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A Study on Determinants of Employee Turnover in the Workplace Environment

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Abstract: ***Employee turnover remains a persistent concern across workplace environments, impacting organizational productivity, employee morale, and overall institutional performance. This review explores a wide range of factors that contribute to employee turnover, encompassing both traditional and evolving workplace determinants. The Key aspects include job satisfaction, compensation, work-life balance, organizational culture, and opportunities for growth. In addition, emerging variables such as digital exhaustion, lack of autonomy and misalignment with organizational purpose, are examined. This study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of turnover drivers and offer practical insights for management and HR professionals to foster a more stable and engaged workforce.***
Keywords: Employee Turnover, Job Satisfaction, Work life Balance, Compensation and Benefits

I. INTRODUCTION

Employee turnover continues to be a major concern for organizations across various sectors, including academic institutions, corporate environments, and public service. Understanding why employees leave their jobs is essential for improving retention strategies and building a stable and motivated workforce. While many studies have explored traditional factors like salary, job satisfaction, and career growth, recent workplace developments have introduced more complex and modern determinants. This review focuses on both basic and emerging variables that influence employee turnover in today's workplace environment. It covers traditional aspects such as work-life balance, job security, and leadership style, along with newer considerations like digital fatigue, and the impact of artificial intelligence in human resource practices. These advanced factors are becoming increasingly relevant due to changes in how organizations operate especially in hybrid and tech-driven work settings. This article aims to provide a well-rounded understanding of what causes employees to stay or leave, and how organizations can adapt their HR policies to create more engaging and supportive workplaces.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Ravi Kumar et al. [2024] explored the role of digital transformation in influencing employee turnover in tech-based companies. They highlighted how the transition to remote work and increased reliance on AI tools has created new stress factors among employees, leading to increased turnover. The study suggested that companies should provide adequate training and support to manage digital tools and maintain work-life balance.[1]

Priya Singh and Ravi Verma [2023] examined the impact of leadership style on employee turnover in Indian corporate settings. Their study found that transformational leadership leads to higher employee retention by fostering an inclusive and motivating work environment. Conversely, transactional leadership was linked with higher turnover rates due to lack of employee engagement.[2]

Aditi Sharma et al. [2023] conducted a study on employee job satisfaction and turnover intentions in public sector institutions in India. Their research concluded that job satisfaction, particularly in terms of career growth opportunities and job security, significantly affects turnover intentions. Additionally, they emphasized the importance of transparent communication from management to reduce turnover rates.[3]

Anil Joshi and Deepak Gupta [2022] discussed the role of organizational culture in influencing employee retention. They found that a culture of innovation and collaboration reduced turnover by enhancing employee engagement. The study recommended fostering a positive organizational culture that values diversity and inclusivity.[4]

Meera R. and Nivedita S. [2022] researched the effects of work-life balance on employee retention in educational institutions in India.

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They concluded that providing flexible working hours and work-from-home options significantly lowered turnover rates, especially among women employees. The study highlighted the importance of supporting employees' personal and professional lives.[5]

Vijay Prakash et al. [2024] studied the psychological contract theory in relation to turnover intentions in Indian manufacturing firms. The research found that breaches in the psychological contract, particularly related to promotions and performance appraisals, led to increased turnover intentions. Organizations were advised to manage expectations effectively to reduce turnover.[6]

Neelam Sharma et al. [2023] analyzed the impact of digital fatigue and technostress on employee retention. Their research in Indian IT firms suggested that the constant use of digital tools, especially in a remote working setup, leads to burnout and higher turnover rates. They recommended incorporating digital wellness programs and regular mental health support.[7]

Pooja Joshi and Gaurav Sharma [2022] explored the relationship between employee engagement and turnover in Indian retail companies. The study showed that employees who felt their work was meaningful and aligned with their personal values were less likely to leave. Their work highlighted the need for employers to focus on employee engagement strategies to reduce turnover.[8]

Kiran B. and Shweta Singh [2022] focused on the role of compensation and career development opportunities in reducing turnover among Indian university faculty. Their study revealed that while salary was a factor, the lack of clear career advancement pathways was a significant contributor to turnover in higher education institutions.[9]

Rashmi Desai et al. [2023] examined the influence of hybrid work models on employee turnover in Indian startups. The research found that a hybrid work model that allowed flexibility in work schedules and location significantly improved employee satisfaction, which in turn reduced turnover rates. Their study recommended a balanced hybrid model for improved retention.[10]

Objectives

- To investigate the major workplace factors contributing to employee turnover in higher education institutions.
- To assess how career development, fair compensation and flexible work arrangements influence employee turnover.
- To explore the impact of organizational communication and digital wellness on employee turnover decisions.
- To derive practical recommendations for HR and management to reduce employee turnover**.**

