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Forgery of Documents and Methods of Combating Forgery

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ABSTRACT

Document forgery is one of the main crimes that undermine public trust and disrupt the country's economic system, and is one of the factors of social inefficiencies in society. With the development of technology, communications, and domestic and international exchanges, the crime of forgery is evolving in various dimensions and levels. Therefore, in the face of new methods of preventing document forgery, determining security indicators in the production of documents seems to be an effective and necessary factor. With this in mind, in this study, which has been conducted using a descriptive method, an attempt has been made to use the opinions of experts in the field of security documents to examine the effectiveness of the four main factors in the production of valuable documents (paper, design, printing, and adhesives) in preventing forgery, using a questionnaire tool.The main goal of this research was to identify new methods of preventing document forgery, and the main and essential factors in paper, document design, printing, and the functions of parts attached to documents as security components in preventing forgery have been identified and examined. The statistical population in this research is 41 people who are experts in the field of document forgery and security document production. They have been surveyed in total. The results show that the use of the above-mentioned four factors in document production is an important and effective indicator in preventing document forgery. Finally, the formation and strengthening of the National Anti-Counterfeiting Committee to coordinate and policy-making on preventing and combating document counterfeiting is the most important (long-term) strategic proposal that has been presented in order to prevent document counterfeiting.

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Introduction

Social interactions among different nations and societies have undergone significant changes in today's world. The concept of a global village has become a reality, and billions of documents are exchanged every second of every day, both face-to-face and indirectly. Today, human life has experienced profound transformations as a result of extensive innovations across various fields. Experts believe that the security features of documents in our country are currently inadequate and that most documents lack the necessary level of security. With the exception of passports, for which specific security features have been established, other documents can be easily forged (Mir Mohammad Sadeghi, 2002, p. 26).

Documents such as identity cards, passports, credit cards, and similar items represent only a small portion of the products of the security printing industry. This industry plays a significant role in maintaining the social and political security of individuals and governments in their social, economic, and other interactions.

From a scientific perspective, prevention refers to a set of measures, other than punitive actions, whose ultimate objective is to limit the occurrence of crime, make criminal activities impossible or more difficult, and reduce the likelihood of their commission. Prevention can be either individual-oriented or situational. Situational crime prevention is based on the assumption that human beings are generally rational and calculating. Individuals consciously or unconsciously assess the potential consequences of their actions in various situations. Criminals are no exception to this general principle. Therefore, by increasing the costs of committing a crime and reducing its potential benefits, it is possible to discourage individuals from engaging in criminal activities (Najafi Abrandabadi, 2004, p. 114).

This research focuses on the situational prevention of document forgery by identifying methods for producing documents that are resistant to forgery. By examining security considerations related to the four principal components involved in producing valuable documents—namely, paper, design, printing, and attached security features—the study seeks to evaluate the impact of each component on preventing document forgery.

Preventing document forgery is one of the major concerns of both governmental and non-governmental organizations in general, and judicial, security, and law enforcement institutions in particular. The methods used to commit forgery have continuously evolved as a result of developments in science and technology across different dimensions and levels. These developments have created new challenges for law enforcement systems, since document forgery is often considered a gateway to the commission of other crimes. Consequently, this offense is of considerable importance and requires the effective application of contemporary scientific capabilities as a fundamental instrument for prevention and counteraction by government authorities in general and law enforcement agencies in particular.

To accomplish this important mission successfully, it is necessary to identify, explain, and implement essential security indicators in the production of valuable documents and negotiable instruments. Furthermore, the application of modern technologies in enhancing document security, preventing forgery, and making fraudulent activities more difficult for forgers must be identified and presented.

Main Objective of the Research

The main objective of this research is to identify modern methods for preventing document forgery. Achieving this objective will also contribute to accomplishing the following subsidiary research objectives.

Research Background

Regarding the forgery of banking documents and the security features of banknotes, three master's theses have been defended at Amin Police University of Law Enforcement Sciences, and one thesis has been defended at Alzahra University. These studies are summarized as follows:

1. Pazouki, Abolhassan (1995). Suspicious Documents and Their Scientific Examination. Master's Thesis, Amin Police University of Law Enforcement Sciences. This research primarily focused on scientific and laboratory methods used in document forgery and their examination.

2.Dehnadi, Maryam (2006). A Comparative Study of Banknote Designs Before and After the Islamic Revolution. Master's Thesis, Alzahra University. This study comparatively examined various printing techniques and security designs used in banknotes before and after the Islamic Revolution.

