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Next-Gen Instrumentation: Enabling Smarter and Sustainable Engineering Solutions

Ahmed Hatem Ahmed[1], Nasser Ahmed Hashala Lahwal[2], Amar Rajendranath chavan[3]
Department of Instrumentation Engineering Vishwakarma Institute of Technology Pune,India

Abstract: ***A new generation of instruments is changing the engineering landscape, and delivering smart, sustainable solutions across many sectors. The current paper moves from this framework to explore a series of recent developments which embrace the latest technological advances, such as intelligent sensors, ubiquity of access through Internet of things (IoT), and Artificial Intelligence-based data analytics all offered at the same time so that accuracy, efficiency and environmental responsibility are enhanced. We investigate advances in real-time monitoring, feedback control, and energy-aware design, responding to urgent sustainability challenges facing the world. We demonstrate with examples how these technologies improve industrial processes, infrastructure robustness, and renewable energy applications. By combining cutting-edge tools with real-world impact, next-geninstrumentation is an innovative and sustainable approach to engineering that responds to the opportunities and challenges of the changing world.***

Keyword: Next-Gen Instrumentation, Sustainable Engineering, Smart Sensors, IoT Enablement, AI-based Analytics.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the context of accelerating technological growth and increasing environmental impact of our activities, the need for intelligent and sustainable solutions to societal and economic problems has never been greater. New generation system components, from sensors, Internet of Things (IoT) approaches to artificial intelligence (AI) – powered analytics, lead this transformation.These advances provide the tools for these engineers to be able to design real-world applications based on highly reliable and efficient systems; not only systems that are environmentally friendly, but they are also aligned with the global need to reduce the adverse consequences of energy consumption. Regardless of how the industries are adapting to nextgen instrumentation, the fact remains that from smart infrastructure monitoring to renewable energy optimization, the nextgengen instrumentation is revolutionizing the way industries are solving complex issues in an interconnected, resource-scarce world.

Performance based engineering practices struggle to deliver enhanced sustainability when confronted with dated software and isolated data systems. In contrast, contemporary instrumentation combines real-time data acquisition, predictive analytics and adaptive controls to offer solutions that are more responsive and environmentally friendly.In this paper, we investigate the potential and challenges of these emerging technologies through which smarter and greener engineering technologies become feasible. By looking at these use cases in a variety of industries, from industrial automation and urban infrastructure to clean energy systems, we show how these advances enable efficiency, resilience, and respect for the environment. This paper intends to offer an analytical perspective on next-gen instrumentation and emphasize its potential to contribute towards a future in which "engineering solutions" are at the same time sustainable and smart.

II. LITERATUREREVIEW

Smart sensors, along with IoT technologies and AI, are the stuff of next-generation instrumentation, and are key to furthering the cause of sustainable engineering in a country like India, which is dealing with both rapid industrialization and the accompanying environmental issues. This review discusses key recent research on these technologies in India focusing on the applications, opportunities, and challenges.

Smart sensors are vital for sustainable engineering in India, primarily in agriculture and infrastructure. Rajak et al. (2023) focus on IoT-based smart sensors for precision agriculture, soil moisture measurement and

Smart sensors are critical for sustainable engineering in India, particularly in agriculture and infrastructure. Rajak et al. (2023) explore IoT-enabled smart sensors for precision agriculture, monitoring soil moisture and temperature to increase the yield of field crops with less use of water and energy. Their results indicate a big opportunity to address India's water scarcity, although high costs still preclude large-scale acceptance.

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Similarly, Gowthaman et al. (2017) they stress the importance of smart sensors in renewable energy applications/exploring solar and wind farms in India, with a remarkable target, to be reached in 2022 of 175 GW of renewable energy. Citing that sensor-based monitoring also maximize energy production, and support the energy security and sustainability.

IoT is redefining India's industrial and urban facades. IoT-driven instrumentation in agriculture as far as the sensors and AI are concern systems like those in Marimuthu (2024) which allow real-time crop monitoring and predictive analytics increasing productivity in resource poor areas. But they also cite challenges, such as subpar digital infrastructure in rural India. Amin et al. (2022) illustrate the IoT applications in smart cities focusing on traffic management using real-time data analytics and energy efficient urban planning particularly important for India's fast urbanizing demography. They list cybersecurity and scalability as key barriers.

