

## 6. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY TEACHING IN IRAN

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### ABSTRACT

In the current century, knowledge is an important source of value; intellectual asset management is of paramount importance. The history of Intellectual Property (IP) dates back to the 15th century, although its legislation dates back to the 19th century. Since IP is not confined to lawyers, and the law belongs to the public, IP education particularly affects the process of law enforcement. However, the history of IP education only dates back to about three decades. These tutorials are based on scattered case education and academic trainings added over time. The history in Iran is nearly two decades. Due to the wide scope of IP, various institutions have been designed for their own training. In this research, a collection of units related to the subject of IP and its training in the framework of the WIPO Platform have been extracted for the first time in four categories of general, specialized, distance learning and university academic education. Information is also tailored to the target groups of the training.

In the end, given the variety of training in the field of IP, the type of training and target groups, recommendations for the training of IP have been introduced: standardization of educational resources; provision of educational content in the local language; training of the trainers; requirement for an IP course for undergraduate students; an IP major designed for students; and development of education for the public and schoolchildren.

Key Words Intellectual Property Training, IP in Iran, Teaching Intellectual Property

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Though the history of Intellectual Property (IP) dates back to 15<sup>th</sup> century, IP legislation began after a few centuries of delay. Over the years, the role of IP in the process of innovation and development of the knowledge-based economy has become more and more evident. The impact of the first industrial revolution and how to protect IP afterwards is an issue of importance in reducing uncertainty, technology development and complementary property.<sup>1</sup> Two major theories have created the basis of IP rules in these years: reward theory and incentive theory. IP legal systems have been challenged in creating interactions between the needs of innovators for profit, and the community's need to benefit from the results of innovations. This challenge has increased with the growth of digital technology (Withers 2006). IP laws have attempted to serve as tools for regulating and facilitating trade in knowledge of innovative goods and services. Although IP may be a legal concept beyond the technical, commercial, and industrial areas, its fruits appear in all spheres of human life and industry. Therefore, in addition to IP laws, training is important not only for lawyers, but also for professionals in other areas. Training has started for more than its legal impact. These trainings have become more important in IP in the past three decades with the growth of new issues and they are academically pursued. The existence of international laws and agreements, such as the TRIPS Agreement, has led to the development of a

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<sup>1</sup> Kenneth Carlaw et al. 'Beyond the Hype: Intellectual Property and the Knowledge Society/Knowledge Economy' (2006) 20 J. Economic Surveys 633

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/j.1467-6419.2006.00262.x> accessed on 19 April 2019.

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Fiala, 'Intellectual Property Rights in the Knowledge Economy' (Swiss Re Institute, 15 September 2011).

<sup>2</sup> David Kappos, John Villasenor and Tiffany Misra 'Intellectual Property Rights in the Global Creative Economy' (World Economic







on IP issues. Oral information and data were received in written files.

field of work of individuals in patents, trademark/trademark and industrial designs. The examiners of the centre also

Based on the Research Onion model which Sanders et al. presented in 2009, this is an applied research with qualitative approach and field strategy and information gathering through semi-structured interviews, and its result analysis is descriptive and qualitative. Information from organizations was gathered at a fixed time. However, the information of each organization has been gathered as much as possible in the past years in line with its historical record.

The WIPO Academy platform was the basis of work in this research to determine a model for data collection. WIPO Academy provides the tutorials in four general categories. Academic education includes master's degree and Ph.D.; the second category of general education includes workshops and summer schools on the basic concepts of IP; the third category of specialized training includes workshops and training programs in specific fields for specific target groups with advanced concepts; and the final category is virtual and distance learning. During interviews, interviewees were asked to provide their organization training in these four categories based on their target group. The target group could be inside or outside the organization. The following section summarizes the status of each organization. Moreover, the information gathered from all organizations is presented in tables in the results section. Suggestions are provided in the analysis section on policy-making opportunities and gaps.

