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Digital Marketing Awareness Among Rural Entrepreneurs of Jharkhand - A Case Study of Ranchi District

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Abstract: ***This research is about the digital marketing awareness among rural entrepreneurs of Jharkhand. Digital marketing has become an integral part of the business, and it is the new-age channel where businesses can promote their products or services through various social media platforms. According to the previous studies, most of the research has been done on the adoption and application of digital marketing tools rather than on digital marketing awareness on the national level, but not at the rural level. To study the digital marketing awareness among rural entrepreneurs, a well-structured questionnaire was prepared, and responses were recorded from 150 respondents. The data was analysed using simple linear regression from SPSS software. The findings reveal that the young entrepreneurs have adequate knowledge and information about the digital marketing tools, and there is still less participation of women in entrepreneurship. They are aware of the digital marketing tools, but there is still less usage of these tools. Rural entrepreneurs still choose traditional marketing. There are various limitations that rural entrepreneurs face, such as a lack of internet facilities, a limited understanding of these tools, and limited technology knowledge. It is suggested that the government should launch some training programmes to educate rural people about the usage of digital marketing tools.***

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Rural Entrepreneurs, Digital Marketing Tools, Digital Marketing Awareness, Social-Media Platforms.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

The world has changed since the advent of technology; now, people can access product information anywhere in the world. Due to this digitalisation, people have the opportunity to differentiate between similar products across various e-commerce channels and can evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of the products. Now every business organisation is shifting from the traditional market to a modern business strategy so as to connect with the consumers directly, know their taste and preferences and fulfil their increasing demands. It has enabled businesses to build strong customer relationships with new and existing customers. Since the business has become digital, the primary objective of the business is to advertise its product and to increase its brand awareness. There are various advertising channels that the organisation has to develop an effective strategy to choose from these channels based on their products and the status of their company.

B. Statement of Problem

Digital Marketing Tools have emerged as a powerful tool in rural entrepreneurship, which helps the business to reach a wider customer base and can access international markets where they can sell their products globally. It has emerged as one of the important tools in the business strategy, but many rural entrepreneurs face challenges in adoption, and there are various factors affecting such as a lack of technology, knowledge of using these tools, lack of training, poor infrastructure, etc. So there is a need to identify the digital marketing awareness among rural entrepreneurs in Jharkhand.

C. Significance of the Study

The study will help to find out the digital marketing awareness among rural entrepreneurs in the Ranchi district. Rural entrepreneurs do not have access to a larger market area, a lack of information and heavy dependence on traditional marketing. This study will help the rural entrepreneurs adapt to digital marketing strategies, which will lead to the growth of their business operations and sales. Digital marketing awareness will help the rural entrepreneurs to reach a larger market area beyond local areas and help them to compete with other businesses. The study will examine the use of digital marketing strategies in the growth of rural entrepreneurship in the Ranchi district.