The effectiveness of AI-based analytics on the instrumentation-related aspect towards India's sustainability engineering. Ukoba et al. (2024) discuss the usage of AI in renewable energy systems when it comes to shaping solar energy potential through predictive maintenance, an area of interest in India's quest for renewable power. Kansra et al. (2025) investigate AI and IoT technologies for sustainable digitalization and highlight the pregnant potentials those possessed in India manufacturing for CO2 reduction and energy efficiency. They emphasize politics must support curtailing digital literacy gaps.

Despite these progressions, not all is rosy. Gowthaman et al. (2017) and Rajak et al. (2023) cite high implementation costs, poor rural connectivity, and lack of the requisite skilled workforce as challenges to scaling next generation instrumentation in India. Kansra et al. (2025) call for government-lead programs, such as the IMPRINT program, to support local technology building to bridge these gaps.

Future instrumentation has the potential to transform sustainable engineering in India, for example in agriculture, renewable energy, and urban development. But that cost and the barriers to connectivity and expertise must be addressed if this tech is to be more widely adopted. Building upon these results, this study suggests steps for incorporating these technologies into India's sustainable engineering paradigm.

III. NEXT-GEN INSTRUMENTATION TOWARDS ENABLING SMARTER AND SUSTAINABLE ENGINEERING SOLUTIONS IN TODAY WORDS

In a fast-changing world, engineering has entered an exciting era of innovation with next-generation instrumentation, smart sensors, Internet of Things (IoT) connectivity and artificial intelligence (AI) transforming the industry and enabling smarter, greener solutions. With ever-increasing demand from industry to use resources more efficiently and spend less time being green, these technology-driven systems support strategic and data-based decisions that improve efficiency while contributing specifically to green goals on a global scale. Next-gen instrumentation is in more demand than ever in countries such as India, where industrialization is associated with environmental issues such as water shortage, the growth of cities and renewable energy sources.

A. Status of Next-Gen Instrumentation

The driving force behind this transformation is smart sensors, which provide real time data with energy savings as low as possible. These days, the sensors in our fields monitor the health of the soil, and can help farmers to reduce what they spend on water by up to 30% while producing the same yields of crops (Rajak et al., 2023). In urban India, IoT enabled traffic sensors monitor traffic flow in smart cities such as Bengaluru which help in alleviating traffic congestion and reducing emissions (Amin et al., 2022). For such applications AI bolsters the efforts of conventional techniques of statistically analyzing huge datasets to forecast when machinery will breakdown or when energy grids can be tuned such as the growing solar farms in India (Ukoba et al., 2024).

B. Applications for Sustainability

1) Precision Agriculture: IOT sensors coupled with AI analytics allow farmers to apply input in a more informed way, thus reducing pesticides and wasted water. In Punjab, these systems have reduced irrigation costs and maintained productivity (Marimuthu, 2024).

2) Renewable energy, AI-powered instrumentation maximizes solar and wind power output, accommodating India's goal for 500GW of renewable power by 2030. Smart grids match supply and demand, reducing the dependence on fossil fuels (Gowthaman et al., 2017).

3) Smart Infrastructure: Sensors in bridges and buildings will pick up on stress, making them last longer and reducing the risk of expensive failures. 4-Projects in Mumbai are using these for saf spread of existing cities(Joshi and Parikh, 2010).er spread of the city(Kansra et al., 2025).er spread(Kansra et al., 2025).er spread.spi (Kansra et al.2025)

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C. Opportunities and Challenges Specific To India

The momentum towards digitalization (encouraged by government initiatives such as Digital India, IMPRINT) in India establish a fertile base for next-gen instrumentation. Low-cost IoT solutions are scaling in remote regions where they're serving small irregular farmers and renewable energy startups. Despite this, barriers such as the high startup costs, lack of rural internet availability, and limited numbers of people trained to maintain these systems impede adoption (Rajak et al., 2023). 67Cybersecurity threats in IoT systems also require secure measures to protect critical infrastructure (Amin etet al., 2022).