III. TRADITIONAL DETERMINANTS OF EMPLOYEE TURNOVER

Here's the combined description and impact for each traditional determinant of employee turnover:

A. Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to how content an employee is with their role, tasks, relationships, and the work environment. Factors such as the nature of the work, relationships with colleagues and supervisors, autonomy, and job conditions influence this. High job satisfaction fosters greater employee engagement, reduced absenteeism, and lower turnover rates. Employees who are satisfied with their work are less likely to seek opportunities elsewhere, while dissatisfaction can drive employees to leave in search of a better work environment, leading to higher turnover.

B. Compensation and Benefits

Compensation and benefits encompass the salary, bonuses, health insurance, retirement plans, and other financial perks employees receive. Fair and competitive pay is crucial for attracting and retaining talent. Employees who feel that their compensation is inadequate compared to their skills and industry standards may seek better financial incentives elsewhere, leading to dissatisfaction and higher turnover. On the other hand, competitive salaries and attractive benefits can enhance employee loyalty and reduce turnover.

C. Career Development Opportunities

Career development refers to the opportunities employees have to grow professionally, acquire new skills, and advance within the organization. This includes training programs, mentorship, promotions, and the ability to take on new responsibilities. Employees who perceive limited career progression may feel stagnant and disengaged, leading them to leave for roles that offer better growth potential. Organizations that invest in career development can reduce turnover and enhance employee satisfaction by offering continuous learning and promotion opportunities.

D. Leadership Style

Leadership style refers to how managers and leaders interact with employees, including their communication, decision-making, and management approaches. Leadership can be supportive, directive, transformational, or autocratic. Poor leadership practices, such as micromanagement, lack of support, or inconsistency, can demoralize employees, leading to dissatisfaction and increased turnover.

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In contrast, positive leadership that fosters trust, open communication, and motivation encourages employee loyalty, which can help reduce turnover.

E. Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance refers to an employee's ability to balance work demands with personal life. Flexible work hours, remote work options, and sufficient vacation time contribute to this balance. A poor work-life balance, where employees are expected to work long hours or are constantly on-call, can lead to stress and burnout, prompting employees to leave for roles that offer better personal time flexibility. Offering work-life balance policies can enhance job satisfaction and reduce turnover by showing employees that their personal well-being is valued.

F. Job Security

Job security refers to the stability of an employee's position within an organization. Employees who feel their jobs are secure are more likely to stay, while those facing uncertainty (due to layoffs, restructuring, or organizational changes) are more likely to leave. Uncertainty about job security can cause anxiety, dissatisfaction, and ultimately, increased turnover. Providing job stability encourages loyalty and retention, as employees are more likely to stay in secure, stable work environments.

G. Organizational Culture and Environment

Organizational culture refers to the shared values, beliefs, and practices within an organization. It includes how employees interact with each other, the norms around communication, collaboration, and the overall atmosphere. A positive organizational culture fosters job satisfaction, collaboration, and organizational loyalty, which helps reduce turnover. In contrast, a toxic culture marked by poor communication, discrimination, or favoritism can lead to dissatisfaction, low morale, and higher turnover.

H. Interpersonal Relationships

Interpersonal relationships refer to the quality of interactions among employees, including relationships with colleagues, supervisors, and subordinates. Positive relationships based on trust, collaboration, and mutual respect enhance job satisfaction and employee engagement, leading to lower turnover rates. However, poor relationships, conflict, or a lack of support can create feelings of isolation and dissatisfaction, driving employees to leave the organization for a more harmonious work environment.

I. Workload and Job Demands

Workload and job demands refer to the amount of work expected from employees and the level of difficulty associated with their tasks. High workloads, unrealistic deadlines, and excessive job demands can cause stress and burnout. Employees who feel overwhelmed by their workload may seek roles with more manageable expectations, leading to increased turnover. Conversely, organizations that ensure reasonable workloads and provide the necessary resources for employees tend to have lower turnover rates.

J. Recognition and Rewards

Recognition and rewards refer to how employees' contributions are acknowledged, whether through formal recognition programs, bonuses, promotions, or other forms of reward. A lack of recognition can lead to decreased motivation, which contributes to higher turnover rates. Recognizing employees' efforts and rewarding them appropriately boosts morale, fosters loyalty, and helps reduce turnover.

By addressing these traditional determinants, organizations can create an environment that supports employee retention, ensuring long-term success and a committed workforce.