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D. Scope of the Study

The study focuses on the level of digital marketing among rural entrepreneurs of Jharkhand and examines the benefits of using these tools, which will help in the improvement of the business. The main focus of the study is on the rural entrepreneurs of Ranchi district. The study will help to identify the usage level of digital marketing tools such as social media platforms, e-mail marketing, and mobile marketing, which will help in the promotion of their products or services. Identifying the factors affecting the digital marketing awareness, which include education, age, gender, digital knowledge, and experience in the business.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1) Rao, D. V. M., & Rajeswari, K. (2020): The study reveals that there is a growth of entrepreneurship through digital marketing strategies. There has been a lot of technological advancement from 2013 to 2023, indicating that the whole world is on an online platform. A shift in the marketing trends of consumer preferences, tastes, and needs requires serious attention and needs to be studied on the basis of this change in consumer tastes. The study also reveals that there is a need to improve the digital infrastructure in rural regions and improve the internet facility.
2) Mokhtar (2015): The article states that the shift of marketing strategy from traditional marketing to digital marketing and its positive impact on small businesses. The findings of the study state that by using a digital marketing strategy, the small business will have a larger customer base, access to global markets, help in reducing product cost and enhance customer engagement. The research suggested that the enterprise should have its own website so that the business owners can provide and update information about their new products and existing products.
3) Mohan and Ali (2019): The article states that the difficulties faced by the Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the implementation of the digital marketing tools, factors affecting the adoption of marketing tools and various types of digital marketing tools used by the MSMEs. The researcher highlights that policymakers should launch government initiatives that will help in the upgradation of their skills and enable them to compete in the market with other business organisations.
4) Kumar and Kumar (2021): The article states that the adoption of e-entrepreneurship in rural areas is still a challenge, as rural areas do not have adequate internet facilities, they are not aware of the benefits of using digital marketing tools to grow their business and lack knowledge about using these tools. This study aims to identify the problems and opportunities of e-entrepreneurship in the Indian Rural Market. To examine these objectives, the data were analysed using secondary data, for example, books, journals, articles, etc., and a SWOT analysis was done. The study reveals that different business models must be designed to develop the Indian Rural Market.
5) Selvi and Mahalakshmi (2024): The article states that due to the growing digitalisation, there is research that has been done in urban areas, but there is no such research regarding digitalisation in rural areas. The study examines the usage of digital marketing tools and their impact on rural entrepreneurship. The findings suggested that there should be training programs organised by the government to educate people about digital marketing.
6) Awang et al. (2026): The article states that through digital marketing strategies, rural entrepreneurship can be developed, which is a core part of rural economic development. The study aims to examine the usage of digital marketing tools in the success of rural entrepreneurship. The study also highlighted the challenges, such as a lack of internet infrastructure and a lack of digital literacy. The research suggested that by empowering rural people, they can play a key role in the overall development of the economy.
7) Dhungana (2024): The article states that due to the rapid growth of technology, the adoption of digital marketing has become important in small businesses. The study examines the usage of e-marketing, which will increase the business performance and improve customer engagement. The study highlighted that through digital marketing, small businesses' revenue increases, an increase in customers and the profits of the business. The study emphasized that increase in the usage of digital marketing tools, training programs regarding technology upgradation and financial allocation in the business operations.
8) Priya and Kokila (2022): The article states that MSMEs are a vital component of the Indian economy and add socio-economic development of the overall country. The study highlights the various challenges faced by rural areas in the adoption of a digital marketing strategy. The study highlights that the main reasons are there is lack of awareness and knowledge of digital marketing, inadequate digital infrastructure, inefficient allocation of financial resources in digital marketing tools and application in the business. The study suggested that the government should launch some schemes for the MSMEs to educate them about online marketing.

