iJRASET
International Journal For Research in
Applied Science and Engineering Technology

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR RESEARCH
IN APPLIED SCIENCE & ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

Volume: 13 Issue: V Month of publication: May 2025

DOI: https://doi.org/10.22214/ijraset.2025.69636

International Journal for Research in Applied Science & Engineering Technology (IJRASET)
ISSN: 2321-9653; IC Value: 45.98; SJ Impact Factor: 7.538
Volume 13 Issue V May 2025- Available at www.ijraset.com

Electric Vehicles: A New Era in Transportation and Its Future Potential

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Abstract: Vehicles powered by fossil fuels pose a significant environmental threat by emitting harmful pollutants, including carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, and sulfur and nitrogen oxides. In contrast, electric vehicles (EVs) and hybrid electric vehicles (HEVs) offer a sustainable solution to this issue. With the growing use of renewable energy sources for charging, the global market is witnessing a rapid transition towards an electric vehicle revolution. Electric propulsion systems are now being adapted for heavy transport vehicles, enabling their shift to electric alternatives. This paper provides a comprehensive overview of the role of electric vehicles in mass and freight transportation worldwide, with a focus on battery charging infrastructure. It explores recent advancements and trends in EV battery technology, particularly the sustainability of lithium-ion batteries and their components. Additionally, it includes a comparative analysis of various EV models available in the Indian market. The paper concludes by discussing government incentives, challenges faced by EV adoption, and potential areas for future development.
Keywords: Electric Vehicles (EVs), sustainability, lithium-ion battery, charging infrastructure.

I. INTRODUCTION

The growing demand for transportation, driven by rapid urbanization and economic growth, has fueled significant interest in the e-mobility sector. The release of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere contributes to the phenomenon known as global warming. Additionally, gasoline-powered vehicles contain twice as many components as electric vehicles, which further amplifies their overall carbon footprint [1].

Humans inhale thousands of litres of air daily, with most of it passing through the nose, upper airways, and respiratory tract, making exposure to air pollution unavoidable. Pollutants are generally categorized into two types: primary and secondary. Primary pollutants are directly released into the atmosphere from sources like the combustion of fossil fuels, such as petrol and diesel. Internal combustion (IC) engines running on petrol burn fuel in low-oxygen conditions, releasing varying amounts of carbon monoxide (CO2), nitrogen oxides (NOx), and hydrocarbons like benzene and polycyclic aromatic compounds. In contrast, diesel engines operate with an excess of oxygen, resulting in lower carbon monoxide emissions but higher levels of nitrogen oxides and particulate matter (PMx) [2]. These pollutants are linked to respiratory disorders, irregular heartbeats, and heart attacks.

Secondary pollutants form when primary pollutants undergo chemical reactions in the atmosphere. For example, nitric oxide (NO) from IC engines converts to nitrogen dioxide (NO2), which may interact with the ozone layer and deplete its concentration. Additionally, in the presence of sunlight at lower atmospheric levels, NO and NO2 react with oxygen (O2) to produce ozone (O3). Ozone is a powerful oxidant and respiratory irritant, which, when inhaled, can lead to symptoms such as chest pain, shortness of breath, and other health issues [3].

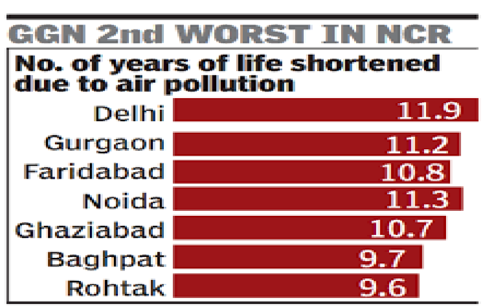

Fig. 1 - PM 2.5 pollution in 7 major cities in India

The demand for transportation continues to rise with the rapid pace of urbanization and economic growth, driving significant interest in the e-mobility sector. The release of CO2 into the atmosphere contributes to the depletion of the Earth's ozone layer. One key factor that makes electric vehicles environmentally friendly is their simpler design, utilizing only half the components of a gasoline-powered vehicle, thereby reducing their overall carbon footprint.