#### 4. EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF ORGANIZATIONS RELATED TO INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY IN IRAN

##### A. STATE ORGANIZATION FOR REGISTRATION OF DEEDS & PROPERTIES (INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY CENTER (IPC)):

The IPC has the official responsibility of registering and protecting industrial property in Iran. This organization plays the most important role in IP and pursues activities in the field of education. According to the rules, 70-100 hours of training will be provided to the examiners of the center by internal instructors. These trainings are tailored to the

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Based on the terms of the memorandum, IPIC, as the representative of WIPO in Iran, was responsible for providing specialized training in this field. An executive plan was set as the first course. A comprehensive training course for organization representatives was organized in four steps. The first step of this course (called teaching method) was completed. Subsequently, content tutorials including patents, industrial design, brand, GI, SME, TK and some other topics will be presented. The Ministry of Justice also held specialized training seminars for other organizations such as the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization, Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting, Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration, Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, Ministry of Sport and Youth, and the Ministry of Education. Its cooperation with South Korea has been high on the Knowledge Sharing Program (KSP) project has been defined based on the cooperation, and three courses have been organized for five educational organizations. The fourth training course was held at the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration on June 24, 2016.

#### F. Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance

The Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration has the most effort and activity in the field of IP in the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance. There is an office entitled Office of Research Studies and Capacity Building and the Regional and International Education Group in the Customs

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Table 3. Audience / target group of different organizations



the field of law and in technical fields. Therefore, teaching and learning these new issues requires not only the presence of experienced professors from international organizations, but also apprenticeship in IP offices of other countries, international organizations or their respective organizations in other countries is also important. Types of training in the form of internship, especially by the National Intellectual Property Centers' examiners are more essential. Learning by doing in this respect would be more practical and efficient. To facilitate such training, the Islamic Republic of Iran may benefit from bilateral agreements with other countries and national IP offices and leverage from capabilities of international organizations such as the WIPO.

One of the most important obstacles and challenges in this regard is language. Educational content is rarely found in the national language and most of those limited resources cover legal aspects of IP as opposed to other economic and management aspects. Moreover, the understanding of educational content in a language other than national language (English contents instead of Persian materials) challenges a true understanding of the content and is time consuming. However, in recent years there have been some attempts for providing content in local languages. However, for more standardized and reliable material, translation from the WIPO on IP contents may be a better option. Furthermore, the fact that some other countries neighboring Iran also speak Farsi can be utilized as well.

Despite IP and related laws of Iran having more than 90 years of history, this issue has not yet matured in Iran and it faces a small number of experienced technicians because IP teaching in the country is less than two decades old. However, in the public domain and legal sectors of Iran, there is a relatively high level of knowledge and accumulation of knowledge.

In the results section we mentioned that IP in the academic sector is taught only at a postgraduate degree at universities, and is not taught at the Ph.D. degree level. In the master's period, due to the short duration of study, there is no opportunity for students to deepen their subjects and topics. A four-year Ph.D. program would allow students and professors to study IP issues with greater depth. This will help deepen knowledge and create specialized

knowledge and expand new theories in IP regarding national technological development. Information resources and educational references are advanced in developed countries in a standard form and updated frequently. Although the presence of experienced professors with high knowledge of teaching in the area of IP was seen during the studies, standard educational content was less available. Educational resources and manuals are provided both at the general and specialized levels by specialized agencies and their integration by the IPTC can help strengthen the IP training system.

Given that any part of IP is within the authority of an organization, it is important to establish a strong network among these organizations for IP knowledge exchanges. Creating a network to receive information as well as editing educational materials will help students and professors. This networking will also help the individual development of researchers in this field as well as policymakers and decisionmakers. Both official real network and an unofficial virtual network is necessary and cannot be ignored in this regard.

The transfer of professors and students as well as the transfer of specialists in the domestic and international industry will be a good way to create this network. By developing ele



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