iJRASET
International Journal For Research in Applied Science and Engineering Technology



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR RESEARCH

IN APPLIED SCIENCE & ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

Volume: 10 **Issue:** I **Month of publication:** January 2022

DOI: https://doi.org/10.22214/ijraset.2022.39786

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International Journal for Research in Applied Science & Engineering Technology (IJRASET)
ISSN: 2321-9653; IC Value: 45.98; SJ Impact Factor: 7.538
Volume 10 Issue I Jan 2022- Available at www.ijraset.com

Attempt to Concealed the Identity by Modifying Deliberately the Complete Alteration of Signature

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Abstract: ***The significance of the written material in civil and criminal litigation is generally depend on the authorship or origin of the document. Task of examination and comparison is more complex than it may seems to be, when a person changes the writing attributes of his/her signatures by using deliberately modification of complete alteration in the form of allographic style of handwriting which falls in the will full manner of disguise signature. Many people may have the same name but no two person have identical signatures. The fact that a person writes his/her signature so often means that it is deeply engraved on his subconscious. Anyone who wants to change the pattern of his/her own signature has to struggle against the power of his/her subconscious mind. Since this subconscious does not readily accept imposed changes, in most cases, it wins over the conscious. The resemblance will therefore be so obvious that the expert will quickly realize that signatures are only a disguised version of the person's own genuine signature. A unique case with complete alteration of her signature by the complainant was evaluated for signs of disguise with the help of handwriting and fixed the authorship as a result of resemblance of writing attributes in individual signatures of the person concerned.***

Keywords: Disguised, signature, allograph, handwriting attributes etc.

I. INTRODUCTION

The document provides practical detail for comparison of Unknown writing and signature with the Known writing and signature for fixing the authorship or otherwise of origin. The strength of expert's opinion not only depends on the quantity and quality of the collected standard writing and signatures but also on the scientific knowledge and practical experience for reaching at a definite conclusion. The scientific examination and comparison of the disputed writing or signature may be the challenging task for the expert when the standard writing and signature does not contain the similar style of writing or signature as per the principle of science of handwriting identification 'Like is to be compare with the Like'. The basic requirement for collection of the proper standard writing and signature must be relevant for comparison and conclusive opinion. The importance of an adequate amount of writing or signature with similar letters, combination & specious model and design are the keystone of good standard writing or signature. When a person signs his or her name, he or she is carrying out one of the most common writing acts. With time and usage, a signature can become highly individualized, often in a style quite distinct from that of the writer's other handwriting [1]. To a greater or lesser extent, almost all individuals have the ability to distort their hand writing or signature. If the individual has the opportunity to cull or carefully select standard submitted to the Forensic Document Expert (FDE), then one can assume that only those appear different will be produced [2]. A deliberate departure from normal handwriting habits is generally referred to as disguise writing [3]. According to the Oxford Learner's Dictionary the term 'disguise' means 'to change your appearance so that people cannot recognize you' [4]. In other words, disguise means 'modification of the external appearance so as to conceal the real original identity of the entity' [5]. Handwriting is a conscious act. Still the act of disguised is varied in nature and thus there is need to study the detailed characteristic features of disguised writing for significant individual characteristics of complex writing content [6]. The document dealing with disguise writing or signature is increasing day by day by adopting new method and style accomplished by changing slope, reducing or increasing speed, changing letter formation from lower case to upper case or by practicing allographic technique. The possible causes of error in forming an opinion of identification of writing if the forensic expert observes divergencies which can be attributed to intended disguise Said by Osborn (1929) [7]. According to the Alford (1970) in his study of extended disguised writing and by Herkt (1986) in his study of disguised signatures, the alteration of the initial and/or terminal strokes of the writing as a specific disguise method was found [8,9]. A correlation between the size of a disguised writing and the degree of embellishment used in the formation of letters: the larger the disguised writing, the more ornate or 'fanciful' it became. On the other hand, when the writing was made smaller, it became less embellished observed by Alford (1970) [10]. During the course of examination, the FDE faces a number of challenges to prove the disguise writing or signatures authorship. The examiner's confidence, based on scientific principles and experienced judgment, that the opinion rendered is correct.