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9) Hulikatti and Yadav (2025): The article states that the internet has evolved rapidly, which contributes to the digitalisation of the business. The study examines the impact of digital marketing on SMEs, which affects the business growth, income levels and industry sectors. The study reveals that small businesses are known to derive benefits from digital marketing tools, and the youth are adopting digital marketing strategies. The study highlights the importance of the adoption of digital marketing by SMEs.
10) Mishra and Amin (2020): The article states that business organisations are adopting social media marketing more than traditional marketing. The main purpose of the study is to determine the challenges and opportunities of digital marketing. The data was collected from secondary sources. The study reveals that to meet the consumer demand of rural areas, different technologies can be used to produce the goods. The study highlights that technologies are available to satisfy the needs of consumers in rural areas, and e-rural marketing should be prioritised.
11) SN (2025): The article states that earlier digital marketing was recognised as part of marketing strategies; now it has become pivotal for every business organisation. There is a shift from traditional marketing to digital marketing. The main aim of the study is to determine the impact of digital marketing tools on rural markets. The data was collected from primary and secondary sources. The study reveals that there is an increase in the number of mobile users. The study highlights that due to rapid digitalisation, everything has become digital, including the rural markets.
12) Panigrahi (2022): The article states that digital marketing has become a very important aspect of the business, but still, in rural areas, people are adopting traditional marketing. The main aim of the study is to examine the awareness and thoughts of rural people regarding digital marketing and the challenges faced by rural people in the adoption of digital marketing strategies. The study reveals that there is active use of digital marketing by rural people. The challenges are that they don't have a smartphone and have less knowledge about digital marketing.
13) Barman and Mahanta (2025): The article states that with rising internet users, the adoption of e-commerce by MSMEs is being widely adopted. The MSMEs are focusing more on electronic marketing than traditional marketing. The main objective of the study is to identify the adoption, impact and challenges faced by the MSMEs. The study reveals that MSMEs have not widely adopted digital marketing tools and are limited to e-mail marketing and social media platforms. There are various challenges, such as a lack of financial resources, a skilled workforce, and technical knowledge.
14) Tandur et al. (2024): The article states that digital marketing has played a significant role in manufacturing enterprises. The main objective of the study is to analyse the impact of digital marketing tools on the business performance of the manufacturing enterprises. The study reveals that the advantages of using digital marketing tools have influenced the adoption of online marketing. Adoption of digital marketing has a positive effect on sales and profit for the business organisation. Through digital marketing awareness it has increased brand awareness and customer engagement.
15) Ahmad and Pandey (2024): The article states that electronic media has been increasing rapidly and has become a powerful tool of communication with customers to know their tastes and preferences. The main objective of the study is to analyse the current level of digital marketing awareness among SMEs. The study reveals that the SMEs have information about the digital marketing tools, but have limited adoption of them. There are various challenges, such as practical knowledge and security, which become obstacles to the adoption of digital marketing tools.
16) Prayogi and Subriadi (2024): The article states that due to the emergence of digital technology, business organisations are adopting modern business strategies, such as the adoption of e-commerce platforms, to expand their business. The main aim of the study is to analyse the role of digital marketing strategy in the growth of SMEs. The study reveals that digital marketing has positively impacted the business, such as in customer engagement, brand recognition, improving sales, access to the global market, and a reduction in the cost of the product.
17) Nayak et al. (2025): The article states that digital marketing has gained significant importance in the SMEs enterprise, which helps them to directly connect with the customers, suppliers, smooth communication and access to global markets. The digital marketing tools have helped small businesses to compete with the bigger industries. The main aim of the study is to analyse the adoption of digital marketing platforms through the moderators such as age, education, and gender. The study reveals that digital marketing has a significant impact on SMEs and also analyses the demographic factors in the adoption of the online marketing strategies.
18) Perera and Razi (2025): The article states that technology has increased the efficiency of business operations, wider market reach, innovation and efficient decision making. The study analyses the internal and external factors. The study highlighted that digital technology has helped in the smooth functioning of the tasks, and increased customer engagement, such as knowing their preferences and access to the international markets and it also empowers innovation. The study highlights the importance of leadership qualities, allocation of resources, and access to international markets.

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19) Senthilvelan (2025): The article states that SMEs are the core component of the economy, and due to the rapid technology upgradation, everything has become digital and has played an important role in survival in the international market. The main aim of the study is to analyse the challenges, adoption and future scope of digitalisation and the key factors that influence this process. The study reveals that there are challenges in the usage that cannot be ignored, but still can be conquered. There are bigger barriers, such as insufficient financial resources and a lack of technology, but through proper strategy, these barriers can be overcome by the SMEs.

20) Mendi (2025): The article states that digital advancement has become an important concept in the SMEs business, which helps them to compete in the international market, enhancing innovation and survival in the market. The main objective of the study is to identify the SMEs encompassing digital technology, which will help in business operations, production and business models. The study highlights that SMEs adopt various digital transformation strategies, such as data analysis tools, ERP, and digital marketing tools. The findings suggest that incorporating digital technology in SMEs is not sufficient for the organisation; it should train the employees about the technology upgrade. The SMEs should align their technology with business goals so as to sustain their growth.