IV. REVIEW OF EMERGING DETERMINANTS

A. Time Autonomy & Chronotype Flexibility

Time autonomy refers to the flexibility that employees have in managing their own schedules based on their productivity patterns, also known as chronotypes. Not every individual operates optimally within the traditional 9-to-5 workday. Some employees may perform better early in the morning, while others are more productive later in the day or at night. Providing flexibility for faculty members or employees to choose when they work allows them to align their schedules with their peak performance times, leading to better productivity, satisfaction, and well-being. In the context of higher education, chronotype flexibility is particularly beneficial for research and teaching staff who may need uninterrupted blocks of time to focus on academic tasks.

By promoting time autonomy, organizations can retain top talent, as employees feel more in control of their work-life balance and are less likely to experience burnout.

B. Organizational Sense-Making Capacity

Organizational sense-making is a critical determinant in understanding how employees interpret and emotionally respond to changes within an institution. Employees' ability to understand the context of organizational changes such as leadership transitions, shifts in institutional policy or changes in job roles—is essential for maintaining engagement and commitment. When employees do not feel equipped to make sense of changes or do not receive adequate communication regarding institutional shifts, uncertainty can lead to disengagement and eventually turnover. By providing faculty and staff with the necessary context and emotional support, institutions can enhance their organizational sense-making capacity, reducing confusion, frustration, and turnover.

C. Sentiment Analysis from Internal Communications

Sentiment analysis, especially using Natural Language Processing (NLP) technologies, allows organizations to assess the emotional tone and underlying sentiments in internal communications such as emails, chat messages, or meeting notes. For academic institutions, sentiment analysis can be a powerful tool for gauging faculty morale and identifying early signs of dissatisfaction or disengagement. Through analyzing communication patterns, HR teams can detect negative sentiments or stress indicators and intervene proactively before turnover occurs.

D. Digital Exhaustion and Technostress

Digital exhaustion and technostress are emerging as significant determinants of employee turnover, particularly in environments that heavily rely on technology for day-to-day operations. Digital exhaustion is not only a result of increased screen time but also from poorly designed interfaces or lack of digital literacy support, which exacerbate feelings of frustration. To mitigate this emerging determinant, institutions must promote digital wellness by offering adequate training, encouraging regular digital detoxes, and simplifying digital tools to reduce the cognitive load on employees. Supporting a healthy digital environment will not only decrease turnover rates but will also enhance productivity and employee well-being.

E. Engagement with External Professional Ecosystems

Employee engagement with external professional ecosystems, such as academic networks, professional organizations, and collaborations with research institutions, can also influence turnover rates. In higher education, faculty members are often involved in various external academic networks, which may increase their mobility as they are exposed to broader career opportunities outside the institution. Strong networks can enhance an employee's reputation and open doors to new research opportunities, but they may also lead to faculty members being courted by other institutions or organizations.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The pilot study was conducted at Arts and Science and Engineering Colleges in Coimbatore to test the influencing factors and turnover among faculty members. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the primary and secondary data source was used. Primary data was collected through questionnaire. The variables were measured using Likert scale. In this study, each item was rated on a scale ranging from 1 to 5, where 1 represents "Strongly Disagree," 2 denotes "Disagree," 3 stands for "Neutral," 4 indicates "Agree," and 5 represents "Strongly Agree." This format was selected to ensure clarity, ease of interpretation, and the ability to perform quantitative analysis.

Convenient sampling was used to collect the data from the respondents and questionnaire was received from the respondents. The chosen respondents were 20 faculty members who are currently working in Arts and Science and Engineering Colleges. A summary of the demographic characteristics of the participants is presented in Table 1 below.

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TABLE I
RESPONDENTS DATA

Respondent	Age	Gender	Position	Experience/ Year
1	4	Female	Associate Professor	20
2	4	Male	Associate Professor	19
3	4	Female	Associate Professor	21
4	4	Female	Assistant Professor	14
5	3	Female	Assistant Professor	9
6	2	Female	Assistant Professor	3
7	2	Female	Assistant Professor	3
8	3	Male	Assistant Professor	8
9	5	Female	Professor	26
10	3	Male	Assistant Professor	13
11	5	Female	Professor	22
12	4	Female	Associate Professor	18
13	3	Female	Assistant Professor	9
14	3	Female	Assistant Professor	9
15	4	Male	Assistant Professor	11
16	3	Male	Assistant Professor	4
17	4	Female	Assistant Professor	7
18	2	Female	Assistant Professor	3
19	3	Female	Assistant Professor	6
20	3	Female	Assistant Professor	5

