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## The Significant of Information Ethics among Student in Malaysian

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**Abstract** In this global area, information are very easy to be access everywhere and anytime because of the internet. Not only that, in this global area which is information been uploaded every second and very fast to be reach on what we want to do. Most of it based on research that been conducted by professional people who have done many kind of research in their lives. But there are also have certain of people who updated the information based on their opinion and what they think are valuable for them but not for anyone. So information ethics are very important especially student who use information every day in their lives. On this research paper, it will reveal what are information ethics and also the justification about the variables that could affect the importance of information ethics among university students. This study helps providing the importance of information ethics in term of student's privacy of information and intellectual property that is one of factor that contribute to the ethical behavior issues. A few recommendations for future research to observe and investigate what could be done in order to raise more awareness especially to young adults in high school who have different knowledge about information ethics compared to this study's respondents which are only undergraduate's students.

**Keywords** Information Ethics, Privacy of information, Intellectual Property

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### Introduction

This chapter will introduce the overview about the research topic. In this chapter, the researcher will include the statement of the problems, objectives of the research, research questions, and significance of the research in order to explain the background of the research topic. The operational of terms that will be use in this research will also be highlight in this chapter later. This chapter also, will measure on the importance of information ethics among students in university. Through this chapter also, there will be background of this study and the problem statement which consists of the need of this study to be done regard to the student's ethics towards information. There are also purposes of the study which highlighted and focus on the main purpose of this study. This also chapter explains on the three research objectives and research questions of this study that narrow down the focus of the study. The scope of this study will be among the education sectors specifically will focus on the undergraduate students university consists four very important fields that been picked. Lastly, in this chapter, it will talks on the significance of this study. The significance study will enhance the understanding student's attitudes towards information ethics within Uitm, the institutions will know more about their student ethics level and can encounter the issues emerged regarding to information privacy, accuracy, property and accessibility.

### Background of the Study

Nowadays, information has become important component of life because it equips people in various situations. Information ethics has been described as "the branch of ethics that emphasizes on the relationship between the creation, organization, dissemination, and use of information, and the ethical standards and moral codes governing human conduct in society". Similarly, information ethics encompass the ethical issues that are



associated with the development and application of IT [1]. It has been intensely inspected in information science for over twenty years. Some of the first, more recent definitions were created in the nineteen eighties. Information ethics covenants with the moral behavior of information-users based on their responsibility and their accountability. Essentially, information ethics in information science has inclined to grow out of the ethics of librarianship. Nonetheless media and press ethics, computer and Internet ethics, and moreover the ethics of governance and business concern themselves with, amongst other issues, most of the same ground as the ethics of librarianship. Over the past few decades, high educations have been moving increasingly to utilize the information for various aspects in education area. Information ethics are extremely vital in education institutions. It is not only essential component of student and workplace performance in information but also critical factors in knowledge society. Ethics and education are the two sides of the same coin and are complementary to each other. Education without ethics is nothing but directionless learning and to developed right ethics, education essential. The sole purpose of education lies in the enlightenment of mind that gives an ability to choose between moral and immoral ways. With proper education and good ethical values, all the colors of our society can be merged to paint a dynamic and powerful country which can face any challenge for completion of task as well as fulfillment of duty unconditionally from infrastructure to healthcare. Information ethics inside an institution can offer many advantages. However, in this area ethical philosophy can affect the institutions in numerous ways involving its reputation, efficiency, privacy of the organization. These ethics and moral challenges arise in education sectors because electronic environments afford new types of actions that may require new moral codes, such as copying software and hacking. Yet, they also arise in part because certain types of immoral actions, such as plagiarism and invasions of privacy, are easier to perform in electronic settings, as well as harder to detect or control. Therefore, academic institutions have to actively monitor their student's behaviors.

### **Problem Statement**

Information ethics deals with the respect given to information when it is generated, processed, transferred, and most importantly, when it is used. With the pervasiveness of information technology (IT) in business and everyday life, one can expect that the frequency and complexity of information ethical problems will only increase [2]. According to Beale [3], the ideal development of ethics in higher education would be to guide student development of ethical behaviors towards information. The education of information ethics should starts begin in university because in the future students are more ready to encounter with the wider and huge issues. Thus, activities regarding information should be conducted ethically and morally so that there no such things like misuse of the information. At present, the Internet has taken over the role of the main information provider especially among the young generations, especially students, changing their perspective and attitude towards academic institutions greatly. Due to this internet exposure, students in university tends to easily commit to unethical behavior with the main reason in order to complete the task given to them. The emergence of information technology has also brought challenges towards education institution such as university and made their job much more challenging than before. Over the years, similarly, the misuse of information and unethical behavior towards information have caused significant losses to businesses and societies [4].