III. RESEARCH GAP

After reviewing the existing articles, there is no such study about the digital marketing awareness among the rural entrepreneurs of Ranchi district. Most studies are conducted at nation level or in developed local areas. Existing studies are about the adoption and usage of digital marketing tools, but not about the awareness level of digital marketing tools among rural entrepreneurs. Awareness is the first step towards the adoption and usage of digital marketing strategies. This research will help to find out the role of digital marketing awareness among rural entrepreneurs, promoting digital and social inclusion of rural people, and the study will provide how digital marketing tools can be used to increase the growth of the business.

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1) What is the status of digital marketing awareness among rural entrepreneurs of Ranchi district?
2) What are the factors affecting digital marketing awareness?
3) How have the rural entrepreneurs benefited from using the digital marketing tools?

V. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1) To study the status of digital marketing awareness among rural entrepreneurs of Ranchi district.
2) To examine the factors affecting digital marketing awareness.
3) To examine the benefits of using digital marketing tools in the growth of rural business.

VI. HYPOTHESIS

H0: Digital Marketing Awareness has no impact on rural entrepreneurs.
H1: Digital Marketing Awareness has a positive impact on rural entrepreneurs.

VII. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A systematic method adopted by the researcher to analyse the data collection and measure the value. The study adopted a descriptive and analytical research design to examine the digital marketing awareness among rural entrepreneurs of Jharkhand – A case study of Ranchi district. A quantitative method has been adopted, and data were collected from primary sources through a structured questionnaire. The data was taken from 150 respondents through random sampling.

A. Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive and quantitative approach. The data were collected from 150 respondents through a questionnaire in which demographic questions and Likert scale items were included. The data was analysed using Simple Linear Regression and ANOVA to investigate the impact of digital marketing awareness among rural entrepreneurs, and the data is displayed using tables and pie charts, which will help to understand clearly.

B. Data Sources

The study is completely based on primary sources; no secondary sources have been used. Data was collected directly from the 150 rural entrepreneurs through surveys and interviews. It provided necessary information and experience regarding their business and their awareness level of digital marketing tools.

C. Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Samplin Technique – The study used stratified random sampling in which the population was divided into small groups.
Sample Size – 150 respondents

D. Data Collection Method

Data was collected through a structured questionnaire in which all necessary questions were involved, and data was gathered from rural entrepreneurs of the rural areas of Ranchi district.

E. Data Analysis Tools

Descriptive statistics: The study adopted descriptive statistic method like percentage and regression tools, to analyse the data. This analysis was done to investigate the impact of digital marketing awareness on improving sales and business growth.in rural areas of Jharkhand. Statistical Tools: Statistical tools such as Correlation Coefficient (R), R Square, Adjusted R Square, and Standard Error of Estimate were used to analyse the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable.
Software Used - SPSS software was used to analyse the data.

VIII. DATA ANALYSIS

A. Demographic Factor

1) Gender

Table I

Gender	No. of Responses	Percentage (%)
Male	105	70
Female	45	30
Other	0	0

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: Table I shows the gender distribution, 70% male and 30% female. It indicates a gender gap in rural areas, where more males are engaged in the business and female participation is still less. The reasons that indicate less participation of females include a lack of knowledge, financial resources, and support from the family.

2) Age

Table II

Age	No. of Responses	Percentage (%)
18-25	34	22.7
26-35	47	31.3
36-45	41	27.3
45 Above	28	18.7

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: Table II shows the age distribution of the respondents, which majorly falls in the group of 26-35 (31.3%), followed by the 36-45 age group (27.3%) and followed by the 18-25 (22.7%) age group. The remaining respondents fall in the 45 and above age group (18.7%). It depicts that the younger adults and middle-aged group are more involved in the business activities, followed

by the younger generation who are well equipped with the technology, and there is low participation of older adults due to their limited digital literacy.