3.Vafadar, Hossein (2004). Document Forgery and Its Role in Crimes Against Property. Master's Thesis, Amin Police University of Law Enforcement Sciences. In addition to addressing the legal aspects of the crime of forgery, this research examined several methods of document falsification.

4. Handiani, Abdollah (2004). The Economic and Law Enforcement Consequences of Using Banknotes. Master's Thesis, Amin Police University of Law Enforcement Sciences. This study investigated the economic, law enforcement, and security implications of various types of banknotes used in Iran.

Theoretical Foundations of the Research

Forgery

Lexically, the Persian term for forgery (Jaal) means to make, transform, convert, establish, place, or create something. It also refers to an artificial or fabricated object presented as genuine, or something invented independently (Dehkhoda, 1998, p. 573).

In technical terms, forgery is defined as follows:

"Document forgery or falsification refers to the intentional creation of a false written document, with fraudulent intent and in a manner capable of causing harm to another person. This may occur through material falsification, such as altering, modifying, or imitating words, numbers, and signatures in various ways so as to create a false representation. It may also occur through intellectual or substantive falsification, including changing the nature or content of a document during its preparation, falsely acknowledging obligations, admissions, or releases on behalf of relevant individuals, misleading others, or omitting certain statements, admissions, or material conditions that have been accepted and agreed upon by the parties involved. In general, forgery encompasses any act through which an unreal matter is presented as real" (Soleimanpour, 1982, p. 43).

Questioned Documents

Questioned document examination is a specialized field within forensic science concerned with examining documents that are suspected of being forged, fraudulent, or damaged. The examination of questioned documents emerged as a distinct discipline within forensic science around 1870. One of the early pioneers in this field was Alphonse Bertillon (Bell, 2010, p. 642).

Research Methodology

In terms of its nature and purpose, this study is applied research, while its methodological approach is descriptive-analytical.

The statistical population consists of 41 specialists and experts, including official judicial experts, forensic science laboratory specialists, professionals from printing and publishing

companies, representatives of the Central Bank of Iran, Bank Melli Iran, and the Government Printing House, as well as academics and experts from other institutions actively involved in the production of security documents. All participants held at least a bachelor's degree. The entire statistical population was included in the study using the census sampling method.

The questionnaire was initially designed with 17 questions. Following consultations with several distinguished academic professors, the number of questions was increased to 20, and general considerations were also incorporated.
Accordingly, the validity of the research instrument was established through the content validity method, as the questionnaire was reviewed and approved by subject-matter experts.
To assess the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated. The resulting value indicated a reliability coefficient of 89.35% for the questionnaire.
Definition of a Document
A brief reference to the linguistic and conceptual definitions of a document will be provided here, while readers are referred to supplementary sources for further information.
An examination of the origins of the concept helps clarify the meaning of a document. Linguistically, the term document refers to a support, something upon which one relies or to which one turns for support (Dehkhoda, 1998, Vol. 9, p. 13785). It may also refer to anything that can be cited or relied upon as evidence (Allameh Haeri, 1972) or anything considered trustworthy and reliable (Nafisi, 1939, Vol. 3, p. 1945; Moein, 2004, Vol. 2, p. 1929).
In administrative terminology, a document generally refers to the outcome of activities and services performed by individuals and various organizations, prepared and organized in written or other forms in accordance with established rules and regulations, and preserved for future reference (Amirshahi, 2007, pp. 5–6).
According to the definition provided by Kiani, the former Deputy Director of the National Archives, a document is:
"Any type of information that is produced by or received by a government institution, remains permanently in the possession of the government, and possesses archival value from judicial, political, social, artistic, or historical perspectives" (Iran Newspaper, May 8, 2003).
An examination of various sources suggests that a document can be defined as an information-bearing unit, including written, visual, and audio materials, created by natural or legal persons or through computer systems, and possessing sufficient value to warrant preservation (Gharibi, 1996; Fothergill, 2000, p. 14).

This definition places greater emphasis on the informational content of a document than on its physical appearance.

