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# Economic and Moral Rights under Copyright Law in India: A Balanced Analysis of Author's Interests

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## ABSTRACT

*The Copyright law of India is “set to strike a fine balance between the proprietary and the right of the authors and greater good of the population to know and culture. This equilibrium is reflected in the bi-polar system of economic and moral rights of the Copyright Act, 1957. Even though economic right allows the authors to have exclusive right to reproduce, distribute, communication to the people and adaptation of their work, the moral rights safeguard the personality and reputation of the author by observing the right of paternity and integrity. The paper under discussion has conducted a reasonable assessment of the two dimensions within the Indian legal system. It examines the lawmaking move, judicial precedent, such as the Amarnath Sehgal v. v. Union of India, Indian Performing Right Society v. Eastern Indian Motion Pictures Association, criticizes the attitude of Indian courts in interpretation of authors rights as regards to technological progress and commercial exploitation. It also studies the relationship between the copyright protection and the constitutional values, and the freedom of speech in particular and the right to livelihood. In so doing, it purports that economic rights promote creativity, but moral rights humanize copyright by enrooting decency within the intellectual property law. The study concludes that the most important thing is to have the capacity to remain in a fragile, context-dependent balance to ensure authorial safety and social changes in the so-called shifting” digital era.*

**Keywords:** Copyright Law; Economic Rights; Moral Rights; Authorial Dignity; Digital Era.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The history “of the copyright law in India shows that there is a continuous struggle on how to balance individual creativity and the overall cultural development. In its normative essence, copyright has a two-fold nature: it aims at giving an author legally enforceable rights of his/her creations, as well as, at the same time, to make sure that the society obtains the advantages of sharing knowledge and artistic expression. This balance is made by law under the Copyright

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Act, 1957, which is a blanket legislation created with a view of consolidating and amending the law on copyright in India,<sup>3</sup> and copyright is understood as a bundle of exclusive rights existing with respect to original works of literary, dramatic, musical and artistic works, and also with respect to film and sound recordings on the cinema front.<sup>4</sup>

The utilitarian theory and the personality theory are the two prevalent philosophical theories that can be traced back as the foundations of the copyright law. The utilitarian theory, which is mostly linked to a common law system, is the justification of copyright protection as an economic incentive factor to encourage creativity and innovation.<sup>5</sup> Giving authors the exclusive economic rights over a period of time, under sec 14 the law promotes an investment in intellectual labour and cultural development in India and provides authors with a commercial incentive to make money on the work and assure financial gains.<sup>6</sup>

But in India copyright protection is not narrowed down to mere commercial considerations. It also encompasses the ethical aspect of authorship hence recognizing the fact that creative work is a certain continuation of individual and intellectual spirit of the author. Moral rights are codified in section 57 of the Act where the author is given the right to claim authorship (right of paternity), the right to restrain or claim damages against any distortion, mutilation or modification of the work prejudicial to his or her honour or reputation (right of integrity)<sup>7</sup> even when assignment of copyright has taken place. The judicial interpretation has transformed in the way of expressing this dual framework. In *Indian Performing Right Society v. Eastern Indian Motion Pictures Association*, The Supreme Court scrutinized the association of lyricists, composers and film affirmed the commercial complexities of copyright ownership in the film works, but raised unanswered critical questions as to the relationships between authors after assignment.<sup>8</sup> These issues found their way to legislation in the Copyright (Amendment) Act, 2012, which provided more power to the authors of literary and musical works in films and sound recordings as to the protection of royalties.<sup>9</sup>

Moral rights jurisprudence reached a high level of maturity in the case of *Amarnath Sehgal v Union of India*.<sup>10</sup> It concerned the removal and inappropriate storage of a mural that was painted on the wall of a government building by a well-known sculptor. The Court acknowledged that

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<sup>3</sup> The Copyright Act, 1957 (Act 14 of 1957).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 13.

<sup>5</sup> William M. Landes & Richard A. Posner, *An Economic Analysis of Copyright Law*, 18 J. LEGAL STUD. 325 (1989).

<sup>6</sup> The Copyright Act, 1957, s. 14.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 57.