In this study, the problems that occur is the lack of information ethics behavior among students in Uitm Puncak Perdana. The students are increasingly making use of information to resolve their daily task or assignment however they did unethically. The issues arise when the lack of information ethics education were given to student in higher level particularly in university that lead to the misuse of information such as unprotected information access, plagiarism others work and expose to the unfiltered information. What can be discover from these dilemmas is that they are all elements of the issues of information ethics for example issues of information privacy, accuracy, intellectual property and access. The aim for this research is to determine the importance of information ethics in Uitm. By uncovering the student's attitudes towards information ethics within Uitm Puncak Perdana, the institutions will know more about their student ethics level and can encounter the issues emerged regarding to information privacy, accuracy, property and accessibility. This paper highlights the importance factors influence student's information ethics and gives an overview of the various aspects of the subject taught at various institutions particularly university. Uitm Puncak Perdana will also know the importance



of implementing information ethics to students as it can increase their awareness towards sense of ethics. Additionally, increasing the awareness of information ethics may produce students who are more ethically and morally, which may result in greater utilization of information to avoid misuse of information.

### **Information Ethics**

Basically, ethical theories that define what right actions and wrong actions people may take under different circumstances (also reflected in teleology and deontology) are generally accommodated under four widely known theories: consequence-based theories, duty-based theories, rights-based theories and virtue-based theories [5].

Information ethics refer to the discipline dealing with what is good or bad and with moral duty and obligation. From these definitions, ethics seems to primarily focus on the norms and standards of behavior of individuals or groups within a society based on normative conduct and moral to share, store, protect and retrieve the information ethically can be the advantage improve in today's education environment. Management of information ethics is more concerned with the security, accuracy, completeness and timeliness of multiple pieces of data. In recent years, "Information Ethics" (IE) has come to mean different things to different researchers working in a variety of disciplines, including computer ethics, business ethics, medical ethics, computer science, the philosophy of information, social epistemology and library and information science. Its deal with the moral beliefs of right and wrong intention that leads to individual's ethically or unethically behavior. The question of 'right' and 'wrong' has been troubling human beings for centuries. Almost every man or woman faces a moral dilemma of determining what is 'right' and what is 'wrong' in their everyday life [6]. Ethics examines the rational justification for our moral judgments; it studies what is morally right and wrong, just or unjust. Today information ethics encompasses a wide range of issues involving the creation, acquisition, organization, management, translation, duplication, storage, retrieval, and any other processes involving printed or digital texts, graphics, voice, and video. Information ethics can address any issue relating to the Information Society or the Knowledge Economy. As a field of applied ethics, it draws upon historical and philosophical insights [7] in order to describe current problems such as bridging the digital divide and to craft normative solutions for personal and professional conduct and for public policy [8]. In addition, its important to know how to utilize information in a ethically and legally ways in order one person to being an information literate individual. With all the information that is available online and in digital format, it is all too easy to use other people's work and calls it ours own. Information ethics stems from practical challenges and issues arising from the impact of IT on contemporary society. Moreover, information in the institutions particularly education for all around the world rapidly growth each year and lead to globalization. Over the years, the misuse of and unethical behavior towards Information system have caused significant losses to businesses and societies [4].

### **Research Methodology**

Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem. It may be understood as a science of studying how research is done scientifically. There are various steps that are generally adopted by researcher in conducting research in line to examine the research problem along with the logic behind it. It is necessary for the researcher to know not only the research methods or techniques but also the methodology. In this chapter, the method used to conduct this research will be discussed. This chapter briefly explains the methodology used in conducting this research, which is the research approach, research design, and type of the research. There will be the research conceptual framework that shows the relationships between the independent variables: privacy of information and intellectual property and dependent variables: information ethics.

### **Findings**

#### **Demographic profile of the respondent**

Table 1: below summarized the background profile of the respondent. The key demographic variables for this study consists four areas been discussed which are the respondent's gender, age, programmers and also semester.