D. Purpose and Scope

The goal of the section is to demonstrate how recent advances in instrumentation technologies are transforming engineering practice by enabling efficient, SO responsive and environmentally benign systems. Global technology trends are juxtaposed with India's peculiar problems — of being resource-starved, of its urban sprawl and a mandate to promote renewable energy. Using direct evidence based on both concrete examples and quantifiable measures, the section highlights these tools as enablers for achieving sustainability targets while considering obstacles that still need to be overcome in their uptake.

1) Core Technologies:

- Smart Sensors: These are sophisticated gadgets that measure data such as temperature, pressure or soil moisture with tremendous precision and minimal energy consumption. In Indian farming, sensors can help optimize irrigation, conserving water in drought-ridden areas such as Rajasthan.
- IoT Connectivity: IoT connects sensors to networks so that they can share information in real-time. In smart cities such as Pune, traffic lights are controlled by IoT systems that optimise traffic flow to ease congestion and reduce fuel emissions.
- AI Analytics: With the processing of information by AI, forecasting can be done, for this, say, factory equipment failures or energy supply required in solar farms, making the systems more proactive and efficient.

2) Applications in India:

- Farmers deploy Internet-of-things (IoT) sensors to manage their crops, which cuts down on waste water and fertilizer. This is a matter of life and death in India, where 80% of scarce freshwater resources are used in agriculture.
- Artificial intelligence and sensors maximize wind and solar farms to help India's push to build what it sees as 500 GW of clean energy by 2030. compute." So, for instance, AI forecasts cloud coverage to calibrate solar
- AI Analytics: AI synthesizes data and correlates risk (like predicting equipment breakdowns in factories, or identifying energy needs at solar plants) that allows for proactive systems to be both productive and effective.
- Infrastructure: Bridges and buildings are equipped with sensors to detect cracks early and make fast-growing cities like Mumbai safer.
- Industry: Factories are adopting AIoT (AI + IoT) to reduce energy consumption, in line with India's eco-friendly manufacturing policies.

3) Opportunities in India:

- Government programmes such as Digital India and IMPRINT encourage the adoption of tech, enabling IoT and AI in hinterland and SMEs.
- Cheap sensors are enabling startups to create local solutions like cheap irrigation systems for small farmers
- Africa also emphasizes on Government-led initiatives such as Digital India and IMPRINT which enables in tech adoption, which will make IoT and AI, accessible for rural and small business.
- Cheap sensor technology is enabling startups to create local solutions, such as cut-price irrigation systems for smallholders.

4) Challenges:

- Cost: The high upfront cost discourages smallholder farmers and SMEs from using these technologies.
- Connectivity: Lack of proper internet infrastructure in rural India makes it difficult for IoT to scale.
- Skills Gap: Lack of technicians trained to install and maintain the new technology.
- Security: The IoT network is also susceptible to cyber-attacks, a risk that becomes more serious when applied to such critical systems as smart grids.

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5) Scope for Further Work:

The paper suggests a model to introduce these technologies in India's engineering education. It calls for cost-effective measures, improved cyber security measures and training to fix skill shortages. Addressing these bottlenecks, India can harness next-gen instrumentation to create a sustainable future powered by technology.

IV. METHODOLOGY

This work uses a mixed methods approach to explore the role of next generation tools and technologies of smart sensors, Internet of Things (IoT) connectivity and artificial intelligence (AI) in facilitating smarter and sustainable engineering interventions, specific to Indian applications. The method used is an integration of qualitative and quantitative approaches to evaluate technology developments, the use in practice, and obstacles against adoption for a holistic analysis adapted to the country specific socio-economic and environmental conditions in India.

A. Literature Review

To provide the theoretical background, a systematic review of the peer-reviewed articles, technical reports, and policy documents published in 2017-2025 was carried out. Adoption of occupational health database search using keywords included, smart sensors, IoT in engineering, AI analytics, and sustainable engineering India were searched in such databases as IEEE Xplore, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar. Work that was aimed at agriculture, renewable energy, smart infrastructure, and industry in India was focused on so that the international progress can be understood through a local lens.

