and need to update various sections of the copyright law of the U.S., and an examination of the U.S. copyright law, its limits, exceptions, and other similar legal acts concerned with the use of content in various medium of instruction.

The first part also provided summaries of four case studies involved in the educational use of copyrighted material. The first case study is concerned with the exceptions in classroom use and the immunity of teachers from copyright liability, as long as the materials presented were obtained in legal means. The second case study analyzed the use of DVDs as instructional materials, as the ways in which the freedom from copyright liability can be revoked with the circumvention of DVD encryption. It also discussed the interference of U.S. agencies with the educational use of films. The third case study discusses the databases for American music, that are applied in instructional materials or are allowed for students to access freely. The researcher argued in this section that the copyright law has provisions that burden the educational use of music. Lastly, the final case study was used to enumerate and change assumptions in technology, particularly its use in education. All these cases were vital in establishing the role of copyright law in educational use and discussing areas that need provisions and updating.

Part two of the paper was dedicated to presenting the obstacles to digital learning including the uncertainty of the copyright law in digital learning; DRM technology which involves piracy, pricing, and purpose; the process of rights clearance which includes the determination of whether a license is necessary; and gatekeepers such as libraries, insurers, and universities.

In the final part of the paper, Fisher (2009), provided an earnest declaration of the need to reform the definitions and limits of the law to include new settings and ordeals in education in the digital age and to widen the scope of exceptions to limit copyright liability.

In the Philippines, studies in copyright law do not specifically target the use of copyrightable materials in instruction. Most of the studies that are accessible today are focused on the copyright law of the U.S. However, there was a case in which the library of the University of the Philippines Diliman was featured after suing Google in 2005 for copyright infringement. The case began with Google's Library project in which traditionally published books all over the world were digitized, including those in the mentioned university. This case also thrived on the idea of copyright use in a transformative manner, which Google argued, falls under the fair use doctrine of the U.S. Copyright Law.

Google's Digital Library can also be used as instructional material, especially on web-based learning. But the site only allows users to view snippets of texts, and the rest are blocked, to ensure that the protection of the creator is still protected.

In an article seeking legal advice on copyright law, Acosta (2016) discussed the sections of RA 8293 of the Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines, to dismantle the fair use of copyrighted films for academic purposes. She initially defined what is considered to be an audiovisual work as stated in Section 171.6, then moved to define who are the rightful owners of films and their economic and moral rights over them as stated in Section 178.5. She concluded the article by saying that the display of films if for the purpose deemed academic and instructional, is not an infringement to copyright.

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### 3. Conclusions

This paper has presented various ways in which students and teachers overlook copyright laws when creating instructional materials. There is also minimal recorded related literature in the Philippines, examining the background of U.S. Copyright Law, which has similar copyright laws to the Philippines, which has served as the opportunity to explore works that examined the application of copyright and fair use guidelines in education.

This study is only limited to the jurisdiction of Philippine copyright laws and there is no objective of reforming laws and updating provisions in the laws in this study, it is only suggested. Further studies are recommended to find participants and use methods of gathering data, to view the problem from various dimensions.

It is highly recommended that studies like these should pursue in creating guidelines and educational awareness of copyright laws. Certain sections of the copyright law pertaining to the insertion of copyrighted content into instructional materials should be written in vernacular, available in digital and physical form, like a pamphlet or booklet, and must have a version translated into Filipino.

The education that we have today is not merely an act participated by a student and a teacher, but rather an educator and a learner, and a teacher and student could be either or both. Instructional materials are tools in which the learner and educator connect, materials in which multimedia content can be applied to make lessons more innovative and creative. It is a duty as learners, to learn the copyright law and concepts of fair use; and as educators, it is a duty to ensure that others can learn them too.

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