Under Iranian civil law, a document is defined as any written material that can be cited in legal proceedings, whether in support of a claim or as a defense, and serves as a means of proof. In some contexts, the term is used in a broader sense to refer to any form of evidence and is therefore synonymous with proof or evidentiary material (Jafari Langroudi, 2009, pp. 363–364).
Overall, a document must possess two essential characteristics to be legally recognized as such:
1.It must have the capacity to be cited or relied upon as evidence.
2.It must be the product of human work and intellectual activity (Deyani, 2005, p. 25).
It should be noted that a written item does not necessarily have to be presented in court to qualify as a document. Rather, it must simply possess the capacity to be relied upon as evidence. For example, if one person lends another a certain amount of money and receives a written receipt in return, that receipt constitutes a document, provided that it is signed by the other party. This remains true even if no dispute arises between the parties and there is no need to

present the receipt before judicial authorities. Even if the receipt is obtained solely for future reference and personal record-keeping, it is still considered a document.

Types of Documents

Documents can be classified into several categories, including the following:

1. Bearer Document

A bearer document is a written instrument in which the signatory undertakes to pay a specified amount of money, either in a single payment or in installments, on a predetermined date to whoever presents the document. In other words, the person possessing the document is recognized as its lawful holder.

2. Official Document

An official document is one that is prepared and registered at the Office for Registration of Deeds and Properties, an official notary office, or before another competent authority or authorized public official, provided that it is prepared within the scope of their legal authority and in accordance with applicable laws and regulations (Seighal Noori, 1996, pp. 41–46; Iranian Civil Code, Article 1287).

3.Private Document

Any document that does not qualify as an official document is legally considered a private document. In other words, a document that does not meet the legal requirements for official-document status is classified as a private document (Jafari Langroudi, 2009, Vol. 2, pp. 1554–1555; Deyani, 2005, pp. 26–28).

From the perspective of legal validity and legal consequences, the legislator has also classified documents into three categories: official documents, private documents, and enforceable documents (Hosseini Nejad, 2008, p. 42).

Concept of Forgery

Linguistically, the term forgery refers to making, placing, establishing, creating, transforming, altering, or changing something. It may also refer to making something unpleasant appear acceptable or changing the original nature of an object (Moein, 2004, Vol. 1, p. 1231; Jafari Langroudi, 2009, Vol. 2, pp. 1554–1555).

In the legal systems of many countries, including Iran, the crime of forgery has not been defined through a single comprehensive statutory definition. Instead, legislation generally identifies specific instances of forgery, the methods through which it may be committed, and the penalties applicable to offenders.

Some legal scholars have defined forgery as follows:

"Forgery is the fraudulent distortion of the truth in a document, written material, or another object, with the intention of causing harm to another person, through methods specified by law" (Koosha, 1999, pp. 5–6).

According to another definition, forgery involves the intentional alteration of a written document or other objects specified by law, with the purpose of presenting them as original or authentic for one's own benefit or that of another person, to the detriment of a third party.

Another legal scholar has similarly described forgery as the fraudulent distortion of the truth, to the detriment of another person, in a document, written material, or any other object, through one of the methods prescribed by law (Jafari Langroudi, 2009, Vol. 2, p. 1555; Hamidzadeh Arbabi, 2009, pp. 10–20).

From the perspective of the legislator, forgery consists of creating a false written document, instrument, seal, or signature belonging to an official or private individual without the authorization of its rightful owner, or committing similar acts with fraudulent intent (Parchami, 2002, pp. 148–150).

As can be observed, the central element in all these definitions is the concept of "fraudulent distortion of the truth." This means that not every alteration or misrepresentation of the truth constitutes forgery; rather, the alteration must be carried out with fraudulent intent.
For example, a court typist may make numerous typing errors during daily work, requiring a secretary or judge to correct or modify those errors. However, since such corrections do not involve fraudulent distortion of the truth, they do not constitute a criminal offense.
In cases involving document forgery, it is important to recognize that an alteration of the truth constitutes forgery only when it relates to the legal significance or operative content of the document, or to matters that the document or written instrument was prepared to establish or disprove
.