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ISSN: 2321-9653; IC Value: 45.98; SJ Impact Factor: 7.538
Volume 10 Issue I Jan 2022- Available at www.ijraset.com

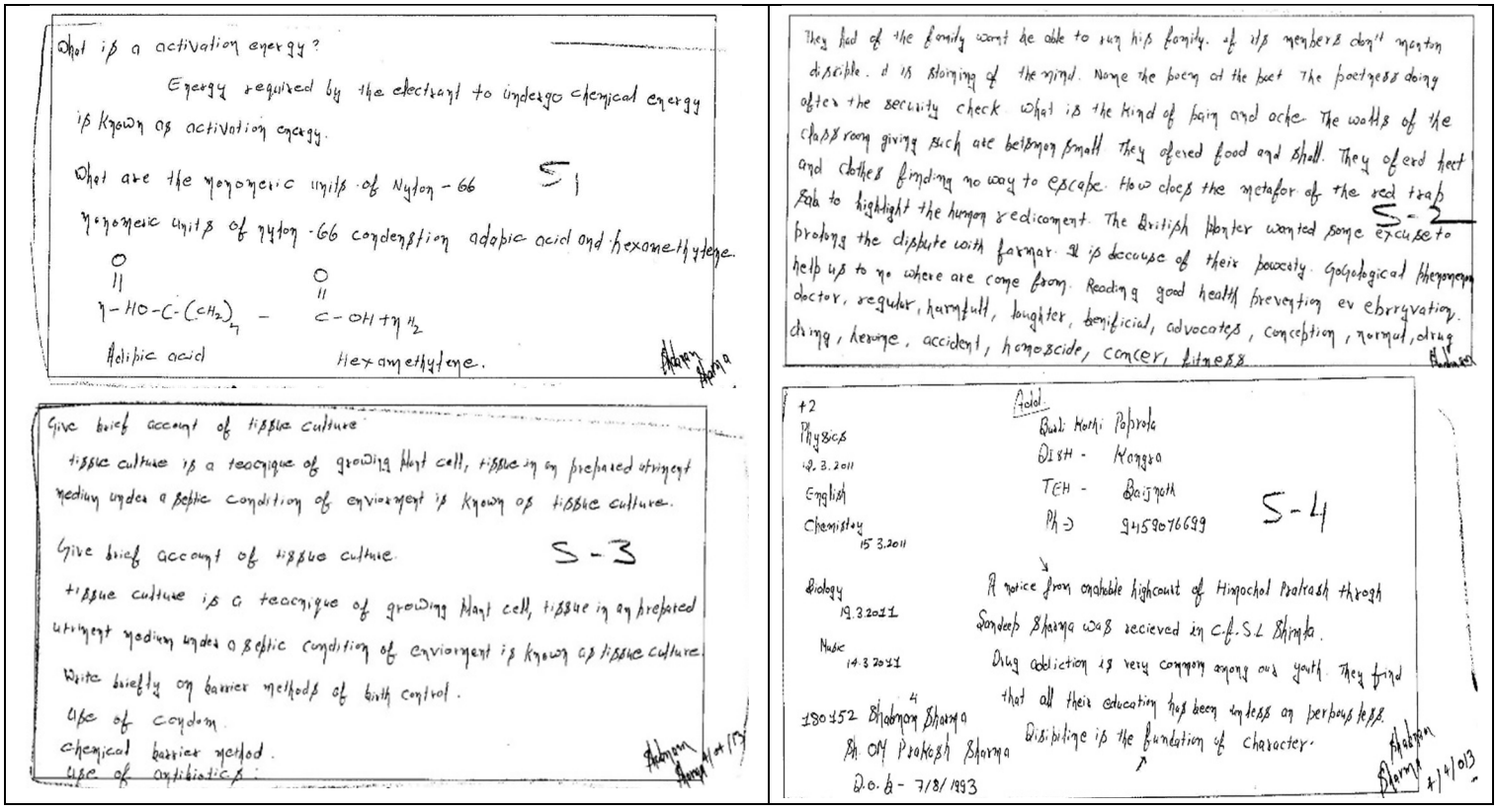
A. Case History

In a case, complainant denied that the questioned signatures Q1 to Q5, were not her signatures by adopting the complete alterative form of letters and style of writing (complete alteration) in order to hide her identity. The Forensic document expert by their concerted efforts analyzed the writing attributes by comparing supplied specimen signatures and writing S1 to S5 and S6 to S10 with the help of scientific technique and their practical expertise for arriving at conclusion. The examined signatures proving that the writer attempts to camouflage her own handwriting by adopting and practicing the allograph technique to concealed her identity by adopting completely alternative form of letters and style with anticipation to disclaim it later.

B. Observation

Scientific examination of disputed signatures was conducted by the Forensic Document Expert (FDE) by using available scientific tools, such as, Hand Magnifying lenses of different magnifications, Stereo- microscope, Projectina Docucenter NIRVIS etc. Both the questioned and specimen signatures were compared with each other for their general and individual writing attributes. The questioned and specimen signatures were written freely, show uniform line quality, freedom and natural variation. The hidden writing characteristic which were essential elements of the individual writing habits, observed minutely by the FDE and in conspicuous details of formation of characters and their combinations, some of such as similarities in the individual writing habits are: formation of upper and lower curved body part with movement of twist at base of 'S'; second variety of nature, formation of lower curved body part of 'S'; relative location, manner and habit of construction of loop at upper body, shoulder and finish of 'h'; relative location and movement of commencing stroke, formation of oval body part and twist at terminal stroke of 'a'; formation of 'b', relative slant of vertical staff, shape of curved body part, with loop at terminal part; relative location and shape of hooked commencement of 'n' and 'm'. The linear letters are those lowercase letters having no ascending loop or stems (i.e., not supralinear) sometimes known as 'minuscules' consisting of 'm', 'n', 'a' etc[11]. But the writer attempt to disguise her writing characteristics by adopting the nature and manner of formation of supralinear letters i.e. 'h', 'b', sometimes known as 'majuscules' in the execution of letters 'h', 'n', 'm' in the word 'Shabnam' in aforesaid specimen signatures. The forwarding authority did not provide the similar model and design of specimen nor they provide the admittedly genuine signatures of the person concerned. It was very stiff action for the handwriting expert to prove the authorship on the basis of limited writing material.

Figure 1: Allographic form and style of Specimen writing (S1 to S5) for comparison