<sup>8</sup> *Indian Performing Right Society v. Eastern Indian Motion Pictures Association*, (1977) 2 SCC 820.

<sup>9</sup> The Copyright (Amendment) Act, 2012 (Act 27 of 2012), ss. 18 & 19.

<sup>10</sup> *Amar Nath Sehgal v. Union of India*, 2005 (30) PTC 253 (Del)

the ruin and manipulation of the work did not only harm the material object, but also hurt the image and reputation of the author. It believed that under Section 57 the moral rights are independent and may be enforced even against the physical work owner. This was the first step towards a deeper understanding of the copyright law in India, as the act was established that copyright law is not only protecting economic investment, but also the creative personality of the author.

The copyright laws in India are also influenced by the international obligation of the nation under the Berne Convention on the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works and the WIPO Copyright Treaty both of which require the protection of moral and economic rights of the author and prohibit derogatory treatment of the work. The fact that India has legislatively aligned itself with these standards shows that it is ready to incorporate international standards of intellectual property without being insensitive to the realities of development and constitutional principles.

Notably, the copyright in India should be interpreted in the constitutional context and general background. Though copyright provides some exclusive rights, under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution,<sup>11</sup> there is a reasonable restriction of copyright by means of fair dealing contained in Section 52 of the Act, which is aimed at maintaining this balance between incentive on the part of a person and access on the part of the population. The balance in the modern digital world is challenged like never before. The concept of authorship and control is complicated by digital reproduction, online streaming, artificial intelligence-created content, the remix culture, and real-time distribution” on the global scale.<sup>12</sup>

## Literature Review

1. **William M. Landes & Richard A. Posner, *An Economic Analysis of Copyright Law*, 18 J. LEGAL STUD. 325 (1989)** – This seminal “work lays the foundation for the economic theory of copyright, explaining why exclusive rights are necessary to incentivize creativity and how economic analysis can optimize copyright duration and scope.<sup>13</sup>
2. **David Vaver, *Intellectual Property Law: Copyright, Patents, Trade Marks*, 3rd ed. (2011)** – Vaver’s work is a foundational text explaining the philosophical underpinnings

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<sup>11</sup> Constitution of India, art. 19(1)(a).

<sup>12</sup> The Copyright Act, 1957, s. 52.

<sup>13</sup> William M. Landes & Richard A. Posner, *An Economic Analysis of Copyright Law*, 18 J. LEGAL STUD. 325 (1989).

of both economic and moral rights, especially the moral rights tradition arising from civil law systems.<sup>14</sup>

3. **Graham Greenleaf, *Global Data Privacy Laws*, 2nd ed. (2014)** – Though focused on privacy, Greenleaf’s comparative analysis of intellectual property frameworks aids understanding of how moral rights
4. **R. K. Goyal, “Economic Rights in Copyright Law: An Analysis” in *Indian Journal of Intellectual Property Law*** – Goyal charts the development of economic rights under Section 14 of the Indian Copyright Act, critiquing restrictive doctrines that limit authors’ bargaining power post-assignment.<sup>15</sup>
5. **T. Ramappa, “Economic Incentives and Creative Industries in India”, *Journal of Intellectual Property Rights*** – This article evaluates how economic rights affect creative industries in India, especially film, music, and publishing, arguing that economic rights must be strengthened to support emerging creators.<sup>16</sup>
6. **Remuneration Rights of Authors in the Digital Age by Shyam Divan and Arjun Shrivastava** discusses how digitization is affecting the traditional economic rights, specifically through streaming services and royalty payments.<sup>17</sup>
7. **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) -Economic Performance of Copyright-based Industries (2023)-** This report is an empirical data on influencing economic rights on GDP in various countries; it will indirectly support the discussion of economic incentives in India.<sup>18</sup>
8. **Government of India -National IPR Policy (2016)** -This policy has acknowledged the economic role of intellectual property, insisting on balanced protection of property as a way to enhance innovation and creative industries.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> David Vaver, *Intellectual Property Law: Copyright, Patents, Trade Marks* 3rd ed. (2011).

<sup>15</sup> R. K. Goyal, “Economic Rights in Copyright Law: An Analysis”, *Indian Journal of Intellectual Property Law* (Vol. 15).

