# Disguise e-Code: A Revolution in the Administration of Lecturers and University Students

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**Abstract.** The disguise e-Code is an administration mechanism to solve human capital problems in an organisation. It is intended to solve human capital problems like uneven distribution of assignments which can lead to an uncomfortable and suspicious working environment among staff. This will eventually demotivate the staff to provide their best service and full cooperation to complete any program or task successfully. The disguise e-Code will exchange staff's real name which is only known by their superior. Thus, any problems that occur among staff can be discussed openly without prejudice because it is tagged as anonymous and only based on the single task data alone. Next, corrective actions can be taken more easily. To facilitate the systematic use of this e-Code system, mobile applications were developed as the supporting tools. In this study, a series of surveys were conducted on staff and students to understand their perception on the implementation of disguise e-Code. For the staff, the questionnaires were distributed at the end of the meeting to the attendees who used this disguise e-Code. There were more than 60 respondents among the staff. Meanwhile, more than 100 students filled up the questionnaire after they checked their results via disguise  e-Code app. The questionnaires were analysed by using quantitative method, based on a 5-point Likert Scale. The average score resulted from both respondents were more than 4.5 (Strongly Agree). This indicates that the disguise e-Code is an easy to understand and apply mechanism and has positively affected the organization, especially to solve sensitive issues. Moreover, from the students 'perception, the disguise e-Code is an easy-to-use application. Hence, it is recommended that this mechanism should be applied as the best practice in any organisations, especially those with many staff and having difficulties in adopting open criticism among the staff.

**Keyword**: Administration, Disguise e-Code, Organisation, Productivity, Staff, Student

## Introduction

An organisation will only be competitive and thereby lead to desired progress if the problems within the organisation are well controlled. Eventually, this will increase productivity and work efficiency, which will also enhance cooperation, trust and motivation within the organisation. According to Rohana et al. (2015), collaborative and united organisations have the capability to contribute significantly towards the national economy, and to compete at a higher level in the global business arena. Psychological health problems, such as being temperamental and stress that often occur among the employees may negatively affect work focus and job satisfaction (Azahar et al., 2014). On that basis, various control measures have been introduced and taken to handle these issues, such as engaging an accredited counselor as a mediator to advise in understanding and solving the problems. It has been reported by Abu Bakar (1985), these job facets: accomplishment interpersonal relations,

acknowledgement, accountability, the work itself, working environments, advancement, job security, rank, career and private life; are perceived as low satisfaction by a staff.

These problems can have negative impacts on an organisation and need to be handled wisely to ensure that everyone's work gets better and the organisation's objectives can be achieved successfully. A balanced and timely distribution of tasks is necessary to ensure that all tasks are well accomplished. So, the head department should be wise to determine the positions and jobs of different employees according to their respective skills (Abdul Said & Katriani, 2014). In addition, the rewards or benefits provided by an organisation, whether in financial or non-financial form such as free hospital treatment, can boost motivation as well as the productivity among employees (Faizillullahwati, 2002). However, employees' behaviours and attitudes such as trustworthy, committed and happy at work also play a role in increasing the productivity of an organisation (Muna & Atasya, 2013).

Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) has 14 branches and 35 campuses all over Malaysia. It accommodates a large number of staff and students. By referring to the university's capacity in terms of facilities, staff and students as well, there is a high possibility of various administrative and managerial problems expected to occur. Hence, various initiatives have been taken by UiTM's management to overcome or at least minimise these problems such as conducting team building activities, employing mentorship program, utilising peer recognition, ensuring leadership by example, creating a positive work environment, communicating effectively, rewarding good performance and etc. which have successfully led to an improvement of the efficiency of the administration and management. However, there are issues that are not totally resolved and in need of attention especially motivation to do extra work, self-integrity, relationship between peers and communication between staff and students.

The main purpose of the disguise e-Code is to solve human capital problems (lecturers and assistant engineers) in the School of Civil Engineering, UiTM Pahang which involves irregular distribution of working tasks, achievement in key performance index (KPI) and less accuracy in assessing individual performance yearly scores. The irregular distribution of working tasks related to the lecturers are teaching time and number of teaching classes, involvement in internal organisation and frequency of office tasks. Meanwhile, for assistant engineers, supervision of the laboratory is the main issue as there are assistant engineers who need to supervise heavy and dirty laboratory works, but not the same case for other assistant engineers. These human capital problems have caused communication discomfort among staff that indirectly lead to an uncomfortable and full-fledged work environment. This will eventually demotivate the staff to provide their best service and full cooperation in order to complete any program or task successfully. This would also affect the faculty achievement through its KPI, objectives, visions, missions and strategic planning, whereby the faculty will be under-achieved due to lack of support. It has been proven in many studies in strategic human resources that human's contribution and human resource management are two most vital factors that lead an organisation to perform in flying colors (Audia, 2016). These problems and their negative effects are concluded in an interview survey of 25 lecturers and 5 assistant engineers at the School of Civil Engineering, UiTM Pahang.