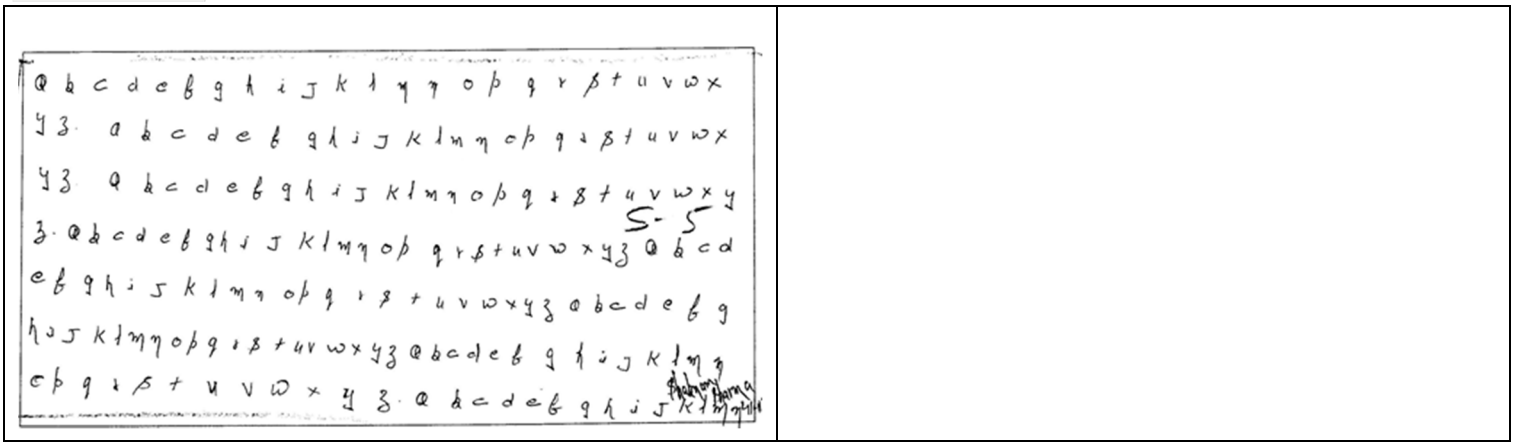
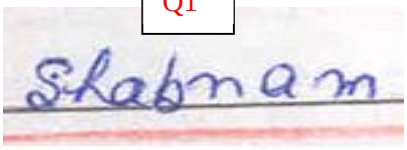
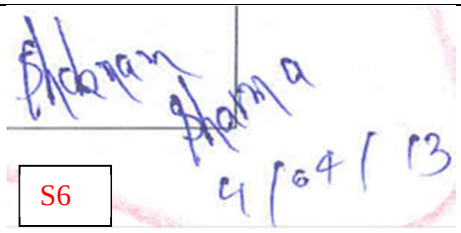
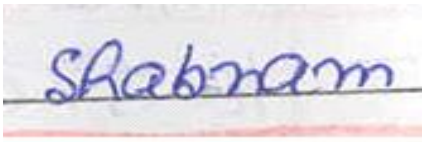
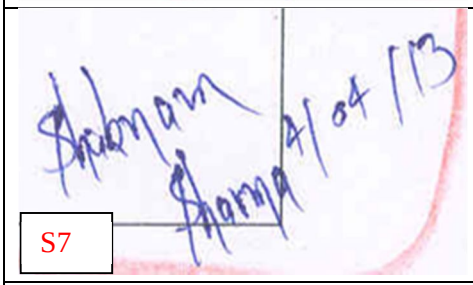