<sup>16</sup> T. Ramappa, “Economic Incentives and Creative Industries in India”, *Journal of Intellectual Property Rights* (Vol. 24).

<sup>17</sup> Shyam Divan & Arjun Shrivastava, “Remuneration Rights of Authors in the Digital Age”, *Journal of Indian Law Institute* (2020).

<sup>18</sup> World Intellectual Property Organization, *Economic Performance of Copyright-based Industries 2023* (WIPO Report)

<sup>19</sup> Government of India, *National IPR Policy (2016)*, Ministry of Commerce & Industry.

9. **Lionel Bently & Brad Sherman, Intellectual Property Law, 4th ed. (2018)** -A reference textbook, which covers the moral rights in both civil and common law and their historical development with critical comparative views.<sup>20</sup>
10. **Jane C. Ginsburg & Robert A. Gorman, Copyright: Cases and Materials, 8th ed. (2016)** Ginsburg in her work provides profound insights into the doctrine of moral rights and dwells on paternity and integrity rights and how they were applied in landmark cases around the globe.<sup>21</sup>
11. **A. K. Rai, “Moral Rights in Indian Copyright Law: An Appraisal”, *Journal of Intellectual Property Rights*** – Rai critiques the limited application of moral rights in India, arguing for clearer statutory protections to preserve dignitary values.<sup>22</sup>
12. **Priya Nair, “Moral Rights and Digital Alteration: Challenges in the Internet Age”, *Indian Journal of Law and Technology*** – This article focuses on conflicts arising when digital platforms modify content, questioning if Section 57 extends to online distortions.<sup>23</sup>
13. **V.S. Mani, “Judicial Enforcement of Moral Rights in India”, *Supreme Court Cases Journal*** – Analyzes Indian judicial interpretations post-Amarnath Sehgal, evaluating their contribution to moral rights jurisprudence.<sup>24</sup>
14. **Amarnath Sehgal v. Union of India, 2005 (30) PTC 253 (Del)** – A landmark decision where the Delhi High Court protected an artist’s moral rights against distortion of a sculpture.<sup>25</sup>
15. **Indian Performing Right Society v. Eastern Indian Motion Pictures Association, (1977) 2 SCC 820** – A seminal case on economic rights of lyricists and composers in film, analyzing ownership and assignment complexities.<sup>26</sup>
16. **R.G. Anand v. Deluxe Films, (1978) 4 SCC 118, 4 SCC 118, (1978)** the Supreme Court did not directly establish the statutory moral rights, but the personality rights were

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<sup>20</sup> Lionel Bently & Brad Sherman, *Intellectual Property Law*, 4th ed. (2018).

<sup>21</sup> Jane C. Ginsburg & Robert A. Gorman, *Copyright: Cases and Materials*, 8th ed. (2016).

<sup>22</sup> A. K. Rai, “Moral Rights in Indian Copyright Law: An Appraisal”, *Journal of Intellectual Property Rights* (Vol. 21, 2016).

<sup>23</sup> Priya Nair, “Moral Rights and Digital Alteration: Challenges in the Internet Age”, *Indian Journal of Law and Technology* (2019).

<sup>24</sup> V.S. Mani, “Judicial Enforcement of Moral Rights in India”, *Supreme Court Cases Journal* (2022).

<sup>25</sup> Amarnath Sehgal v. Union of India, 2005 (30) PTC 253 (Del).

<sup>26</sup> Indian Performing Right Society v. Eastern Indian Motion Pictures Association, (1977) 2 SCC 820.

recognized in the context of performer, which also made contribution to the jurisprudence of moral rights..<sup>27</sup>