TABLE 2
ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

estion Number	Assessment Questions
QA1	Job Satisfaction
QA2	Compensation and Benefits
QA3	Career Development Opportunities
QA4	Work-Life Balance
QA5	Organizational Culture and Environment
QA6	Time Autonomy & Chronotype Flexibility
QA7	Organizational Sense-Making Capacity
QA8	Digital Exhaustion & Technostress

Demographic Summary

- Gender Distribution: Out of the 20 respondents, 75% are female and 25% are male, indicating that the majority of the sample consists of female faculty members.
- Position Held: The largest portion of respondents, 65%, hold the position of Assistant Professor, followed by 20% who are Associate Professors, and 15% who are Professors. This shows that early to mid-career faculty dominate the sample.
- Age Group Representation: About 10% of respondents are in the 25–30 age group, 25% fall in the 31–35 age group, and remaining 65% are above 35 years of age, showing a predominance of mid- to late-career individuals in the study.
- Years of Experience: A majority of the respondents (around 60%) have more than 10 years of experience, while the rest have less than 10 years, indicating a well-balanced mix of experienced and relatively new faculty members.

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TABLE 3
SCORE FOR ASSESSMENT QUESTION (QA1 TO QA8)

spondant	QA1	QA2	QA3	QA4	QA6	QA7	QA8
1	3	1	5	3	3	4	4
2	4	2	5	3	3	3	4
3	3	1	5	3	2	4	4
4	4	2	4	2	2	5	4
5	4	1	4	1	2	4	4
6	3	1	5	2	2	3	5
7	2	1	4	2	2	2	5
8	4	2	5	3	2	1	5
9	4	3	4	3	4	4	3
10	4	2	5	4	4	5	3
11	3	2	4	4	4	3	3
12	3	2	5	3	3	2	3
13	3	2	3	3	3	1	4
14	4	2	3	3	3	2	4
15	4	2	2	3	4	5	5
16	4	1	4	4	2	4	5
17	3	1	4	4	2	4	4
18	3	1	3	3	2	4	4
19	3	2	4	2	4	2	4
20	3	3	4	2	4	2	4

TABLE 4
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR DETERMINANTS OF EMPLOYEE TURNOVER

Mean	QA1	QA2	QA3	QA4	QA5	QA6	QA7	QA8
Standard Error	3.421053	1.736842	4.052632	2.842105	2.736842105	2.842105	3.157895	4.052632
Median	0.13925	0.149895	0.194571	0.191381	0.214150099	0.206094	0.298761	0.161746
Mode	3	2	4	3	3	3	3	4
Standard Deviation	4	2	4	3	2	2	4	4

TABLE 5
ONE-WAY ANOVA SUMMARY FOR EMPLOYEE TURNOVER SURVEY QUESTIONS

SUMMARY

Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance
QA1	20	68	3.4	0.357895
QA2	20	34	1.7	0.431579
QA3	20	82	4.1	0.726316
QA4	20	57	2.85	0.660526
QA5	20	55	2.75	0.828947
QA6	20	57	2.85	0.765789
QA7	20	64	3.2	1.642105
QA8	20	81	4.05	0.471053

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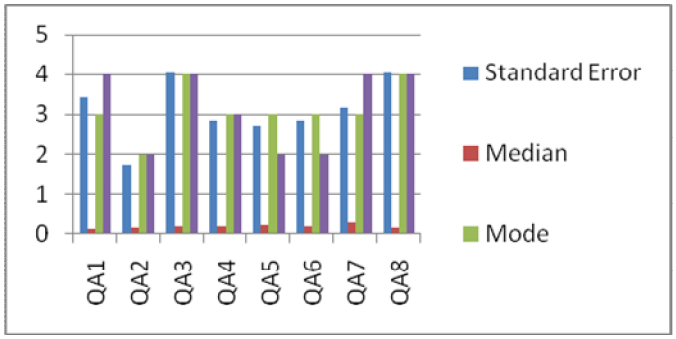

Fig. 1 Statistical Summary

VI. FINDINGS

1) Job Role Fit: Most employees feel their job matches their skills and interests, but not everyone agrees.
2) Salary & Benefits: Many employees are not satisfied with their pay and benefits.
3) Career Growth: Employees are happy with the opportunities to grow and develop professionally.
4) Work-Life Balance: Some employees feel they have balance, while others think it needs improvement.
5) Work Environment: The workplace culture is okay but could be more inclusive and positive.
6) Flexible Hours: Some employees enjoy flexible hours, but others want more control over their schedules.
7) Communication: Organizational changes are not always clearly communicated to employees.
8) Digital Wellness: Most employees feel supported in managing digital stress and screen time.