3) Education Qualification

Table III

Education Qualification	No. of Responses	Percentage (%)
10th Pass	41	27.3
12th Pass	51	34
Graduate	43	28.7
Post Graduate	15	10

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: Table III shows the education qualification of respondents, and majorly fall under the group of 12th pass with 34%, followed by the group of graduate 28.4%, followed by the group of 10th pass 27.3% and followed by the group of lesser post-graduate of 10% (n=15). It indicates that in the rural area of Ranchi district, where majorly rural entrepreneurs are 12th pass, which states that the rural people have completed their basic education and have the knowledge to start the business. Many rural people have completed their graduation, which increases the literacy rate in rural regions, followed by people who are 10th pass, which shows that people are literate and there are fewer post-graduates.

4) Types of Business

Table IV

Types of Business	No. of Responses	Percentage (%)
Agriculture	52	34,7
Handi Crafts and Arts	29	19.3
Forestry Products	32	21.3
Food Processing	16	10.7
Others	0	0

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: Table IV shows the types of business rural entrepreneurs are engaged in. Majorly, rural entrepreneurs are engaged in agriculture with a 34.7%, followed by forestry products with 21.3%, followed by handicrafts and arts with 29%, followed by others 14%, and followed by food processing with 10.7%. It describes that rural people of Ranchi district are mostly engaged in agricultural activities, for example, growing wheat, vegetables, etc and after that, rural entrepreneurs are involved in forestry products like wood, bamboo, lac, etc. Rural people are also involved in handicrafts and arts like jute bags, pottery, woodwork, etc and others are involved in livestock. They are also engaged in food processing, such as dairy products, grinding raw spices, etc.

5) Experience in the Business

Table V

Experience in the Business	No. of Responses	Percentage (%)
1-5 years	45	30
5-10 years	62	41.3
15-20 years	27	18
20 and above	16	10.7

Source: Primary Data

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Interpretation: Table V shows experience in the business of respondents and mainly fall in the group of 5-10 years with 41%, followed by the group of 1-5 years with 30%, followed by the group of 15-20 years with 18% and followed by the group of above 20 years with 10.7%. It shows that the rural entrepreneurs have been in the business for many years, and they are experienced enough in managing the business. After that, 30% shows that rural people are influenced in starting the business rather than going for jobs in urban areas. 18% shows that they are in the business for a longer duration, and very few have been in business for over 20 years.

B. Hypothesis Testing

Table I

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.751[a]	.564	.561	.54452

a. Predictors: (Constant), DIGITAL_MARKETING_AWARENESS

Source: Computed by researcher using SPSS software

The model summary depicts the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. The value of R = 0.751, which states that there is a strong positive relationship between the variables, which means that by using digital marketing tools, there is a strong influence on rural entrepreneurs of the Ranchi district, and they are aware of the perceived benefits of using it. The value of R square = 0.564 states that 56.4 % of the variation in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variable, and the remaining 43.6% are other factors that do not contribute and influence the research.
The Adjusted R Square = 0.561, which states that the reliability of the model is improved by adjusting the sample size. The small difference between R square and Adjusted R Square shows that the model is well-fitted. The Standard Error of Estimate = 0.54452 represents the average prediction error. The lower relative value shows that the data is fit and accurate.

Table VII

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	56.653	1	56.653	191.074	<.001[b]
	Residual	43.882	148	.296		
	Total	100.534	149			

a. Dependent Variable: PERCEIVED_BENEFITS

b. Predictors: (Constant), DIGITAL_MARKETING_AWARENESS

Source: Computed by the researcher using SPSS software

The Table shows the ANOVA results states that the regression model is statistically significant (F=191.074, p < .001), and the p-value is less than 0.05. The F-value of 191.074 is high, which states that the independent variable (Digital Marketing Awareness) has a significant impact on the dependent variable (Perceived Benefits). The significance value
Sig=0.000, which is less than 0.05, indicating that the value is significant. The value stated that it has a positive impact on digital marketing awareness among rural entrepreneurs.