**Table 1:** Respondent's Demographic Information

Demographic Variables	Measures	Frequencies	Percentages (%)
<b>Gender</b>	Male	21	35.0
	Female	39	65.0
<b>Age</b>	Between 18 – 20	12	20.0
	Between 21 – 25	45	75.0
	26 and above	32	5.0
<b>Programmes</b>	IM244	7	11.7
	IM245	12	20.0
	IM246	19	31.7
	IM245	22	36.7
<b>Semester</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> semester	5	8.3
	2 <sup>nd</sup> semester	6	10.0
	3 <sup>rd</sup> semester	19	31.7
	4 <sup>th</sup> semester	4	6.7
	5 <sup>th</sup> semester	18	30.0
	6 <sup>th</sup> semester	8	13.3

### Descriptive Analysis of the research variables

This study has developed three factors that represent as the variables in measuring the importance of information ethics among students that consist of information ethics, privacy of information and intellectual property. Then, calculation of the mean value of each variable through the descriptive analysis exercises within this section, researcher will discuss the descriptive statistics of the research sample. According to Sekaran [9] the descriptive statistics is the statistics that describe the phenomena of interest and also show how variables were relate to one another, no matter there are differences between two (2) or more groups and the like. The statistics can be presented in various formats that allow the better understanding of the results of the study. Within this study, the use of table to represent the descriptive profiles of the research variables.

**Table 2:** Descriptive profile of Intellectual Property

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid (C1)	Strong Disagree (1)	1	1.7	1.7	1.7
	Disagree (2)	2	3.3	3.3	5.0
	Neutral (3)	8	13.3	13.3	18.3
	Agree (4)	15	25.0	25.0	43.3
	Strongly Agree (5)	34	56.7	56.7	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	
Valid (C2)	Strong Disagree (1)	2	3.3	3.3	3.3
	Disagree (2)	1	1.7	1.7	5.0
	Neutral (3)	8	13.3	13.3	18.3
	Agree (4)	23	38.3	38.3	56.7
	Strongly Agree (5)	26	43.3	43.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	
Valid (C3)	Strong Disagree (1)	2	3.3	3.3	3.3
	Disagree (2)	4	6.7	6.7	10.0
	Neutral (3)	13	21.7	21.7	31.7
	Agree (4)	21	35.0	35.0	66.7
	Strongly Agree (5)	20	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

Table 2: depicts the variable of intellectual property in section C. For this variable, there are seventeen questions available and the results been chose by the respondents at the likert scale is from all the given choices, which is 1-5 (strongly disagree strongly agree). For question C1 the highest percentage in this questions is the scale of 5 with 34 respondents (56.7%), followed by 4 with 15 (25.0%), 3 with 8 (13.3%), and 2 with 2 respondents (3.3%). C2 in the meantime, have five varies scale used by the respondents with the highest of them all is 5 with 26 (43.3%), trailed behind is the scale of 4 with 23 respondents (38.3%), 3 with 8 (13.3%), 1



with 2 (3.3%) and lastly 2 with only 1 respondent (1.7%). Next question is, C3 with the highest percentage is the scale of 4 with 65 (35.0%), 5 with 20 (33.3%), 3 with 13 (21.7%), 2 with 4 (6.7%), and 1 with 2 respondent (3.3%). C3 on the other hand shows that majority of the respondents agreed on the scale of 3 in this question with 20 respondents (33.3%) followed by 4 with 19 (31.7%), 5 with 11 respondents (18.3%), 2 with 7 respondents (11.7%), and 1 with only 3 respondents (5.0%). C3 shows the highest percentages is scale 4 with 24 respondents (40.0%), trailed by scale 5 with 17 respondents (28.3%), 3 with 13 respondents (21.7%) and the other scale 1-2 with 3 respondents (5.0%). For C2 question, the highest percentages is scale 3 with 19 respondents (31.7%), 2 with 15 respondents (25.0%), 4 with 14 respondents (23.3%), 1 with 10 respondents (16.7%), and 5 with 2 respondents (3.3%). As can be seen, for C3 the highest percentages is scale 4 with 26 respondents (43.3%) and the lower is 2 with 2 respondents (3.3%). While, the question of C3 the results is that majority of the respondents chose is 4 with 26 (43.3%), trailed by the scale of 3 with 20 respondents (33.3%), 5 with 9 respondents (15%), 1 with 3 respondents (5.0%) and 2 with 2 (3.3%). Question recorded the majority of respondent choose agree with 28 (46.7%) and the least is disagree with only 1 respondents (1.7%). C3 questions meanwhile most respondents chose 4 and 5 with 18 respondents agree on that options (30.0%), trailed by 3 with 16 (26.7%), and 1-2 with only 4 respondents (6.7%).

