

Electronic information resources in Arab intellectual property rights legislation and laws: an exploratory study

Research – Summary

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Abstract

This research paper aims to explore the extent to which intellectual property laws in Arab countries include provisions related to electronic and Internet-published information sources. The study seeks to identify the availability of intellectual property protection laws and whether these laws have been updated to cover new forms of electronic information sources.

The study's findings reveal that there are intellectual property laws in 17 Arab countries. All these laws include provisions on computer programs, but only five laws address databases as an electronic information source. Moreover, all the intellectual property laws in Arab countries have overlooked provisions regarding electronic information sources published on the Internet.

Keywords

Electronic resources, law and legislation, Arab countries

1. Methodology

1.1. Study Objectives

The primary aim of this study is to examine the Arab legislation and laws related to intellectual property to determine their coverage of intellectual property rights in the digital age, where electronic information sources are prevalent. The study seeks to understand how well Arab laws cover modern information sources, such as electronic sources and internet-published materials. The study also aims to achieve several secondary objectives, which include:

1. Identifying intellectual property legislation issued in the Arab world.
2. Exploring the extent to which intellectual property laws in 10 Arab countries cover electronic and internet-published information sources.
3. Identifying the strengths and weaknesses of Arab legislation.

1.2. Study Questions

1. How prevalent are intellectual property protection laws in Arab countries?
2. To what extent are Arab laws updated, and how well do they keep up with modern technological developments in the field of information publishing and broadcasting?
3. Do Arab legislations cover electronic information sources and internet-published materials?

1.3. Scope of the Study

The study covers the topic of intellectual property and its related legislation and laws. The theoretical aspect includes defining intellectual property and reviewing the legislation issued in ten Arab countries. The study focuses on the legislation in the following ten countries: Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Tunisia, Qatar, Morocco, Jordan, the Sultanate of Oman, Yemen, and Sudan.

1.4. Study Methodology

The study primarily employs a survey methodology to examine the intellectual property rights legislation in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Tunisia, as well as international agreements and legislations.

4. Findings and recommendations

4.1. Results

The study produced the following key findings:

1. **Modernization of Intellectual Property Laws:** Most Arab countries have shown a commitment to modernizing their intellectual property laws. Out of the 17 laws reviewed, 10 were enacted after the year 2000, and 4 were issued in the 1990s.
2. **Recent Legislation:** Yemen has the most recent intellectual property rights law, issued in 2012.
3. **Outdated Legislation:** Libya has the oldest intellectual property rights law among Arab countries, with no updates since its enactment in 1968.
4. **Protection of Computer Programs:** All ten laws analyzed include provisions for protecting computer programs as information sources.
5. **Database Protection:** Only 5 out of the 10 laws cover databases as protected information sources. These countries are Egypt, Morocco, the Sultanate of Oman, Yemen, and Sudan. In contrast, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Tunisia, and Jordan do not provide such coverage.
6. **Internet Publishing:** None of the Arab laws reviewed include provisions for protecting intellectual property rights for information published on the Internet.

4.2. Recommendations

1. **Amendment of Laws:** The study recommends amending intellectual property rights laws in Arab countries to encompass modern forms of publishing and broadcasting information.
2. **Internet Protection:** It is recommended to include internet-published information sources in the works subject to copyright protection.
3. **Education and Awareness:** The study suggests educating researchers and intellectuals about digital publishing on the Internet to enrich Arabic digital content. This initiative should be preceded by the implementation of laws and legislation that protect the materials they publish, keeping pace with technological advancements.