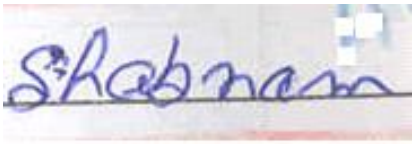
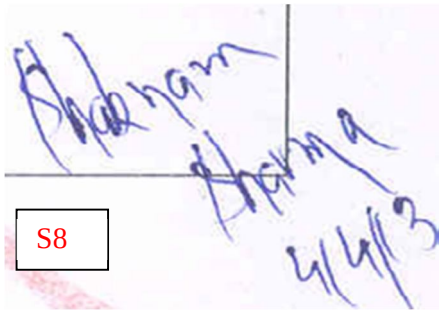
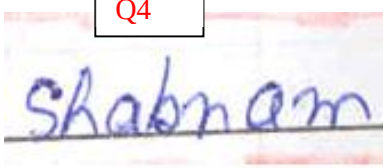
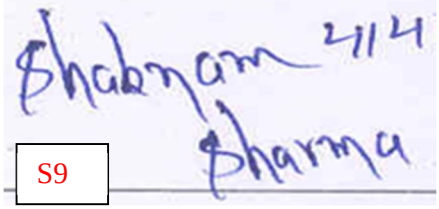
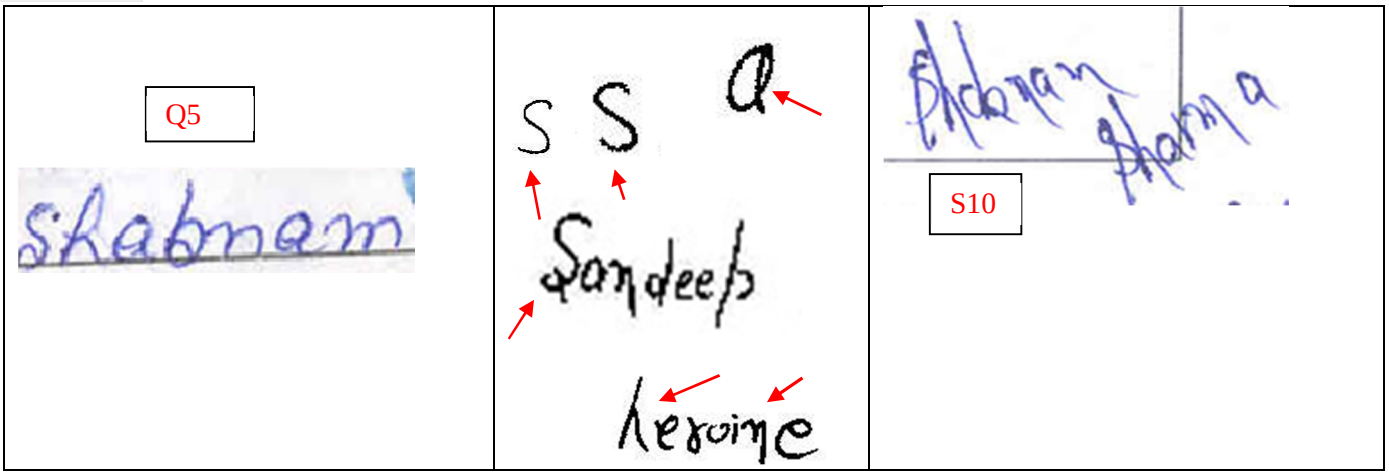