**Table 3:** Descriptive statistic of Intellectual Property

S. No.	Questions	Descriptive Statistics			
		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
1	I will violate the copyright for academic purposes	60	3.22	1.059	1.122
2	I did unauthorized sharing of violate information with others	60	2.92	0.979	0.959
3	I give honor to intellectual property right of others	60	3.62	0.976	0.952
4	I am not give credits to owner of information that I access	60			
5	I respects the creator of the information by citation the resources	60	3.75	1.052	1.106
6	I felt unfair to the owner if I use their information without giving credit	60	3.73	0.972	0.945
7.	I will reproduce the existing information and claimed its mine	60	2.75	2.064	4.258
8.	I will cite the work of others whenever appropriate	60	3.27	1.148	1.318
9.	I used to give copy of my work to other students	60	3.00	1.074	1.153
10.	I used to copy other students works	60	2.67	1.100	1.209
11.	I used to do copying and pasting essay from internet and submitting it as my own	60	2.95	1.760	3.099
12.	I used to changing a few words of a paragraph copied and pasted from internet, so that the material does not have to be cited	59	3.02	1.106	1.224
13.	I used to changing few synonym words, so that the resources does not have to be cited	60	3.17	1.137	1.294
14.	I have illegal copied original software instead of buying it	60	3.32	1.066	1.135
15.	I have illegal copied original software instead of buying it	60	3.50	1.081	1.169
16.	I felt guilty if I download a private software	60	3.42	1.062	1.129
17.	I did unauthorized sharing of original software with others	60	3.23	1.110	1.233

### Recommendations

From the findings of this study and the knowledge obtained from reviewing past research, there are several recommendation that could be made through this research where all of the recommendation could be applied by education sectors or its also could help to improve their ethics towards information. From the current research findings, and data that has been analyzed in the previous chapters it has been found that most of the respondents are aware about the information ethics, the importance of it, and respect the creator of information. This study also recommends necessary policy measures to be taken by the higher learning institutions including UiTM to take an action seriously regarding to students ethics while they seek for information to prevent unnecessary issues occurs. Educating young people with some knowledge on



importance of information ethics would help increase their level of awareness and also perceptions on their behavior itself. Further investigation and experimentation into cybercrime for different types of population is strongly recommended. In addition, since the majority of the UiTM Puncak Perdana students are Muslims, teaching ethics from an Islamic perspective, as recommended is expected to contribute to the development of appropriate information ethical attitudes of students. With this in mind, some recommendations are made up to help information ethics become one of importance aspects that should be considered especially in education sectors. The recommendation was:

- i. Conduct rigorous research to better understanding of information ethics aspect;
- ii. Reflect on, critique and argue perspectives on key issues in information ethics with reference to a range of academic sources;
- iii. Exhibit specialized knowledge of current and emerging topics in information ethics in a class that features appropriate communication tools;
- iv. Enhancing the implementation of university policies, standards and process towards information ethics
- v. Conceptualize and debate ethical issues associated with information in the interests of balancing individual and public good;

### Conclusion

In conclusion, this study proven that the importance of information ethics among the UITM students and how they react and their level of awareness in the matter. With the pervasiveness of IT in business and everyday life, its undeniable the importance of information ethical do influence students on their privacy of information and intellectual property can only be expected to increase in frequency and complexity. Based on the above variables that have been tested, majority all of them agreed that there is definitely importance to always respect the information while accessing information either online or not. Similarly, with the increased use of computer and information technology it is important to strengthen the awareness of information ethics among students and universities can play vital role in generating awareness of ethical issues in the use of information technology (Brey, 2007). From the result presented are clearly and specifically address each research question. This study revealed that students are generally sensitive to the ethically of information privacy protection but unethically of unauthorized access of computing and information resources for personal purposes and the ethicality of software copyright protection. One can say that computer ethics plays the role of a reference discourse for ethics-related information system research in the sense that much of the key areas of interest can be found in both. By the time, those individual involved should know their rights and responsibilities with regard to information access and protection. The researcher hope that this study also gives a recommendation for future research to observe and investigate what could be done in order to raise more awareness especially to young adults including high school students who have different knowledge about information ethics compare to this study the respondent are from undergraduates students.

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