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A STUDY TO IDENTIFY COMMONLY EMPLOYED METHODS OF DISGUISE

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INTRODUCTION

Disguised handwriting is the willful modification of a person's natural writing to conceal the identity. When a person is called to give his handwriting sample for investigation, he /she tends to disguise the handwriting to conceal their identity. Disguised writing is always superficial and leads to an inferior quality of writing. According to the principle of handwriting, individual characteristics remain constant. Individuals change their class characteristics to disguise their handwriting, and the individual characteristics will not change. Common methods of disguised writing include change of style of writing, change of pen pressure, change of slant, use of unskilled hand, change of pictorial effects, change of shading and spacing, change of line quality, presence of pen pause, tremors, and hesitation, change of diacritics, etc.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To distinguish the disguised handwriting from the original handwriting
- To find the methods used for disguising the handwriting
- To determine the commonly used methods for the disguise

of handwriting

- To calculate the percentage of each method used for disguising the handwriting

METHODOLOGY

1. Sample collection and procedure

- The samples were collected from 100 subjects aged between 17 to 25 years.
- The subjects were asked to write on an A4 white sheet of paper using a ball blue pen. The paper and pen were provided by the researchers to the subjects
- The subjects are restricted from looking into other writing while giving the standard and disguised writing sample and to use any other pen, paper, and other supporting materials like paper, books, or writing pads under the A4 sheet.
- Subjects were selected with fewer external factors that affect the writing. They were instructed not to use their unskilled hand to disguise writing
- A control passage was dictated to the subjects.
- The following samples were collected from each of the subjects – 1. Standard handwriting (slow speed), 2. Standard handwriting (moderate speed) and 3. Disguised handwriting.
- The subjects were asked to take as much time as they wanted to disguise the writing.
- The 3 samples collected from each subject were considered as one sample for comparison.
- 15 characteristics were fixed to compare in the samples
- A comparison between the disguised handwriting with the original handwriting was performed.
- The changes in the 15 characteristics in the sample were recorded in a table.

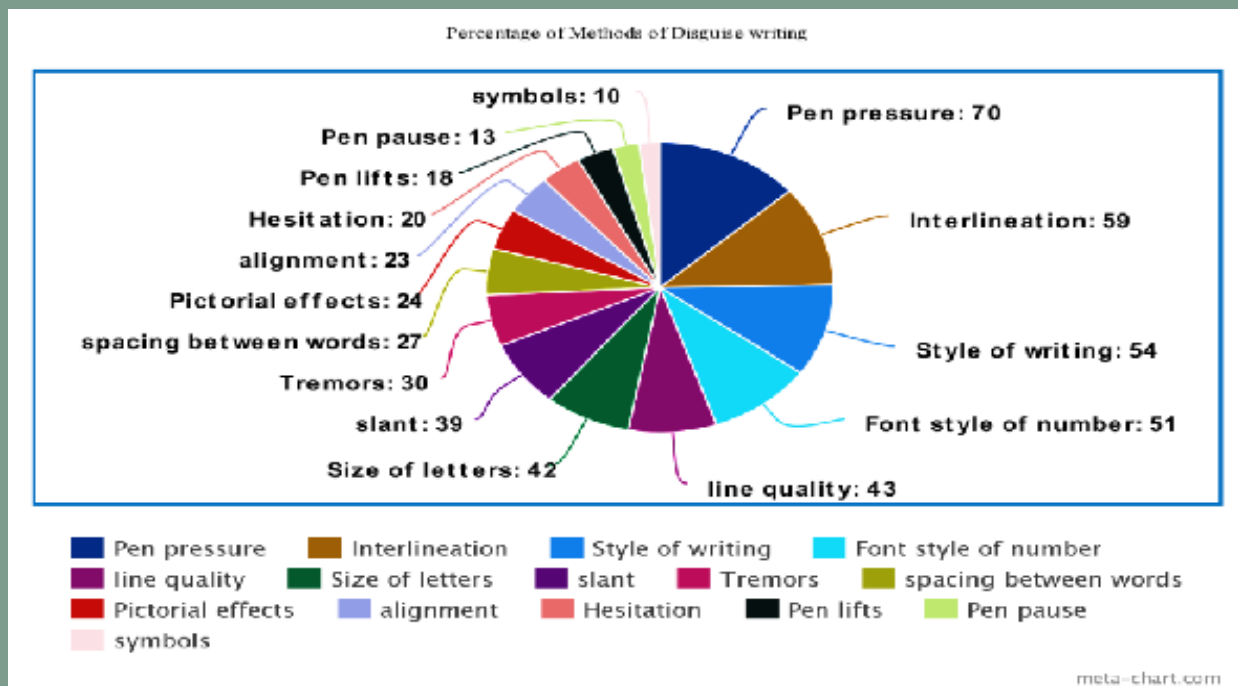
- The commonly used methods of disguise were observed and recorded

The 15 characters which were looked for and graded were:

1. Style of writing – changed / same
2. Spacing between words – increased/decreased/same
3. Slant – changed / same
4. Alignment – changed / same
5. Pen lifts – present/ absent
6. Pen pause – present/absent
7. Pen pressure – increased/ decreased/ same
8. Interlineation – increased/ decreased/ same
9. Size of letters – increased/ decreased/ same
10. Line quality – changed/ same
11. Hesitation – present/ absent
12. Tremors – present/ absent
13. Pictorial effects – present/ absent
14. Font style of numbers – changed/ same
15. Symbols – changed/ same

FINDINGS

Sl.no	Characteristics	No. of people who changed the characteristic in disguise writing
1	Pen pressure	70
2	Interlineation	59
3	Style of writing	54
4	Font style of Numbers	51
5	Line quality	43
6	Size of letters	42
7	Slant	39
8	Tremors	30
9	Spacing between words	27
10	Pictorial effect	24
11	Alignment	23
12	Hesitation	20
13	Pen lifts	18
14	Pen pause	13
15	Symbols	10



- 70 people changed their pen pressure and only 10 people changed or used the symbols in disguised writing
- Most people increased or decreased their pen pressure along with other methods of disguise.
- The subjects used more than one method while disguising.
- 15 out of 100 subjects used more than 8 methods of disguise.
- 19 subjects out of 100 only used 3 and a lesser number of methods of disguise.
- 66 subjects out of 100 used 4 to 8 methods to disguise writing.

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