Table VIII

Source: Computed by the researcher using SPSS software

The Coefficient table states the strength of the relationship between digital marketing awareness and perceived benefits of digitalisation. The standardised Coefficients Beta (B=0.751) states that there is a positive relationship between digital marketing awareness and perceived benefits of digitalisation.

Hypothesis
Digital Marketing Awareness has a positive impact on rural entrepreneurs

IX. ACHIEVEMENT OF OBJECTIVE

The data obtained from the respondents helps to analyse the impact of digital marketing awareness on rural entrepreneurs. Over 76.53% agree that respondents are aware of the online transactions used in the business. 30.27% responses disagreed that the online business is expanding rapidly, which indicates that the practical application of digital marketing tools is still limited. About 69% agree that they are aware of various social media platforms and the benefits of using these tools. By analysing the outcome, it is evident that the practical knowledge of digital marketing tools is still to be studied.

The result indicates that overall 72.95% agree that digitalisation of business increases sales, helps in reaching global markets, improves brand awareness and produces business opportunities. It reflects that the digitalisation of business has a positive impact on business growth.

The outcome states that 75.86% agree that respondents accept online transactions from the suppliers and customers. About 63.46% responses are neutral regarding the usage of digital marketing platforms. 60.28% neutrally agree that respondents are using digital marketing tools for advertising their products. These results help to identify that there is no widespread adoption of digital marketing tools in rural areas.

The respondents 81.33% agree that businesses still adopt traditional marketing and have not fully shifted to online marketing, and are aware of online scams regarding payments. However, 78.12% agree that digital platforms are very costly to maintain, followed by 75.2% agree that internet facilities are still very limited. 69.6% depicts that there is still limited knowledge regarding digital marketing tools.

X. FINDINGS

Demographically study highlighted that mostly males from rural areas are participating in rural entrepreneurship; there is a lack of female engagement in the business. Young adults and middle-aged groups are involved because they keep up with the trends. Most respondents are 12^{th} pass, and they are more involved in the agriculture business.

After analysing the regression analysis, the value is significant, and there is a positive relationship between the independent and the dependent variable.

Overall, 70.58% of respondents agree that they have knowledge of digital marketing tools because it helps the business to achieve new heights, an increase in sales, promotion and people will be aware of the rural products and services. About 72.95% of respondents are aware of the benefits of using social media platforms to increase their growth, and it has a positive influence on sales without any extra wastage of financial resources. However, 64.08% responses states level of awareness regarding digital marketing awareness, and it shows a neutral level of adoption, which means an average number of entrepreneurs use it, but it is not widely used. About 80.06% of responses still depend upon traditional marketing, which shows they still trust in old advertising methods and mostly businesses use mixed advertising methods using both traditional and digital marketing tools.

XI. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that digital marketing awareness plays an important role in the adoption of digital marketing tools in rural entrepreneurship and have significant impact on business growth, and aware of the benefits of using these tools. These digital tools are becoming essential tools helping the business to reach the international market. Many respondents are aware of the digital marketing tools, such as social media platforms, and various methods of advertising products or services. There are various challenges associated with this, such as a lack of digital infrastructure, a lack of skills, a lack of practical application of knowledge, a lack of digital literacy, etc, so the government should launch some initiatives to combat these challenges.

XII. SUGGESTIONS

A. Education regarding digital literacy

The Government should launch training programs to educate rural entrepreneurs about digital literacy, such as arranging virtual sessions where they can learn all the basic information regarding digitalisation and the methods of using these social media tools.

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B. Promotion of women entrepreneurship in rural areas

There are schemes that policymakers have launched to promote women's entrepreneurship and encourage them to do business. Encouraging them to form SHGs to promote savings through which they can start a business, educating them about financial literacy, making them aware of the social media tools and introducing them to successful women entrepreneurs so that it can motivate them.

C. Improving internet infrastructure

It is one of the important components in digital marketing awareness because, without proper infrastructure, a rural entrepreneur cannot do an online business. The policymakers should allocate funds to improve digital infrastructure.