Since their resurgence in the automotive market at the beginning of the 21st century, electric vehicles (EVs) and hybrid electric vehicles (HEVs) have been steadily gaining traction worldwide. The introduction of stricter emission regulations, energy resource limitations, and financial crises has triggered a global push to electrify transportation [4].Several factors have facilitated the integration of electric mobility into the mainstream automotive market, with advancements in the renewable energy sector being a key contributor. Over the past decade,

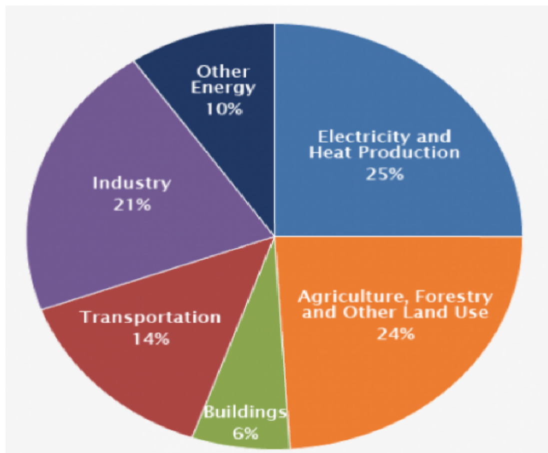

Fig. 2 - Greenhouse gas emissions by different sectors

Significant progress in wind and solar energy technologies has dramatically reduced their costs. Renewable energy sources offer clean power without a carbon footprint. In contrast, the petrol, diesel, and compressed natural gas (CNG) required for internal combustion engine-based transportation systems depend on a complex and costly supply chain, which is vulnerable to disruptions from climate change, geopolitical events, and other factors [5].

The electric vehicle industry has seen significant advancements in research and development recently. Battery electric vehicles (BEVs) are considered a sustainable option, particularly when the electricity used to power them is generated from renewable energy sources. Modern battery cells offer much higher energy densities and are significantly more affordable per kWh compared to just a few years ago. Advances in electric motor and battery technology for both Hybrid Electric Vehicles (HEVs) and Electric Vehicles (EVs) have lowered production costs and improved their suitability for long-distance travel.

Lithium is currently the preferred material for battery production due to its lightweight properties and excellent electrical conductivity. Studies reveal that lithium-ion (Li-ion) batteries can endure temperatures exceeding 70°C, compared to traditional batteries, which are limited to 50-60°C. This allows Li-ion batteries to perform better under high-stress conditions while maintaining their lifespan. Among various battery technologies, Li-ion cells remain the most widely used and heavily invested in, with leading companies like LG Chem, Panasonic, and Samsung employing this technology.

Lithium's advantages have made it a cornerstone of today's energy storage sector [6]. Although lithium-metal technologies, which promise much higher energy densities, are under development, they currently lack the large-scale production capabilities and established supply chain benefits that Li-ion technology enjoys [7].

The rapid adoption of lithium-ion batteries in electric vehicles is expected to lead to a significant increase in the number of used batteries in the near future. Options such as remanufacturing, repurposing, and recycling are key to ensuring the safe and effective disposal of these batteries. However, the complexity of lithium-ion batteries presents challenges for planning efficient recovery processes. For the battery industry to achieve true sustainability, recycling efforts must also be economically viable [8].

To enhance the resilience and sustainability of automotive supply chains while minimizing the demand for primary resources, circular economy strategies need to be implemented at both governmental and industry levels.Electric vehicles generate fewer vibrations compared to traditional internal combustion engine (IC) vehicles [9]. As a result, they do not require the heavy frames typically associated with IC engine vehicles, which reduces their overall weight.