Besides human capital issues on lecturers and assistant engineers, this problem is also faced by the students. At UiTM, lecturers need to inform on-going assessments to students before they sit for the final exam. The most common method is by displaying the on-going assessments on the notice board in front of the lecturer's office. Even though there is no name shown and only the UiTM identification number (ID) is displayed, this will not stop their peers from finding out the name(s) easily. This is because UiTM ID can be found on the student card as well as in the attendance list. This will create a sense of embarrassment to students who are under performing as their results can be known to their peers. This may be a minor problem for some students but a lot of them will face the tendency to be stressed out and eventually demotivate them from improving their performance. The effects are concluded through an interview survey of 50 students at the School of Civil Engineering, UiTM Pahang.

**Methodology**

Firstly, each staff member needs to send their username to the superior in order to get their disguise e-Code. Whenever there is a discussion regarding sensitive issues, the superior will send a mobile app e-Code (Figure 1 and Figure 2) through official email which later needs to be downloaded by the staff. Other than the disguise e-Code, the information of the issues which will be discussed is also displayed through this mobile app. The purpose is to ensure that there is no inaccurate information since the individual information can be viewed and checked by each member of staff. If there is any inaccurate information, a report shall be lodged by them to the superior to be corrected. Information for each staff must be accurate before any meeting is held to avoid any inconvenience during discussion.
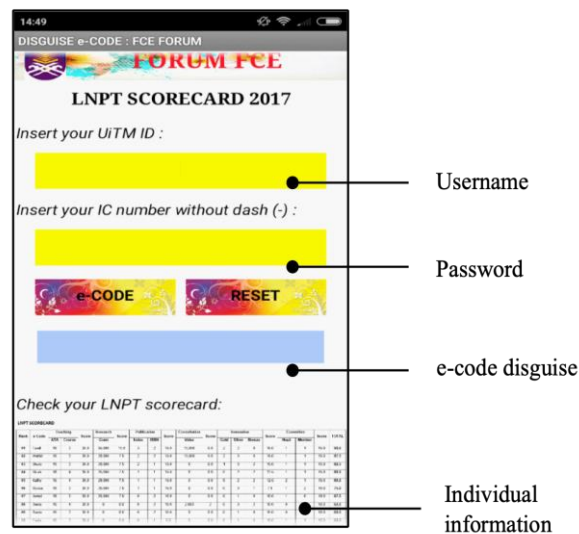


**Fig.1** Disguise e-Code mobile app for staff

During the discussion, information about each staff member will be displayed on screen. Meanwhile, for the chairman of the meeting, WhatApps application will be displayed on his or her personal computer screen. The screen is only visible to the chairman of the meeting. The purpose is to ensure the chairman receives the feedback through WhatApps application from the staff which is the subject of a particular discussion without exposing the identity of the staff. The chairman will act on behalf of the staff in providing feedback to the other meeting members.
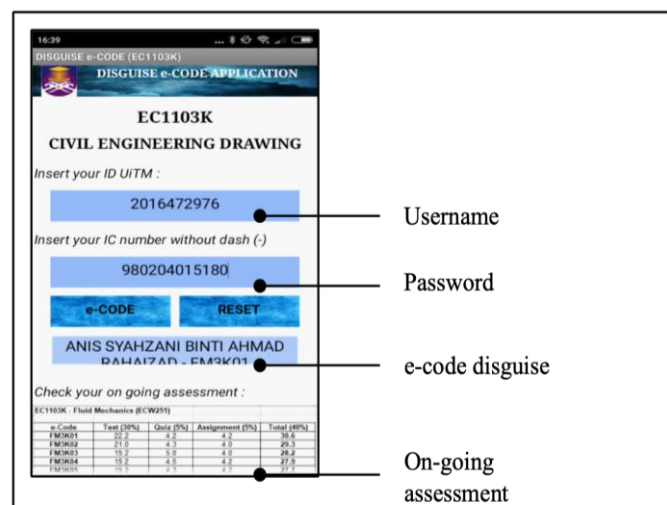