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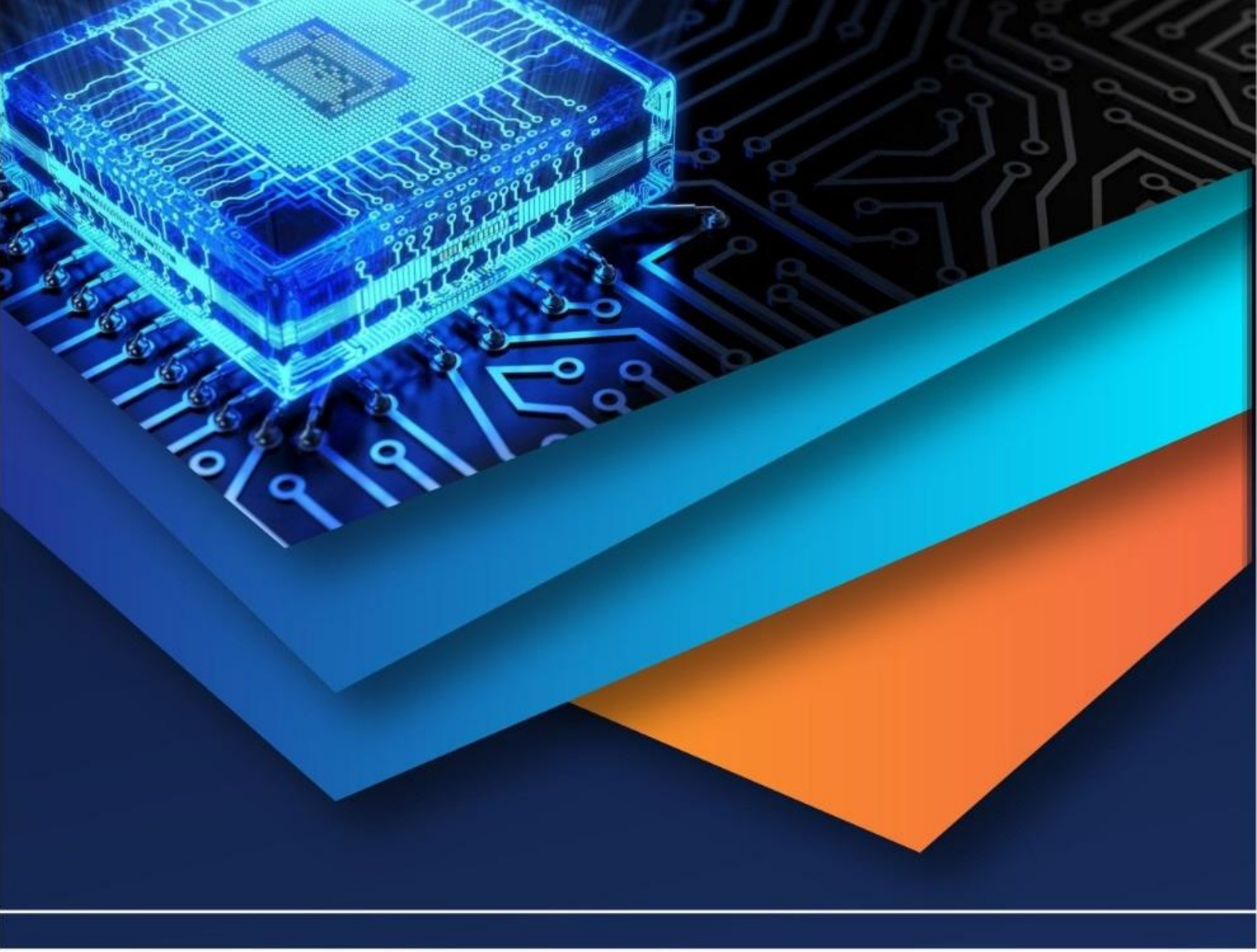

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