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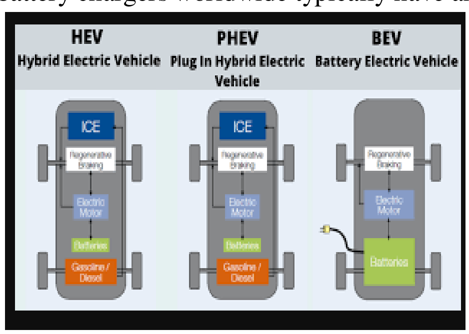
One notable advantage is their low maintenance requirements. Additionally, there is no need for emissions inspections by environmental regulatory agencies. Electric vehicles also offer a comfortable driving experience. Consequently, the commercial electric vehicle market has experienced significant growth in sales.
This paper aims to present a detailed overview of global e-mobility, focusing on advancements and comparisons of key components, including electric motors, batteries, electronics, and control systems.

A. *Types of Electric Vehicles (EV)*
Electric vehicles (EVs) operate entirely using electric propulsion systems. Some, however, are equipped with an internal combustion engine (ICE) that works in conjunction with the electric system. While EVs primarily rely on batteries as their sole power source, other types integrate multiple energy sources, leading to variations like Hybrid Electric Vehicles (HEVs) [9]. EVs can generally be categorized into the following types:
1) Battery Electric Vehicle [BEV]
2) Hybrid Electric Vehicle [HEV]
3) Plug in Hybrid Electric Vehicle [PHEV]
4) Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle [FCEV]

B. *Electric Vehicles Charging Methods*
The efficiency of a battery charger refers to how effectively the power electronics convert AC power from the grid into a regulated DCvoltage that charges the battery. Current battery chargers worldwide typically have anefficiency range between 70% and 90%.



There are three main charging methods supported by existing technology, although research is ongoing into new approaches such as wireless (dynamic) charging and battery swapping. A study by Bloomberg (Fig. 3) revealed that home charger installations have surged, with the fastest growth seen in Europe, followed by China and the United States [10].
1) Level 1: AC to DC using Onboard Charger (Normal Charging)
In this charging method, the vehicle is connected to an AC power source, typically a 120 V AC outlet with an electric input cable capable of handling 15-20 A of household load. The power is transmitted to an onboard charger, which converts the AC power into DC and supplies it to the Li-ion battery.

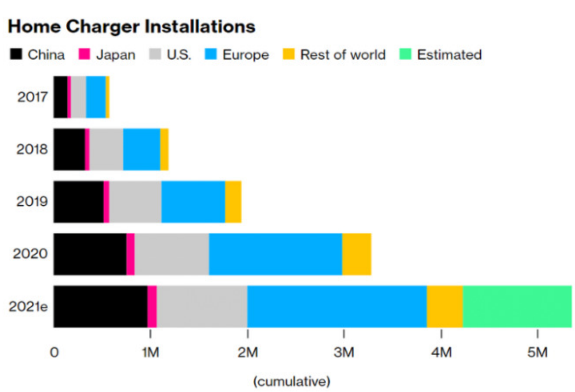


Fig. 3 - Home charger installations across the world

Consequently, fully charging an electric vehicle with a 30 to 40 kWh battery takes around 6-10 hours, which aligns with the typical domestic electricity usage each month. AC to DC charging is generally more affordable than fast charging [11].

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2) Level 2: AC to DC

In this charging mode, the vehicle uses three-phase Alternating Current (AC) from sources of 208-240 V, with a maximum current of 80 A. The Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) has established the J1772 standard in North America, which defines the connector (also known as the coupler) and charging cable used in Level 2 charging applications. As a result, these charging cables are permanently attached to Level-2 charging stations. Homeowners also have the option to install a Level 2 residential charging station.