Definition of Document Forgery

Based on the definitions presented, document forgery can be defined as "the fraudulent alteration or distortion of the truth in a written document, instrument, or any other object, with the intention of causing harm to another person".
In legal terminology, the act of forgery is referred to as Tazwir (falsification), while the person who commits forgery is known as a forger or falsifier. Forgery refers to the intentional creation of something false or contrary to reality, such as forging documents, manufacturing counterfeit coins, or fabricating false genealogical relationships. Therefore, document forgery represents a specific category of forgery, while forgery itself is considered a form of fraud or deception (Jafari Langroudi, 2009, p. 5662).
Accordingly, the intentional use of official or legally enforceable documents that can be relied upon in legal proceedings, whether in support of a claim or as a defense, for the purpose of falsification, fraud, or deception in transactions—where the material and mental elements of the crime are present—constitutes forgery. A person who makes use of a forged document is referred to as a forger or an individual exploiting a falsified document (Fadakar, 1997, p. 6).
Based on the relevant legislation, the criminal acts constituting forgery can be described as follows:
Creating or deliberately altering a written document or instrument; fabricating the seal or signature of an official or private individual; scratching, scraping, erasing, adding to, obliterating, overwriting, blackening, or otherwise tampering with a document; changing the date of a document; attaching one written text to another; or using another person's seal without authorization, with the intention of presenting the falsified item as genuine for one's own benefit or that of another person, to the detriment of a third party and with fraudulent intent (Goldouzian, 2008; Article 523 of the Islamic Penal Code).
For a better understanding of the crime of forgery, each of the aforementioned forms of fraudulent conduct will be examined individually.

Elements of the Crime of Forgery

According to French criminal law, the constituent elements of forgery include the following:
1.Distortion or alteration of the truth.
2. The fraudulent nature of the act.
3.The element of harm or potential damage (Hajiani, 1999, p. 44).

In Islamic jurisprudence, forgery is discussed under the concept of fraud or deception (Ehtiyal) and, depending on the judgment of the competent Islamic authority, may be subject to discretionary punishment (Ta'zir).

Types of Forgery

Under Iranian criminal law, document forgery is primarily classified into two fundamental

categories: material forgery and intellectual (moral) forgery.

1. Material Forgery

Material forgery refers to the physical alteration of a document through mechanical or physical methods, such as cutting, scraping, erasing, or modifying its contents.

This type of forgery occurs when a physical act of falsification is committed against a document or instrument. In other words, material forgery involves the distortion of the truth through a physical operation that leaves externally visible and tangible alterations in the written document or instrument.

The identification of material forgery is generally carried out through referral to a qualified forensic document examiner. However, in some cases, forgery may be committed by inexperienced individuals in ways that can be detected through careful examination.

The essential requirement for material forgery is the performance of a physical act. In other words, the document must first exist as a genuine physical object in the external world. Subsequently, the offender alters its contents, substance, or signature through a physical act, leaving observable traces of the fraudulent operation on the document.

2.Intellectual (Moral) Forgery

Intellectual forgery refers to the distortion of the truth in the content, conditions, or substance of a document without making any physical alteration or modification to its external appearance.

In this type of forgery, the distortion of the truth initially occurs at the mental or conceptual level and is subsequently reflected in the written document or instrument.

Unlike material forgery, which leaves tangible and observable physical traces, the detection and establishment of intellectual forgery are considerably more difficult.

Intellectual Forgery

Legal scholars have defined intellectual forgery as the fraudulent distortion of the truth in a written document or instrument, with the intention of causing harm to another person, without producing any external or material alteration (Basharatifar, 1997, p. 53).

For example, if a defendant, after being informed of the charges by a judge, states in their defense, "I do not accept the accusation," but the judge records the defendant's statement in the official minutes as, "I accept the accusation," the judge has committed the crime of intellectual forgery.

Establishing intellectual forgery requires evidence and circumstances beyond the contents of the document itself, because the act involves mental and intellectual manipulation through which the truth has been distorted and subsequently recorded in writing.

Penalties for the Crime of Forgery and the Use of Forged Documents

The Islamic Penal Code provides for penalties against individuals who commit document forgery. These penalties include financial fines and imprisonment.

According to the Islamic Penal Code, the forgery of academic graduation certificates issued by universities inside or outside Iran, as well as the use of such forged documents, is punishable by imprisonment ranging from one month to three years (Islamic Penal Code, Articles 523–542).

According to Article 532 of the Islamic Penal Code:

"Any employee of government departments, judicial authorities, or individuals performing public services who, in the preparation of written documents or contracts related to their official duties, commits forgery or falsification—whether by altering their subject matter or content, distorting the statements or writings of an official authority, modifying the seals or declarations

of either party, presenting something false as genuine or something genuine as false, or recording an acknowledgment that was never actually made—shall, in addition to administrative penalties and compensation for the damages caused, be sentenced to imprisonment for a period of one to five years or a monetary fine ranging from six million to thirty million rials".