Figure 2: Juxta Posed Chart Showing minutes and in conspicuous similarities in writing attributes in both Questioned signatures (Q1- Q5); Specimen writing (S1- S5) and Specimen signatures (S6- S10)

Questioned signatures (Q1- Q5)	Specimen writing (S1-S5)	Specimen Signatures (S6- S10)
Q1 		 S6
Q2 		 S7
Q3 		 S8
Q4 		 S9



II. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The specimen signatures reveal that the writer appears to have adopted a different model of signatures appended on the specimen sheets. The writer changes her attributes of signatures by deliberately modification in the allographic style of handwriting which falls in the will full nature of complete alteration of disguise signatures.

The extended size and shape in letter formation, changes in the slant and relative spacing indicate the disguise signatures by the writer in order to with anticipation to disclaim it later. Examination revealed that the writing attributes occurring in the questioned signatures Q1 to Q5 (reading as 'Shabnam') are not similarly and collectively accounted for from the specimen signatures S6 to S10 (reading 'Shabnam Sharma') as shown in Juxtaposed Chart (Figure-2). However, the hidden writing characteristics mentioned in observation by the FDE between the questioned and specimen signatures reveals towards the opinion that both questioned and specimen signatures were written by one and the same person. There is also no sign of imitation in questioned signatures (Q1-Q5); specimen signatures (S1- S5) and specimen writing (S6- S10).

Examination of disguise signatures are very challenging task for an expert for a definite opinion expert always face difficulty in examination of disguise signatures or writing, if the standard writing material do not supply with the proper manner. The disguising signatures is the common practice now a days by the disguiser with the intention of concealed his/her identity.

In this case, the writer had given her specimen signatures freely with moderate speed in the presence of investigating officer and witnesses.

Expertise has shown that certain writing attributes of handwriting are rarely changed. The writer adopted some pattern or style, including idiosyncrasies in the construction of nature and direction of strokes of allograph (letter). Use of two or more designs for same allograph e.g. letter 'h', extension in the size of initial staff without creating loop and extend a distance in the formation of terminal stroke in body shoulder.

However, they can be deliberately modified by the disguiser by changing in the style and formation of the characters of her signatures. The specimen signatures manifest the pattern and style of writing adopting by the writer for modification in the general writing habits.