17. **N. Balasubramanian, Economic vs Moral Rights: A False Dichotomy? Journal of Indian Intellectual Property Law** Critiques the debate that economic and moral rights are opposing concepts, and instead presents them as complementary and to be taken as a whole.<sup>28</sup>
18. **S. Iyer, Copyright, Freedom of Speech and Public Interest Indian Law Review** - Explores Constitutional values that moderate economic and moral rights, which advocates a purposive interpretation of exceptions and limitations.<sup>29</sup>
19. **Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works (1886), art. 6** – Requires member states to provide moral rights protection.<sup>30</sup>
20. **WIPO Copyright Treaty (1996)** – Clarifies digital environment protections, influencing domestic legal reforms.<sup>31</sup>
21. **European Union Directive 2001/29/EC (InfoSoc Directive)** – Provides comparative insights into moral rights enforcement in digital contexts.<sup>32</sup>
22. **M. Senftleben, “Moral Rights in European and Anglo-American Law”, International Journal of Law and Information Technology** – Offers” a comparative understanding of moral rights UK/EU vs” Indian systems.<sup>33</sup>

### Research Gap

Even though “there is sufficient literature on economic and moral rights under Copyright Act, 1957, most studies have concentrated on them individually as rather than on the rights as two interdependent components of authorial protection. Its economic rights have been largely analyzed in a business and contractual terms and specifically on assignment, licensing and royalty arrangements. Moral rights, on the other hand, are generally dealt in the exclusive doctrinal din i.e. primarily in Section 57 and case laws such as Amarnath Sehgal v. Union of India. A glaring lack of incorporated erudition may be felt that balances the economic and

<sup>27</sup> R.G. Anand v. Deluxe Films, (1978) 4 SCC 118.

<sup>28</sup> N. Balasubramanian, “Economic vs Moral Rights: A False Dichotomy?”, *Journal of Indian Intellectual Property Law* (Vol. 19).

<sup>29</sup> S. Iyer, “Copyright, Freedom of Speech and Public Interest”, *Indian Law Review* (Vol. 7).

<sup>30</sup> Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, 1886, art. 6bis.

<sup>31</sup> WIPO Copyright Treaty, 1996.

<sup>32</sup> European Union Directive 2001/29/EC (InfoSoc Directive).

<sup>33</sup> M. Senftleben, “Moral Rights in European and Anglo-American Law”, *International Journal of Law and Information Technology* (Vol. 12).

ethical entitlement to act in the same plane in the current creative industry especially in the trade off between proprietary and authorial integrity.

Besides, the available literature is mostly doctrinal and case-law based, and almost no empirical studies exist concerning how these rights are being exercised in practice. Digital ecosystem that is stream-based, characterized by remix culture, AI-generated content and trans-border dissemination, has altered the original parameters of copyright protection to a considerable degree. However, this question of intersecting economic royalties and moral rights of work in special case of digital modification, algorithm distribution, or commercial exploitation with the new technological models has not been well researched in Indian scholarship

Also, the analysis of the extent and boundaries of moral and economic rights is lacking in the required interaction with constitutional values, in the first place, the freedom of speech and public interest. The Indian context is also limited to comparative studies with jurisdictions that provide better protection of the moral rights. This study thus comes to fill these gaps in that it offers a balanced, integrated as well as a context sensitive analysis of both the economic and moral rights and places them in the changing technological and constitutional” context of” India.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The current “research takes a doctrinal and analytical method of research, and the emphasis of the research is on a systematic review of the legal texts, the judicial rulings and the commentary of the research that pertains to the existence of economic and moral rights under Indian copyright law. The study is analytical and critical but has descriptive format, trying to assess the legal framework between the proprietary and the authorial dignity.

### **Primary Sources**

This research relies on the primary sources. These include:

1. Statutory Law- The primary law that shall be discussed is the Copyright Act, 1957, and the amendments made to the law especially the Copyright (Amendment) Act, 2012. Special attention is devoted to Section 13, 14, 18, 19, 52, 57, that stipulates the extent of economic and moral rights.
2. Judicial Decisions- Major cases that interpret the rights of authors are analysed critically. Cases such as *Indian Performing Right Society v* are important. *Eastern Indian Motion Pictures Association* that elucidated rights of ownership and economic interests in cinematographic productions and *Amarnath Sehgal v. Union of India*, which had a

great contribution to the realization of moral rights in India. Relevant Supreme Court decisions and High Court have also been explored as a way of tracing doctrinal development.