It is possible for the person using a forged document to be different from the individual who originally forged it. For example, one person may forge an identity certificate, while another person knowingly uses that forged certificate despite being aware of its fraudulent nature.
It is also possible for the forger and the person using the forged document to be the same individual. In either case, two distinct criminal acts have been committed, and separate penalties may apply.
Problems and Consequences of Forgery
The consequences of document forgery can be examined in three main categories:

1. Material Damage
The harm resulting from the crime of forgery is generally and primarily material in nature. This means that it causes financial losses to individuals and damages their property and assets.
For instance, a forged document may falsely attribute a primary or secondary contractual obligation to an individual, despite the fact that the individual never consented to such an obligation. This creates the risk that the person may subsequently be compelled to fulfill the obligation or repay a debt that they never legitimately accepted (Fathabadi, 2005, p. 205).

2. Moral Damage
Forgery may also cause moral or reputational harm. It is sufficient for the fraudulent act to damage another person's dignity, reputation, credibility, or social standing for moral harm to arise.

3.Social Damage
Forgery not only harms the private interests of individuals but also threatens the broader interests of society.

Such acts undermine public confidence in official documents and legal instruments, potentially making members of society feel insecure even when preparing and executing official documents for their transactions.
Document forgery constitutes a criminal offense even when it causes little or no direct financial damage, because such conduct ultimately threatens public trust in government-issued and official documents.
Means and Opportunities for Intellectual Forgery
The means of intellectual forgery primarily involve obtaining access to relevant registration information through the following channels:

1.Misconduct by Employees of Registration Offices and Official Notary and Marriage and Divorce Offices
Government employees are considered representatives of the state. Therefore, when they commit errors, negligence, or misconduct while performing their assigned duties, their actions may be attributed to the government institution they represent. Such conduct can undermine the reputation and credibility of government authorities.
For this reason, in certain circumstances, the penalties imposed on government employees are more severe than those applicable to ordinary individuals.

One of the violations that may be committed by officials and employees who have access to official documents and records is the falsification of official forms, government correspondence, and public documents.
In addition to the offenses stipulated in the Islamic Penal Code, the Iranian legislator has specifically addressed this issue in Articles 100 to 103 of the Registration Law (Taghdareh, Abhari, and Ehtemami, 2008).

2.Access by Forgers to Relevant Documents Through Certain Organizations, Government Offices, and Institutions
Members of the public often regard non-governmental public institutions affiliated with the government as equivalent to government organizations. Consequently, they generally attribute the same degree of legitimacy and official credibility to the activities performed by these institutions and their employees.
Based on this perception, the legislator has sought to protect the status and credibility of such institutions and safeguard public interests. Accordingly, the forgery of images, symbols, signs, and other representations identifying these institutions or indicating the authenticity of documents issued by them is also considered a punishable offense, with severe penalties prescribed for such conduct.

Methods of Accessing Archives of Registration Documents, Securities, and Property Ownership Records
According to the research, potential access points to archives containing registration documents, securities, and property ownership records include the following:
1.Archives containing official documents and securities at printing facilities.

2.Archives containing official documents and securities at the representative offices of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance.
3. Archives containing official documents and securities at the General Offices of Registration of Deeds and Properties and their subordinate registration units.
4. Official notary offices, as the principal authorized users and distributors of official document forms.
5. Reuse of previously utilized forms by removing or neutralizing their existing inscriptions through chemical substances and subsequently printing or writing a new fraudulent text on them.
6.The possibility of forgery during the production and reproduction of counterfeit documents and forms.

Methods for Detecting Forged Documents
Various methods are used to identify forged documents. Some of the most important techniques are briefly described below:

1. Physical Methods
Ultraviolet (UV) light is used to detect alterations or erasures in handwritten documents and to identify fluorescent security features, such as security threads embedded in checks and banknotes.
Infrared (IR) radiation is also used for forensic examination, particularly to identify forged signatures, examine partially burned documents, and reveal writing that has become gray or faded due to exposure to heat.

2.Chemical Methods

To determine the consistency between two handwriting samples within a document, a test known as Tafel Analysis may be employed.
Furthermore, potassium sulfocyanide testing is used to reveal traces or impressions of ink-written entries in identity documents and official records.

3. Graphological Methods
Graphology refers to the psychological examination of handwriting and signatures. Through this approach, an attempt is made to determine whether a person signed a document under normal circumstances or while experiencing psychological pressure or coercion.
Some Strategies for Preventing Document Forgery
The following measures can help organizations strengthen document security and reduce the risk of forgery and unauthorized manipulation.