**Fig.2** Disguise e-Code mobile app for student

Meanwhile, the students and staff need to send a password to the lecturer. Q-R code of the disguise e-Code will be displayed in front of the office to be scanned and downloaded or the disguise e-Code app will be sent to the official student WhatApps group. On-going assessment will be displayed on the mobile app. Students can also get the disguise e-Code through the mobile app as well. After getting the disguise e-Code, students can check their on-going assessment through the mobile app. This modus operandi is shown in Figure 3.
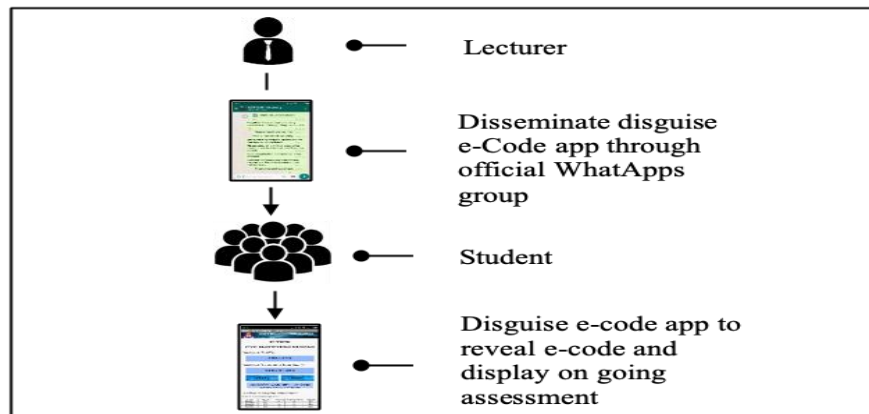


**Fig. 3** Disguise e-Code modus operandi for student

On the other hand, each staff member should have the disguise e-Code before attending the meeting. For the discussion, two screens are required. The first screen is to be displayed to all members of the meeting and the second screen is only visible to the chairman of the meeting. The chairman should have a phone with a specific phone number, so that any discussion which is displayed on the WhatApps application would not show actual names of the meeting members except for the disguise e-code. Members of the meeting should be prepared with WhatApps application on their mobile phones so that actions can be taken if they become the subject of the discussion. In summary, the usage modus operandi for staff is shown in Figure 4.
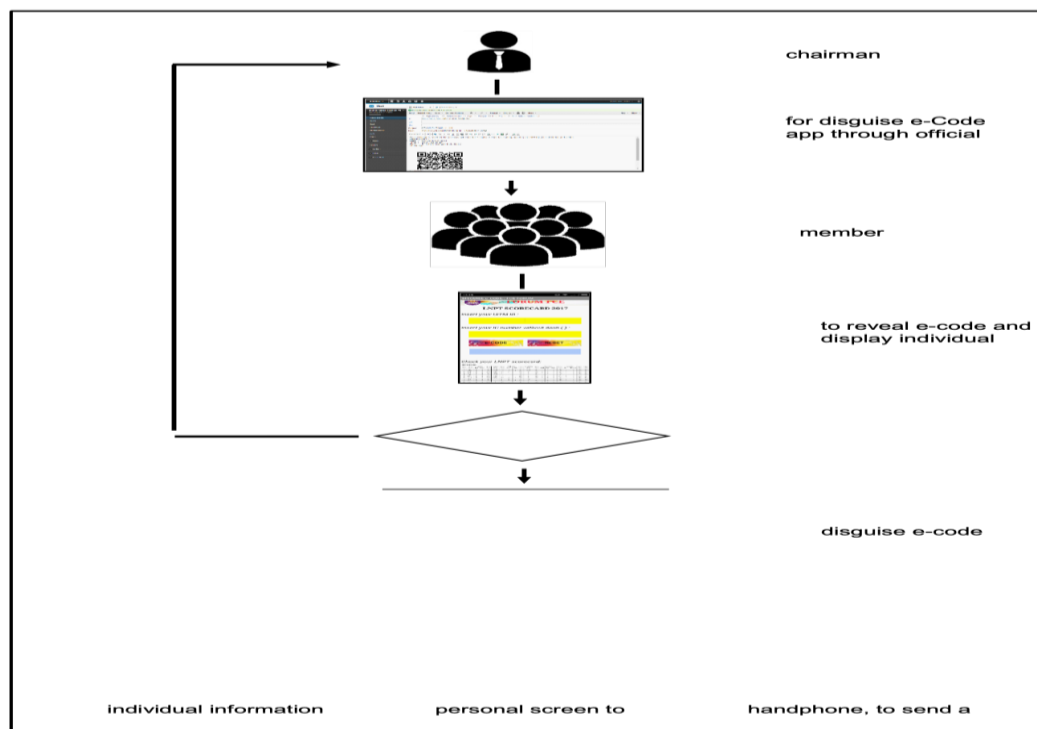


**Fig. 4** Disguise e-Code modus operandi for staff

**Discussion**

The main function of the disguise e-Code being applied at the School of Civil Engineering, UiTM Pahang is to deal with sensitive issues affecting humans' feelings and motivations that arise among the staff so that it can be discussed transparently and without prejudice. Thus, the problems that often cause disruption in organisation administration can be resolved in harmony whilst minimising the negative effects on individual feelings and motivations. As for the students, this disguise e-Code will prevent their on-going assessment from being publicly accessed by their peers, unless permitted by the student himself/herself.