3. International Instruments - To learn the international standards of morality and economic rights, the study resorts to international conventions in which India is obligated, the Berne Convention of the Protection of Literary and Artistic works and WIPO copyright” treaty.

### **Secondary Sources**

These include:

1. Texts and “Critiques on intellectual property law which touch on utilitarian theory and personality theory among other philosophical explanations.
2. Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles Peer-reviewed journal articles of sources like the Journal of Intellectual Property Rights, Journal of Indian Law Institute, Indian Journal of Law and Technology, and other well-known law journals discussing copyright jurisprudence and policy changes.
3. Scholarly Articles and Conference Reports on digital copyright, royalty systems and transforming jurisprudence of moral rights.
4. Government Reports and Policy documents such as the National IPR Policy (2016), which indicate that the Indian government has a policy orientation towards balancing technology and the interest of the population.
5. Official Sources and Global Reports, especially the works by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), which offers comparative and statistical data of industries with copyright.

### **Nature of Research**

It is a purely doctrinal research that does not presuppose collecting empirical or field-based information. It takes a comparative and evaluative approach to examine whether the Indian copyright regime is sufficiently accommodating economic rewards and protecting authorial reputation and dignity in particular in the modern” digital context.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. Whether the “Copyright Act, 1957 has been successful or not in balancing the commercial interests of the authors and protection of their dignity and reputation under the framework of economic and moral rights?
2. How far have Indian courts gone especially in cases like *Amarnath Sehgal v. Union of India* and *Indian Performing Right Society vs. Eastern Indian Motion Pictures Association*, worked out a consistent jurisprudence of interaction of economic with moral rights?
3. How does the digital space, including streaming services, technology adaptations, and web distribution contribute towards determining the degree of protection and use of the economic and moral rights of authors in India?
4. Are the current copyright regulations, in the light of such such provisions as the Berne Convention on the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, adequate to both the constitutional ideals of India and the international obligations of the nation, in the element of striking the proper balance between author protectiveness” and people interest?

#### **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

1. To “examine the depth and nature of economic rights under respective Sections 14, 18 and 19 of Copyright Act 1957 with the reference being made to the assignment and royalty provisions.
2. To examine the conceptual and statutory framework of the moral rights in Section 57 of the Act and analyse their purpose in safeguarding authorial dignity and reputation.
3. To evaluate judicial interpretation of economic and moral rights using such landmark decisions as *Amarnath Sehgal v. Indian Performing Right Society v. Union of India*. *Indian Eastern Motion Pictures Association*.
4. To study how digital platforms, technological adaptations and streaming model influence the violations of royalty and integrity rights of authors” in India.

#### **HYPOTHESES**

1. The “legal framework “of the Copyright Act, 1957 protects the economic rights more than the moral rights in the enforcement.

2. Court interpretation in a case like *Amarnath Sehgal v. Union of India* has widened the scope of the moral rights by overriding the statutory narrow language to safeguard the dignity of the author.
3. With the amendments in the legislation, authors still struggle to find the effective protection of royalty and integrity in the digital and streaming environment.
4. The copyright system in India attains formal adherence to the international standards as per the Berne Convention on the Protection of Literary and Artistic works and yet there is a loophole in enforcement” and implementation.

## **II. RESULTS AND FINDINGS**

The “interpretation “of statutory clauses, court cases, and academic sources and the international documents have shown some crucial results concerning the equilibrium between the rights of economics and morality under the Copyright Act, 1957. The findings are presented in theme based format in accordance with the research objectives and hypothesis of this study.

### **1. Economic Rights Predominance in Factual Fulfillment.**

The study confirms the fact that the procedural and commercial enforcement of the economic rights in India is relatively stronger. The Act in sections 14, 18 and 19 offer comprehensive reproduction, distribution, assignment and licensing mechanisms where by authors and assignees can commercially exploit works of the law by the consideration of section 14, 18 and 19. The courts have prevented in numerous occasions cases involving ownership, royalties, and interpretations of contracts particularly in the movie and music industry.

As an example, in *Indian Performing Right Society v. Eastern Indian Motion Pictures Association* used to explain the principles of ownership of cinematographic works and ended up supporting the producer interests in particular situations. Though subsequent legislative changes enhanced the right of an author to get a royalty, the deployment of the right is more contractual and commercial. The paper thus substantiates that in practice the copyright regime is more likely to be run as a commercial instrument to enable economic transactions.