1. Classifying Reports and Software Outputs According to Their Importance and Security Level
Classifying system-generated reports and printed outputs helps identify important documents and forms. This enables organizations to implement appropriate security measures to prevent their misuse or forgery and to make employees and users aware of the importance and sensitivity of such documents.

2. Understanding the Importance of Signatures and Official Seals
Understanding the significance of signatures and official seals helps reduce negligence, operational errors, and related security vulnerabilities.

Seals should never be left accessible to unauthorized individuals or visitors. Blank sheets of paper must never be stamped or sealed in advance.

3.Recognizing the Authentic Signatures and Seals of Managers and Colleagues
To identify forged documents, it is essential to become familiar with the authentic signatures and official seals used by organizational managers and colleagues.
4. Using Different Signatures for Different Purposes
There is no necessity to use the same signature for important official documents and ordinary correspondence that may be accessible to the general public. Using different authorized signature formats for different categories of documents can help improve document security.
5.Signature Coding and the Use of Signature Verification Systems
Signatures can be assigned unique identifying codes or incorporated into signature verification systems so that they can be more easily distinguished from other signatures and authenticated.
6.Monitoring the Movement of Visitors in Sensitive Areas
Access to sensitive locations, including archives, administrative offices, and computer service rooms, should be carefully monitored to increase document security.
Areas containing valuable information and important records must remain under strict supervision. Entry and exit procedures should follow established protocols, and access permissions should be managed according to specific security requirements.
7. Securing the Circulation of Important Correspondence
The physical circulation of important and valuable correspondence within an organization must be carefully managed and adequately secured.

Such documents should never be transported by visitors or unauthorized individuals.

Using an electronic office automation system that eliminates the need for physical document circulation can provide an effective solution, provided that appropriate cybersecurity measures

are implemented.

8. Verifying the Accuracy of Information in Important Incoming Correspondence

Whenever important information is received through official correspondence, its accuracy and authenticity should be independently verified, either in writing or by telephone, through the relevant issuing authority.

9.Observing Security Requirements for the Storage and Transportation of Case Files

In 2006, the Iranian Judiciary issued guidelines concerning the protection of documents, information, and evidence contained in judicial case files.

Studying these guidelines and adopting their principles can provide valuable guidance for experts and organizational managers responsible for document security.

10.Using Surveillance Equipment to Monitor Access to Sensitive Areas

Surveillance equipment should be installed in important and sensitive locations to monitor access and movement and prevent unauthorized entry.

11. Training Employees and Raising Awareness of Security Requirements

Employees should receive appropriate training regarding document security procedures, the importance of protecting official records, and the consequences of document forgery.

They should also be made aware of the ethical and legal implications of forgery and encouraged to refrain from any involvement in such activities.

12. Using Halftone Printing of Organizational Logos on Official Paper

Organizations can use halftone printing techniques to reproduce their official logos on documents and forms, creating distinctive security features and indicating their validity period. It is advisable for these forms to have a limited period of validity, such as six months or one year, and to include unique identification codes to distinguish them.

These forms should never be considered, by themselves, definitive proof of the authenticity of the information printed on them. Such measures make document forgery more difficult.

13. Secure Storage of Organizational Letterheads and Forms

Organizational letterheads and official forms must be stored in secure and appropriate locations. Anyone who gains unauthorized possession of such forms may potentially print information on them and produce documents that appear to carry the authority and credibility of the issuing organization.

Therefore, proper protection and controlled distribution of official forms and letterheads are essential.

14.Never Signing Documents on Behalf of Another Person Under Any Circumstances

In some situations, personal relationships, mutual trust, and existing agreements may lead individuals to authorize another person to sign important documents on their behalf.

Apart from the potential legal and ethical restrictions associated with this practice, such arrangements may subsequently result in disputes, with the other party potentially claiming that their signature has been forged.

Furthermore, this practice significantly reduces the level of supervision and increases the possibility of procedural errors and fraudulent activities.

15. Storing Securities and Valuable Documents in Safes

Valuable documents, official forms, and securities should be stored in secure safes to prevent unauthorized access, theft, or misuse.

16.Using Holograms on Highly Important Reports and Printed Outputs

Applying security holograms to highly important printed documents and including a statement indicating that the document is invalid without the hologram can substantially enhance document security.