3) Power Charging from DC to DC (Fast Charging)

In this charging method, an external charger or fast charging equipment converts the alternating current from the grid into a high-voltage, high-power direct current that can be used by the battery. Using this technique, a 30 to 40 kWh EV battery can be fully charged in 60 to 90 minutes. While this method requires a significant initial investment, as well as high operational and maintenance costs, it delivers stable and optimal performance during peak demand periods [12].

4) Charging Via Wireless Technology

Wireless charging has emerged as a popular method, although the charging speed and efficiency of this technique remain uncertain. This method transfers power without physical contact by utilizing coupled magnetic fields. It operates on the principle of electromagnetic induction, employing two coils. The primary coil is placed on the road, while the secondary coil is installed inside the vehicle. The concept of dynamic wireless charging is revolutionizing the electric vehicle industry [13]. Qualcomm, a leading technology company, is a strong advocate for dynamic charging. The FIA Formula E race series has tested Qualcomm's Halo WEVC technology, and Qualcomm also trialed the DEVC at low speeds in Auckland. The charging stations are embedded within the road lanes, enabling electric vehicles to charge while in motion. Inductive power transfer, however, tends to be weak, and for optimal power delivery, the distance between the transmitter and receiver coils should range from 20 to 100 cm. Nonetheless, some modifications are needed before this technology can be fully implemented in transportation vehicles [14].

5) Battery Swapping

The Battery Swapping Method offers an efficient way to power electric vehicles without the long wait times typically associated with charging stations. This method facilitates the integration of locally generated Renewable Energy Sources (RESs), such as solar and wind power. One of its main advantages is that drivers don’t need to leave the vehicle, allowing for a quick replacement of the depleted battery. Additionally, the batteries at the station can be used for the V2G (Vehicle-to-Grid) initiative. Battery Swapping Stations pre-charge the batteries in advance, making them ready for quick swaps. For this system to be effective, automakers must adopt standardized battery designs across different EVs. Therefore, car manufacturers and battery producers must work together closely to develop compatible battery swapping technologies [15].

C. Types of Electric Vehicles Charger

Electric vehicle charging stations offer a variety of chargers with different charging modes. These chargers are specially designed to charge either two-wheeled or four-wheeled vehicles. The following are some of the most widely used and popular chargers

Fig.4

1) Combined Charging System (CCS) Charger: This is a widely used DC Fast Charging charger. The CCS connector features a Type 2 interface and two additional DC power lines capable of handling higher voltages compared to regular connectors. It provides a standard output power of 50 kWh. The cost of this charger is estimated to be around Rs. 14 lakhs.
2) CHAdeMO: A traditional DC fast charger offering a power output of 50 kWh. It is commonly used to charge four-wheeled electric vehicles. These chargers are designed with ports that remain locked during the charging process, and at the end of charging, the connector automatically unlocks and disconnects. The price range for this charger is between Rs. 13,50,000 and Rs. 14,00,000 [16].
3) Type 2 AC Chargers: The IEC 62196 Type 2 AC chargers are designed for quick charging of two-wheeled electric vehicles. It delivers 22 kWh of power. The connector has seven contact points: five large and two small. The top row is for signaling, while the center row's three pins serve for earthing, and the outer row's four pins provide power. There are two additional optional pins for rapid charging mode. The cost of this charger is estimated to be around Rs. 12 lakhs [16].
4) Bharat DC-001 Charger: This charger is ARAI-certified for slow charging of four-wheelers. It provides 15 kWh of power and uses a single GB/T charging gun. The charger's output rating is 40-100 Vdc at 200 Amps.
5) v.Bharat AC-001 Charger: ARAI-certified for slow charging of two-wheelers, this charger delivers 3.3 kWh of power per pin, with three pins in total. It has three GB/T charging gun points. The cost of this charger is expected to be under one lakh rupees.

II. GLOBAL STATUS OF ELECTRIC VEHICLE

Innovations are reducing production costs, with the two-wheeler electric vehicle (EV) sector expected to grow at a faster pace than others, particularly in Asia. The rise of EVs will drive significant growth in related industries such as battery technology, advanced materials, charging infrastructure, power management software, and value-added riding services.