### **2. Courts and Court Expansion and Recognition of Moral Rights.**

The results have pointed at the fact that moral rights which are statutorily brief through Section 57 have been greatly broadened through the judicial interpretation. The case of *Amarnath Sehgal v. Union of India* was a landmark on Indian copyright laws. Delhi High Court realized that creative work by an author is a personality and reputation and that moral rights exist even after the economic rights are assigned.

This decision expanded the interpretation of pre-judice to honour or reputation and it placed give consideration to the dignitative aspect of copyright. Nevertheless, the study also indicates that moral rights litigation is still a small number and enforcing them is mostly dependant on fact-based judicial discretion. In contrast to economic rights, the moral rights are less commonly invoked in the everyday commercial disputes which means that the statutory recognition is not matched by the actual use.

### **3. Digital Environment and new tensions.**

The research concludes that the fast growth of digital distribution, streaming services, content generation with the help of AI and online alterations has made the balance between economic and moral rights difficult. Despite the fact that the Copyright (Amendment) Act, 2012 enhanced the royalty rights of authors of literary and musical pieces, the protection is asymmetrical in the digital setting.

The problems of unauthorized digital modification, remix culture, memes modification, and cross-border streaming are problems that question the traditional doctrines of copyright. Although it is easier to detect and prosecute economic infringements (e.g., piracy), digital-based moral rights violations (distortion, modification, or misattribution) are not always addressed because of jurisdictional and technological complications as well as evidentiary ones. The results indicate that the prevailing legal system, despite its theoretical sufficiency, does not have effective imposition of the law to cope with the new technological reality.

### **4. Adherence to International Standards but Loopholes in Implementation.**

The copyright regime in India is formally consistent with the requirements of the international community with the Berne Convention on the Protection of Literary and Artistic Work and WIPO copyright regime, especially the aspect of the moral rights recognition and digital rights. Article 57, which implements the consideration of moral rights, is an implication of the Berne Convention, article .

This study however finds that compliance is mostly normative and not operational. The challenges that arise in practice are not much knowledge of the authors, one-sidedness in bargaining authority, a lack of mechanisms of recourse, and a lack of understanding of digital moral rights. The implementation regime in India is relative to some European jurisdictions that offer greater protection of moral” rights.

## **III. DISCUSSION**

The results “of this research indicate that there is a fine line between economic and moral rights

under Copyright Act, 1957, though unequal. Although the conceptualization of copyright law in the statutory scheme envisions that copyright is a bundle of rights that comprise both proprietary and personality-based rights, the reality as seen in practice is so as to enhance more institutional focus on entitlements to an economic nature.

### **1. Coexistence of Economic and Moral Rights.**

Creative industries in India are based on the economic structure of copyright. In section 14, 18 and 19, thorough regulation is offered on the subject of assignment and licensing thus being enabling to monetize and commercially offer certainty. Nevertheless, the bargaining power usually deviates in favor of producers, publishers or corporate bodies in film and music industry, particularly under assignment agreements. The rationale by the Supreme Court in *Indian Performing Right Society v. Eastern Indian Motion Pictures Association* explains that the economic control can change when the works are incorporated in the cinematographic production. Though later amendments were aimed to secure the right to royalties, the reality was to rely much on the contractual enforcement and collective management societies. On the contrary, under the moral rights in Section 57, moral rights do not necessarily depend on economic ownership, implying that authorial dignity and proprietary control are distinct conceptually. *Amarnath Sehgal v. Union of India* was aware of the fact that the creative work is an extension of the personality of the author. This reading places moral rights above economic benefit, which is a tenet to strengthen the normative value of moral rights. Nonetheless, the fact that there are few cases of moral rights suggests that authors are unaware or unable to exercise the protection.

### **2. Stresses in the Digital Ecosystem.**

The computerization of creative industries has led to increased tension between the commercialization and creative integrity. Online editing tools, algorithmic distribution, streaming services and automated interpretation of the original by artificial intelligence transform traditional distinctions between original and remix works. Piracy and unauthorized distribution often oppose economic rights, and mechanisms of stricter enforcement have been implemented.