17. Comparing Printed Reports with Information Stored in the Electronic System

Organizations should always consider the possibility that information appearing on printed

reports may be inaccurate or manipulated.
Therefore, important decisions should never be made solely on the basis of printed documents. The information presented in printed reports should always be compared with the original data stored in the relevant electronic system.
18. Preparing Checklists for Final Processing Stages and Conducting Final Verification
Organizations should establish specific monitoring procedures at critical stages of administrative processes.
For example, when a student graduates or an employee completes their period of service, appropriate final verification procedures should be implemented.
Relevant checklists should be prepared, and responsible employees and system users should be required to conduct systematic checks at these critical stages.
19.Developing Security Guidelines Based on Organizational Requirements and Sensitivities
Each organization should develop and implement specific security guidelines that reflect its operational requirements, organizational structure, and level of sensitivity.

These guidelines should establish clear procedures for document production, storage, circulation, access control, authentication, and protection against forgery.
Prevention
Prevention refers to a set of measures, other than criminal sanctions, whose ultimate purpose, either exclusively or partially, is to restrict the scope of criminal activity, make the commission of a crime impossible or more difficult, and reduce the likelihood of its occurrence (Raymond, 1991, p. 133).
Types of Prevention: Prevention can be either individual-oriented or situation-oriented. Situational prevention seeks to influence the circumstances and situations that facilitate aggressive or acquisitive behavior. Individual-oriented prevention, however, involves measures and actions that directly affect the individual and, in this way, address individual deficiencies (Keynia, 1991, p. 135).
Situational Prevention of Document Forgery
Documents are exposed to various forms of damage and violations, and forged documents constitute effective tools for perpetrators of various crimes, including crimes against property. Documents are therefore considered both targets and instruments of crime and are consequently relevant to the discussion of situational crime prevention.

According to previous studies, the crime of forgery results from the combination of three fundamental elements: the forger, the vulnerable document, and the motive for committing forgery. If these three elements are regarded as the three vertices of a triangle, the crime of forgery emerges through their connection. Accordingly, combating this crime requires preventing these three elements from coming together. In other words, if any one of these elements is eliminated, forgery cannot be carried out.

Preventing the convergence of an individual with criminal intent and the instrument used to commit the crime, namely, the forged document, is one of the important security considerations addressed by situational crime prevention. The vulnerability of documents and their low level of security are among the key issues considered in this approach. The measures adopted under this type of prevention seek to increase document security and reliability, thereby preventing documents from being forged or altered easily. By modifying and improving existing conditions, situational crime prevention aims to prevent crimes against property, such as fraud and the use of forged documents.

In eliminating vulnerable documents, non-penal situational crime prevention theories play an

important role. This type of prevention focuses on various activities, including making the commission of crime more difficult, increasing the risks associated with committing a crime, and reducing the attractiveness of potential targets.

With regard to making crime more difficult, documents can be protected against forgery by strengthening their physical and security features. Furthermore, appropriate measures can be adopted to establish control programs for different types of documents, particularly identity documents, and to restrict the circulation of forged documents.
Important Considerations When Issuing Checks

1. When writing a check, carefully enter the date and amounts in both words and figures in their designated spaces.

2. After completing the check, review all the written information once again. Write the figures in their designated spaces in such a way that adding extra digits is not possible.
3. Record all the details of the recipient and the amount on the check stub.
4. If the check requires an endorsement, place the endorsement within the designated border or box.
5. Never issue a signed blank check to anyone.
6. Take great care in safeguarding the checkbook. If it is lost, immediately notify the bank and the relevant judicial authorities.
7. Avoid issuing checks for safekeeping, guarantees, or deposits. If this is necessary, document the arrangement through a formal agreement and retrieve the check once the agreed period has expired (Baghaei Naeini, 2008, pp. 46–49).

Research Findings
In this study, data analysis was conducted in two sections: descriptive statistics and inferential statistics.
In the first section, demographic indicators of the statistical population, including work experience, educational qualifications, and age, were summarized and described using tables and descriptive statistical measures such as the mean, median, and mode.

In the second section, the questionnaire items were analyzed using inferential statistical methods.

A) Descriptive Findings

Descriptive Statistics of the Age of Law Enforcement Experts

Statistical Indicator	Value
Number of respondents	41
Minimum age	24
Maximum age	52
Mean age	40
Standard deviation	5.66
Variance	32.10

The average age of the respondents was 40 years, with a variance of 32.10. Their ages ranged from 24 years (the minimum) to 52 years (the maximum).