III. HURDLES AND SOLUTION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES

The development of electric vehicles (EVs) faces several hurdles, but with ongoing innovation and investment, solutions are emerging. Here are some key challenges and potential solutions:

A. *Battery Technology and Range*

- Hurdle**:** The range of EVs is limited by the capacity of current battery technology, and batteries can take longer to charge than refueling a traditional gas vehicle. The range anxiety issue (fear of running out of battery) is a major barrier for many potential buyers.
- Solution**:** Advancements in battery technology, such as solid-state batteries, which promise higher energy density and faster charging times, are helping. Additionally, the expansion of fast-charging infrastructure can alleviate concerns about range and charging time. Ongoing research into lithium-sulfur and other alternative battery chemistries could further enhance efficiency.

B. *High Cost of EVs*

- Hurdle: The upfront cost of electric vehicles is generally higher than traditional vehicles, primarily due to the high cost of batteries. This can make EVs less accessible for many consumers.
- Solution: As battery technology improves and economies of scale are achieved, costs are expected to decrease. Government incentives and subsidies are also helping lower the initial price for consumers. Additionally, cost-effective manufacturing processes and improvements in battery recycling can drive down prices.

C. *Charging Infrastructure*

- Hurdle: There is still a lack of widespread, convenient charging stations, especially in rural or underserved areas, which limits the convenience of EV ownership.
- Solution: Expanding the charging network, both at home (through better home charging solutions) and in public spaces (e.g., more charging stations in cities, highways, and parking lots), is key. Investments in ultra-fast charging stations, along with partnerships between governments and private companies, can also make charging more accessible and efficient.

D. Energy Grid Capacity

- Hurdle: As more people transition to electric vehicles, the demand on the electrical grid could increase, potentially causing strain during peak times.
- Solution: Smart grid technology, which can balance supply and demand efficiently, and better energy storage systems could help manage the additional demand. The adoption of renewable energy sources (solar, wind) to charge EVs can reduce grid pressure and make the system more sustainable.

E. Sustainability and Sourcing of Materials

- Hurdle: The mining of raw materials like lithium, cobalt, and nickel for EV batteries raises environmental and ethical concerns, including habitat destruction, human rights issues, and resource depletion.
- Solution: Research into sustainable sourcing of materials, recycling of battery components, and the development of alternative battery technologies (such as sodium-ion or aluminum-ion) can help address these concerns. Additionally, the adoption of closed-loop recycling systems for EV batteries could help reduce the need for new materials.

F. Consumer Awareness and Perception

- Hurdle: Many consumers are still hesitant about switching to EVs due to misconceptions regarding performance, reliability, or cost-effectiveness over the long term.
- Solution: Increasing consumer education through marketing and outreach campaigns, as well as offering extended warranties and better customer service, can help change perceptions. Demonstrating the long-term savings on fuel and maintenance can also make EVs more appealing to budget-conscious buyers.

G. Limited Model Variety and Availability

- Hurdle: Although EV models are growing in number, some consumers still have limited choices in terms of size, style, and price range.
- Solution: Automakers are investing heavily in EV development, with new models of all types (compact cars, SUVs, trucks) being introduced to meet diverse consumer needs. Governments can also incentivize automakers to produce more affordable, varied options.
- Governments can create effective systems to recycle batteries and ensure their safe disposal.

IV. CONCLUSION

The sustainability of electric vehicles (EVs) holds great promise in reshaping the future of transportation and significantly reducing environmental impacts. While challenges such as battery technology, resource sourcing, and infrastructure development remain, the progress in EV technology and the growing global commitment to environmental goals suggest a positive outlook for their future. As battery efficiency improves, charging infrastructure expands, and renewable energy sources become more integrated into the grid, EVs are poised to become an increasingly viable and sustainable option for consumers.