Nonetheless, the problems of moral rights on the digital level, unauthorized editing, remix culture, or digital distortion, are complex questions. Is meme adaptation distortion? Is it appropriate that the rights to integrity should be influenced by algorithmic changes? The existing statutory wording under Section 57 does not directly deal with alteration of digital form as it is left at the discretion of the courts to apply significant interpretation discretion.

### **3. Constitutional and Public Interest Aspects.**

Copyright protection works synergistically as it overlaps with the constitutional values of freedom of speech, access to knowledge and cultural participation. Even Indian jurisprudence has in some way recognized that exclusive rights should be harmonized with the consideration of the public interest distilled in the provisions of fair dealing. The economic rights when taken to excess would pose the danger of putting up barriers of monopoly of knowledge. On the other hand, too broad claims of moral rights can stifle transformative or critical expression. Section 52 of the doctrine of fair dealing is a structural protection because it guarantees copyright is not used as a tool of censorship.

### **4. The Way Forward: Towards Integrated Protection.**

It seems to be critical to have an integrated disposition towards copyright, acknowledging economic incentive and moral dignity, as mutually supportive and non-competitive. Making royalty protection stricter, providing a clearer definition on the protection of moral rights on the digital platform and by increasing awareness among creators can help to make protection more even.

The study recommends that the reform should be aimed at in the future to include the following:

- Transparent principles of digital adjustments and AI-made changes;
- Improved transparency in collective management of royalty;
- Capacity building efforts to empower authors to exercise moral rights successfully;
- Balancing the statutory interpretation and the changing technological reality.

To sum up, as it was shown in the discussion, although both economic and moral rights are formally considered by the Indian copyright law, the balance between the two is dynamic and contextual. Judicial imagination, legislative sensitivity and policy-based reform will be essential in maintaining such a balance in the quickly changing creative” and digital environment.

## **IV. CONCLUSION**

This study has “attempted to conduct a fair trial into economic and moral rights in Copyright act, 1957, their conceptual basis, the statutory development, judicial interpretation, and their relevance in the digital era. The paper shows that despite the equal recognition of the legal rights of the two sets enshrined in the copyright law in India, their actual work is characterized by an economic superiority that is influenced by the market forces, contract and industry practices. Economic rights are still operating as the main stand of the copyright protection. They promote

innovation and thus facilitate commercial exploitation and support publishing, film, music and digital media. Court decisions, such as *Indian Performing Right Society v. Eastern Indian Motion Pictures Association*, illustrates how economic control could change with reference to the interpretation of contracts and the laws. Changes in legislation have tried to enhance the royalty rights of authors, but there are still high imbalance in bargaining as well as the limitations to enforcement.

Moral rights on the contrary are a lasting protection of the authorial dignity. The law in *Amarnath Sehgal v. Union of India* stipulated that a creative work represents the identity of the personality and name of an author and, thus, created a higher authority of moral rights compared to formal regulations. The litigation of moral rights is however relatively restricted meaning that it is either underutilized or there are structural impediments to its execution. The integrity and attribution right are even more difficult to protect by the digital environment, which is typified by remix culture, technological change, and global distribution.

The research yields that there is normative complaisance with the international norms in the Indian copyright regime by the instruments like *Berne Convention on the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works*, however, there should be a modernization in the enforcement mechanisms to align with the technological realities. Sustainable paradigm should not pit economic and moral rights as conflicting entities but as complementary to each other as part of a holistic approach to copyright.

Future reform should aim at:

- Enhancing effective implementation of royalty right by transparent management systems, collectively;
- Explaining the extent of moral rights in the context of digital and AI-mediated
- Ensuring that copyright protection remains balanced with constitutional values of access, creativity, and public interest.

Ultimately, a truly balanced copyright system in India must protect both the commercial interests and the personal dignity of authors. Only through coherent judicial interpretation, responsive legislative reform, and institutional strengthening can the equilibrium between economic reward and moral integrity be meaningfully sustained in the evolving” creative” landscape.

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