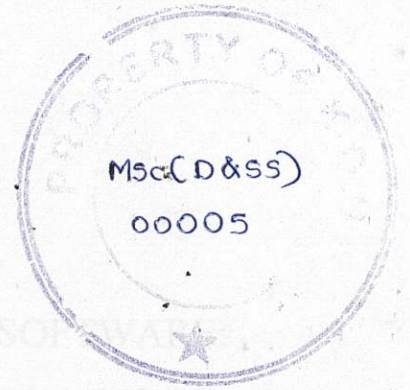


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ATTITUDE TOWARDS USE OF PIRACY SOFTWARE:
SPECIAL REFERENCE TO UNDERGRADUATES IN
SRI LANKA

By

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Dissertation submitted to
The General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Sri Lanka
in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the
Degree of Master of Defence and Strategic Studies MSc(D&SS).

05 OCTOBER- 2015

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ABSTRACT

Software piracy takes place extensively in many parts of the world and this largely occurs due to various web sites that have made it easier to access pirated software, which has in turn resulted in the increased emphasis on the issue of software piracy in both the software industry and in the research community in modern times. Some factors which have greatly affected the use of pirated software include poverty, cultural values, ethical attitudes, religion, and education, and according to empirical studies carried out in this regard, it can be observed that software piracy is a fundamentally intentional phenomenon. Since Sri Lanka does not have a comprehensive survey of PSW, the piracy rate in the country has grown over 90% in recent times and in fact, it is the easy access to these pirated versions that has led to a dangerous situation where the new generation of software users prefers the use of the pirated software as opposed to its original counterpart. Moreover, it can be observed that most undergraduates tend to use PSW for academics with or without the knowledge of the illegal nature and dangerous consequences of this operation. This study is therefore focused on revealing how software piracy in the higher educational sector is a widespread occurrence and how students perceive the use of unlicensed software as acceptable behavior. Undergraduates are the central focus of this research for they play a key role in the society by directly participating in the development process of a country. If not addressed, this increasing trend of becoming addicted to the use of PSW can lead to disastrous consequences in the field of software and computing in the future which would in sequence hinder the social development of the country. The author has conducted a comparative analysis of university students of University of Kelaniya, The General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University (KDU) and Sri Lanka Institution of Information Technology (SLIIT) and the results of the study indicate that the behavior of the respective students in relation to software piracy consists of certain similarities as well as differences. Future research directions and implications are also presented here.

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