B) Inferential Findings
In this study, the questionnaire served as the primary data collection instrument. It examined

modern methods of preventing document forgery, focusing on four principal considerations in the production of security documents.

Conclusion

Preventing document forgery is one of the major concerns of governmental and non-governmental organizations, particularly judicial, security, and law enforcement institutions. Undoubtedly, an essential consideration in prevention is that, alongside advances in science and technology, methods of committing forgery are also continuously evolving across different dimensions and levels. Therefore, achieving effective results in preventing document forgery requires the application of security indicators and features in documents and records, as well as the use of modern technologies to enhance document security and prevent forgery.

In this regard, the findings of the present study not only address the research questions but also provide useful supplementary information, which is presented separately below.

The study examined the role of four fundamental factors in preventing document forgery: paper, design, printing, and attached security features. It also assessed the extent to which each of these four factors contributes to the security of valuable documents.

The results indicate that the application of the aforementioned four factors generally plays a more effective role in preventing document forgery, with the exception of complementary patterns used in document design and the use of dry offset printing techniques, which did not demonstrate the same level of effectiveness.

The findings concerning each factor are as follows:

-Fundamental considerations regarding security paper in document production: The use of security paper with features such as non-fluorescence under ultraviolet light, watermarks, chemical sensitivity, security threads, fluorescent fibers, and colored particles.

-Fundamental considerations in document design: The use of various security patterns and design features, selected appropriately according to the type of document, to make the document resistant to forgery.

-Fundamental considerations in document printing: The use of security printing techniques, including intaglio, letterpress, and microprinting, as well as the application of various security inks appropriate to each printing technique in the production of secure documents.

-The most effective attached security features for enhancing document security: Holograms, laminates, barcodes, and chips.

The findings of the present study are fully consistent with the research conducted by Mr. Vafadar (2004) on the prevention of document forgery. However, regarding the functions of the four security features, the present study further develops and complements his findings.

The results of this study are also fully consistent with Dehnadi's (2006) research on the design and printing factors involved in banknote production. However, that study did not address other factors, such as the security features of paper and attached security components.

Finally, the recommendation obtained from the open-ended questionnaire question, as presented in the first item of the proposed strategies, is fully consistent with the strategic recommendation put forward in the research conducted by Mr. Handiani.(2004)

Recommendations

Based on the studies conducted and the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are proposed:

1.Appropriate modifications and improvements to the four fundamental factors—paper, design, printing, and attached security features—can strengthen documents and enhance their security level, thereby contributing to the situational prevention of document forgery.

2. Given technological advances and the development of various scanners, printers, and

software applications, forgers may potentially gain access to some of the security features incorporated into documents. Therefore, increasing the number of security features used in document production is recommended as a preventive measure.

3.It is recommended that stricter controls be imposed to prevent unauthorized public access to security paper and its production technologies, security inks, security designs and patterns, and specialized equipment used for security printing and document production.
4.Providing general public education to promote citizens' rights and familiarize users of security documents with the four fundamental security considerations discussed above can play an effective role in preventing document forgery.
5. Document-producing authorities should continuously revise and introduce new security parameters in document production to stay ahead of forgery techniques.
6.It is recommended that a National Anti-Forgery Committee, which previously existed in the country, be re-established and strengthened with the participation of representatives from organizations responsible for preventing and combating document forgery. The committee should coordinate activities, formulate policies, and organize national efforts in this field.
7.In the long term, it is recommended that different types of security documents be classified and assigned security levels following expert assessments. This classification should take into account their intended functions, production volumes, useful life, future requirements, and production costs, and should be established through legislation supported by strong enforcement mechanisms.
8.It is recommended that effective cooperation be established between organizations and printing houses responsible for producing security documents. Following expert evaluations and the determination of appropriate security levels, legal responsibility for designing, printing, and producing documents at each level should be clearly assigned.
9. In the long term, appropriate investment should be made to strengthen the country's security paper manufacturing industry in terms of scientific and technical capabilities. Planning should also be undertaken for the domestic development and production of security inks, software, machinery, and security document design and manufacturing technologies. These measures would reduce dependence on foreign suppliers and create opportunities for exports.
10. It is recommended that the use of multifunctional, tamper-resistant national smart documents be included in the long-term agenda of relevant authorities and institutions, so that this national project can be implemented once the necessary infrastructure has been established

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