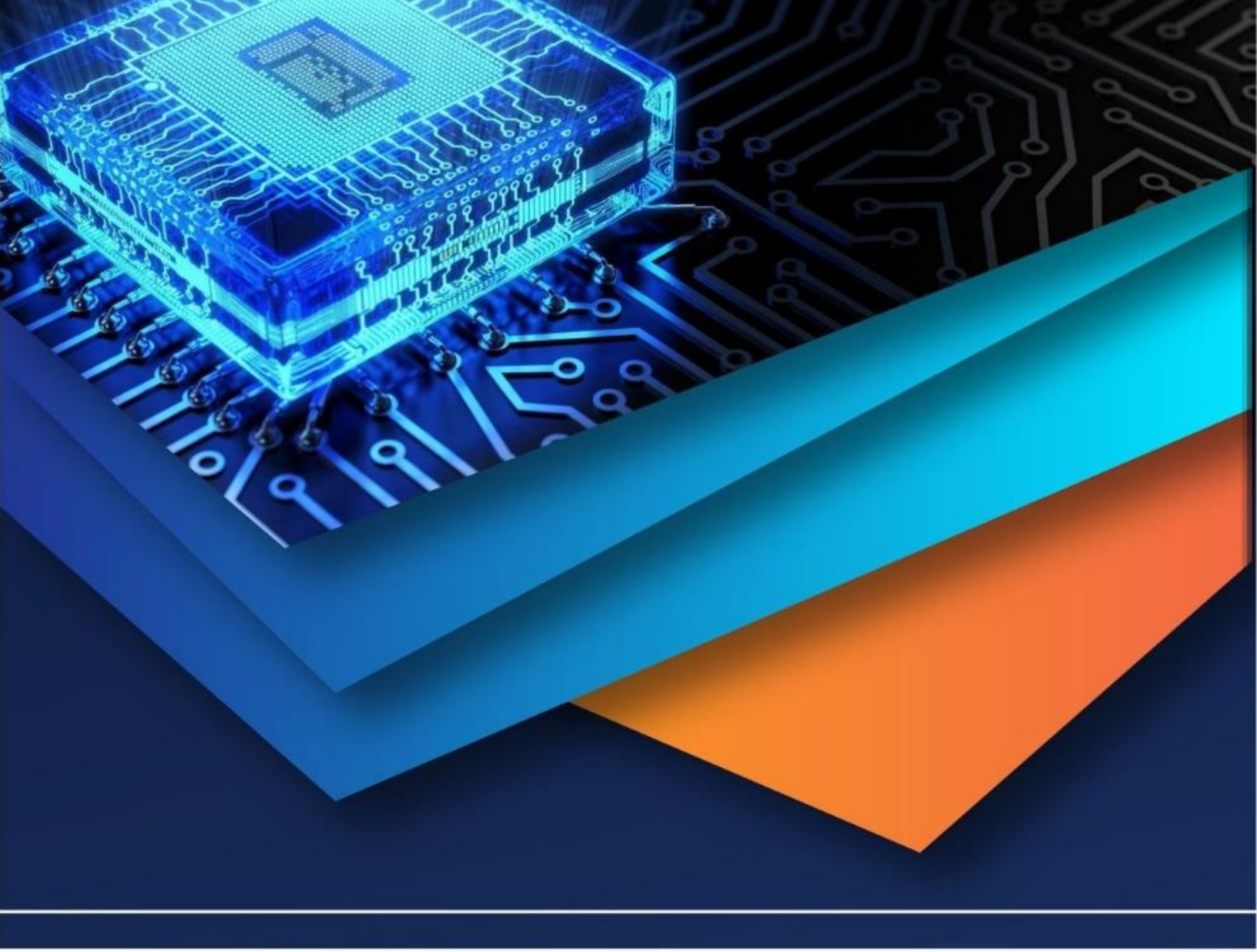
The deliberate detached formation of letters also shows the sign of disguiser. The downward extension of the terminal stroke in the letters such as 'h', 'n', 'a', and 'm', irregular spacing between letters, changing the slant, alignment, location of the commencement and termination observed in specimen signatures.

On other hand, the similar modification in the specimen writing do not adopt the extension style in the aforesaid characters clearly agree the sign of disguise signatures. In this challenging and interesting case, the study was discussed here that the person attempts to hide her identity by modifying their writing attributes completely and tried her level best. The principle of handwriting tells that no writer can exceed his or her skill level. However, it is difficult to change speedily and freely in order to create different style of writing attributes.

In this case, the writer left her conspicuous detail behind her writing which manifest after thorough and scientific examination. The writer fails to conceal her identity. It is because of the handwriting facts that the certain unique writing attributes profoundly costean into the subconscious mind.

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