VII.SUGGESTIONS

1) Improve Salary Structures: Review pay regularly and match with industry standards.
2) Enhance Communication: Share updates clearly and involve employees in decision-making.
3) Promote Work-Life Balance: Offer flexible hours, wellness activities, and mental health support.
4) Build a Positive Culture: Encourage teamwork, recognize efforts, and create a friendly workplace.
5) Support Career Growth: Continue offering training and promotion opportunities.
6) Allow Flexible Schedules: Let employees choose work hours that suit them best.
7) Support Digital Wellbeing: Continue helping employees reduce screen fatigue with breaks and healthy tech use.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The study shows that while employees appreciate growth opportunities and digital support, there are concerns about salary, communication, and work-life balance. By improving pay, promoting a supportive culture, and enhancing flexibility, organizations can reduce employee turnover and create a more engaging workplace. These small but focused efforts will help retain skilled employees and build long-term success.

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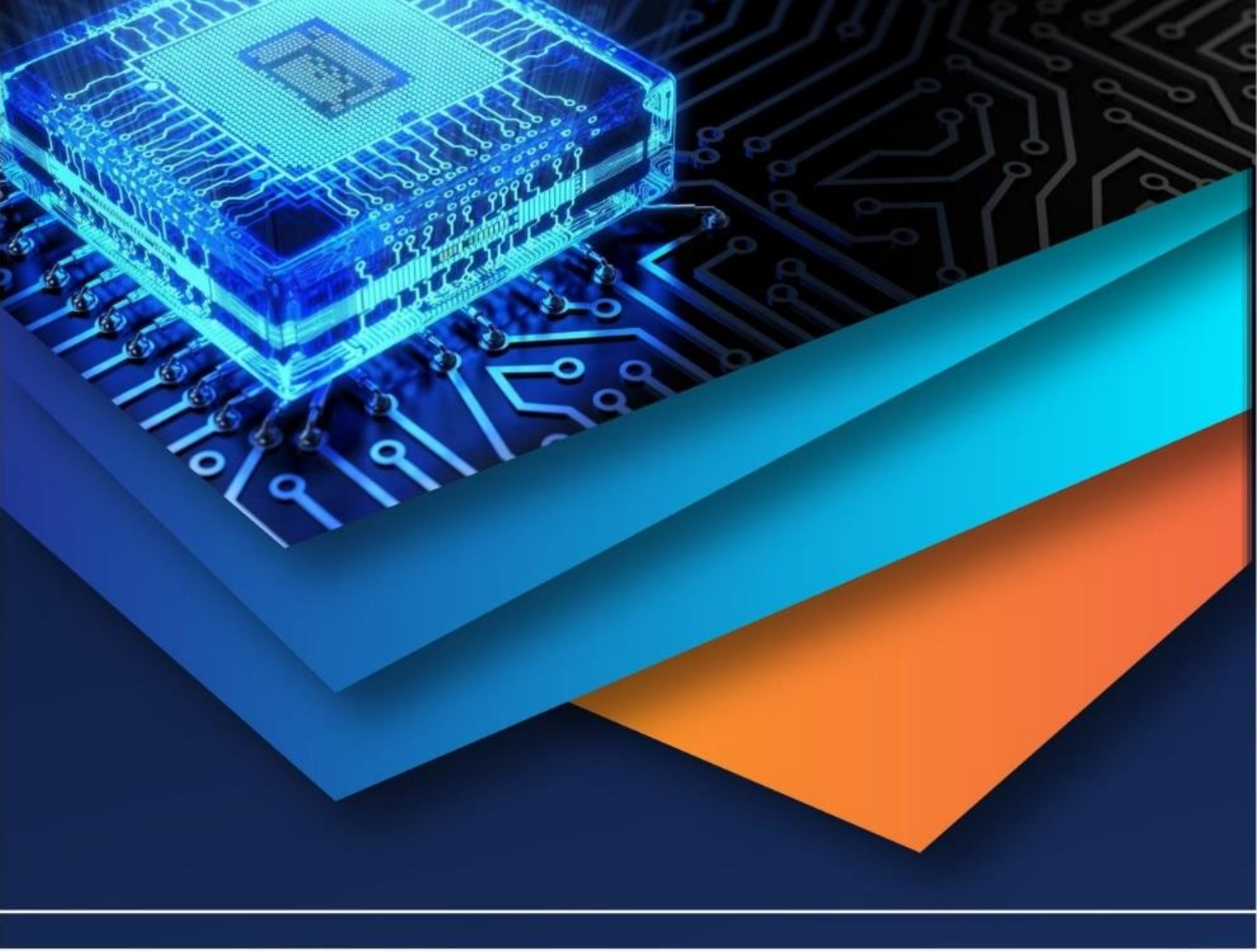

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