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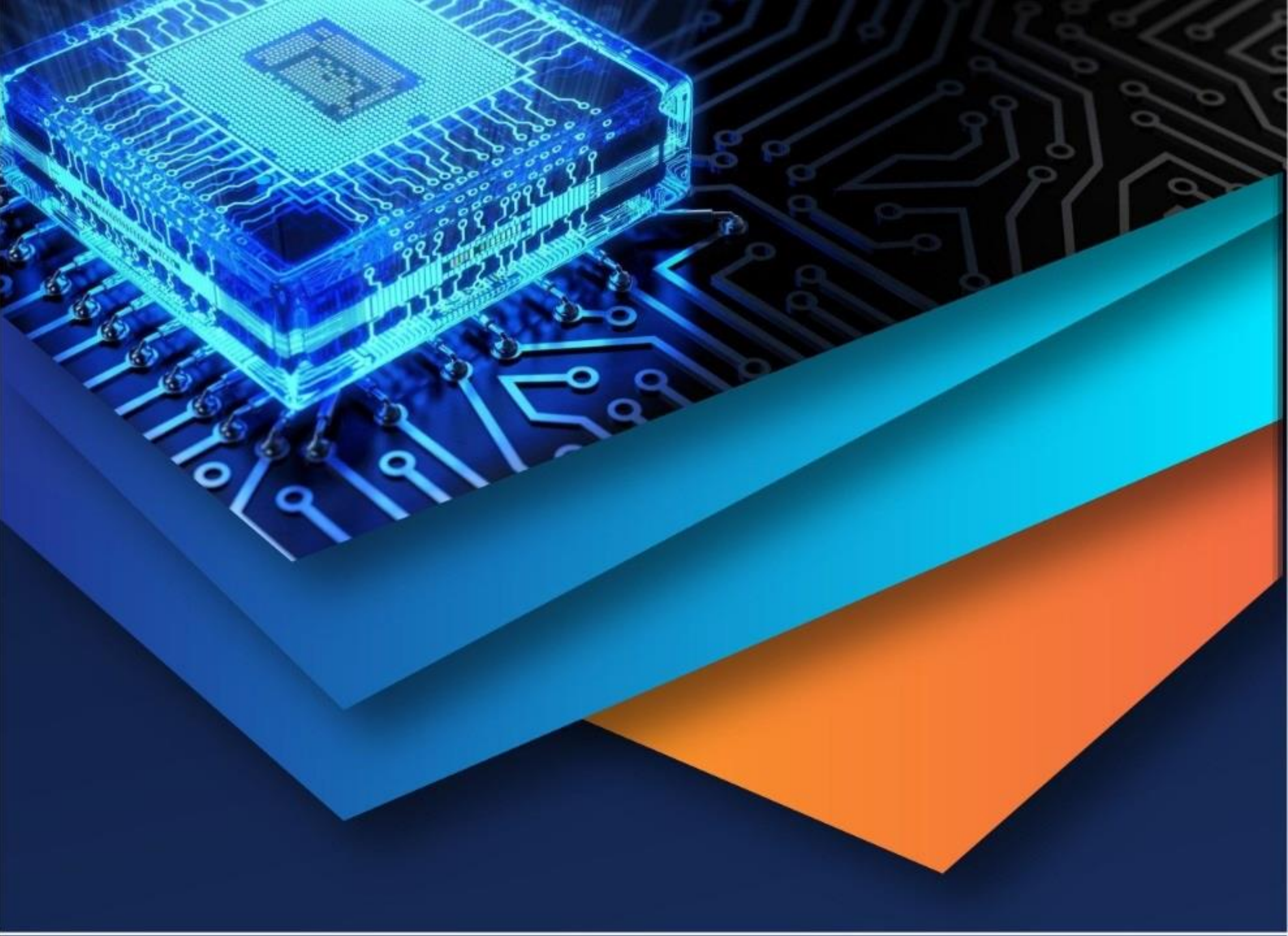

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