Table 1 is the result of a questionnaire conducted on the members of a meeting held at the School of Civil Engineering after they applied the disguise e-Code during the meeting. The average result engaged over 20 members including lecturers and assistant engineers from 3 different meetings. This questionnaire was adapted with modification from the surveys in the study by (O 'Brien, 2004; Almagrabi et al., 2015; Griffin-Shirley et al., 2017). These three studies mainly identified the quality of products and mobile applications through surveys by users, so that the analysed opinions can be used in improving its quality. This questionnaire uses the Likert Scale as the core of the assessment whereby score 1.00 to 1.49 is strongly disagree, 1.50 to 2.49 is disagree, 2.50 to 3.49 is not sure, 3.50 to 4.49 is agree and 3.50 to 4.00 is strongly agree. Through this result, the respondents strongly agreed that the disguise e-Code was an easy-to-understand-and-apply mechanism and positively affected the organisation, especially to solve sensitive issues. However, they are concerned with the protection of individuals 'personnel information because this matter is beyond their control and depends solely on the integrity of the superior.

**Table 1.** Staff's Opiniom on Disguise e-Code

| Item | Mean score | Remarks |
|---|---|---|
| I think that I understand the idea of this disguise e-Code. | 4.88 | Strongly agree |
| I think that I would need assistance to be able to use this disguise e-Code. | 1.22 | Strongly disagree |
| I think that I would like to use this disguise e-Code frequently. | 4.08 | Agree |
| I felt this disguise e-Code is useful to me as a staff. | 4.76 | Strongly agree |
| I felt this disguise e-Code is helpful to solve sensitive matter in my organiaation. | 4.47 | Agree |
| I felt very confident using this disguise e-Code. | 4.95 | Strongly agree |
| I found this disguise e-Code very cumbersome/awkward to use. | 1.67 | Strongly disagree |
| I found this disguise e-Code unnecessarily complex. | 4.62 | Strongly agree |
| I believe the idea utilizing disguise e-Code in the meeting is far better than without utilising it. | 4.31 | Agree |
| I believe the individual's personal information is protected when using a disguise e-Code. | 3.46 | Not sure |
| I believe this disguise e-Code can be used for an unlimited number of people. | 4.02 | Agree |

Table 2 is the result of a series of questionnaires conducted on 4 classes involving more than 100 students after using the disguise e-Code to check their on-going assessment. The adapted questionnaire was modified from a questionnaire disseminated to the staff. Students think that the mechanism of the disguise e-Code to check on going assessment is better than the existing mechanism. In addition, students also strongly agree that the disguise e-Code is easy to use and is not a complicated method.

**Table 2.** Students' Opinion on Disguise e-Code

| Item | Mean score | Remarks |
|---|---|---|
| I think that I understand the idea of this disguise e-Code. | 4.92 | Strongly agree |
| I think that I would need assistance to be able to use this disguise e-Code. | 1.14 | Strongly disagree |
| I think that I would like to use this disguise e-Code frequently. | 4.88 | Strongly agree |
| I felt this disguise e-Code is useful to me as a student. | 4.92 | Strongly agree |
| I felt very confident using this disguise e-Code. | 4.96 | Strongly agree |
| I found this disguise e-Code very cumbersome/awkward to use. | 1.20 | Strongly disagree |
| I found this disguise e-Code unnecessarily complex. | 4.84 | Strongly agree |
| I believe the idea utilizing disguise e-Code as a mechanism to check on-going assessment is far better than without utilizing it. | 4.80 | Strongly agree |
| I believe the individual's personal information is protected when using a disguise e-Code | 4.76 | Strongly agree |
| I believe this disguise e-Code can be used for an unlimited number of people. | 4.80 | Strongly agree |

## Conclusion

Basically, the mechanism of the disguise e-Code can provide benefits to the administration of a university; both to staff and students. Hence, it is recommended that this mechanism should be applied as the best practice in any organization, especially those with many staff and having difficulty adopting open criticism among staff. Since this mechanism needs low-cost capital to be implemented, it can be applied widely. However, the disguise e-Code can only be fully effective if the superior has high integrity in protecting the confidentiality of the impersonation. The main disadvantage of this mechanism is the additional work for the superiors and lecturers because they need to match the names of the staff and students with the passwords in getting the disguise e-Code into the mobile app database. This mechanism will be more complicated if it involves a lot of staff and students. However, if the database mechanism is well structured and periodically maintained, it is believed that this problem can be avoided.

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