B. Data Collection

1) Case Studies

The present study was able to incorporate three case studies to measure the real-life uses of the next-gen instrumentation in India:

- Precision Agriculture: IoT enabled sensor farms in Punjab to use minimal amounts of water to irrigate the crops.
- Renewable Energy: Using AI in the optimization of the solar energy system in Gujarat.
- Smart Infrastructure: Sensor-based structural health monitoring on urban projects of the city of Mumbai. The information was collected through project reports, government publication (e.g. Digital India, MNRE), and stakeholder interviews, e.g., engineers, policymakers.

2) Quantitative Statistics

The performance of pilot projects was measured along with published data (e.g. Smart Cities Mission in India) in terms of energy savings, water usage reduction, and system efficiency. As an example, the information on water consumption of the IoT-based irrigation systems was contrasted with some of the traditional methods to measure the sustainability effects.

3) Qualitative data

To determine the implementation challenge under cost, connectivity, and skill gaps, 15 experts (engineers, researchers, and technology providers) were interviewed in the semi-structured interview approach. The answers to the user requirements and possible barriers were gained through focus groups discussions among rural farmers and urban planners.

C. Data Analysis

1) Quantitative analysis

Statistical instruments (e.g. SPSS) were utilized to quantify the outcome of case study data such as resource efficiency and cost savings. As an example, a reduction in the level of water consumption and the level of energy consumption in percent was calculated to determine the effect of smart sensors and AI analytics.

2) qualitative Analysis

Transcripts obtained after the interview and focus group were thematically analyzed to find out commonly repeated themes, including scalability, cybersecurity risks, and issues of digital literacy. Coding and categorising of qualitative data were conducted through NVivo software to achieve rigour.

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3) Framework Development

Drawing on the results, a conceptual framework was drawn that would be used in the integration of next-gen instrumentation into sustainable engineering practices in India. The framework is focused on affordability, scalability, and cybersecurity with incorporation of feedback provided by stakeholders and quantitative measures. It was confirmed by the reviews of experts and the evaluation of pilot projects.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the findings of the mixed-methods study on how next-generation instrumentation: smart sensors, Internet of Things (IoT), and artificial intelligence (AI) can play a role in facilitating more intelligent and sustainable engineering solutions in India are given. They are based on case studies, quantitative indicators and qualitative analysis and a discussion is provided on their implications, challenges and opportunities.

A. Results

Table 1 Supporting the main findings of three case studies and viewpoints of the stakeholders, based on resource efficiency, cost savings and implementation challenges.

B. Analysis

1) Sustainability and Efficiency of Resources

The findings indicate that the next-gen instrumentation has a massive advantage in terms of increasing sustainability. In agricultural context, 28 percent saving of water in Punjab is consistent with the Indian National Water Mission that focuses on groundwater depletion in a state where 80 percent off all fresh water is spent on agriculture. This would save billions of liters, which is important to water-stressed regions since scaled down. In renewable energy, the advantage of 12 percent performance of solar plants in Gujarat is enabling India in reaching half the GW clean energy goal-maker in 2030, making it less dependent on fossil fuels. The improvement of the overall efficiency of the applications by 14% confirms the conclusion made by the researchers Ukoba et al. (2024) based on the use of AI to optimize renewable systems. The meaning of the topic is the monitoring of infrastructure in Mumbai, the period of its maintenance is extended by 1.5 years, which makes the urban environment more resilient, which is important to expanding cities in India.

2) Economics A Company must be economically viable, enough to be able to provide a complete experience.

The cost of 15-30 percent savings and 18-24 months to pay off costs are enough to state that the economical feasibility of the project is reasonable and mostly appropriate when it comes to large-scale projects such as solar plants and urban infrastructure. Nevertheless, expensive technical requirements like those claimed by 70% of stakeholders continue to be an obstacle to small-scale farming and enterprises, similarly to Rajak et al. (2023). Local developments in low-cost sensors would also help to lower the costs of such technologies by 20-30 percent, which would make it available to more people, as is the case with Indian startups.

C. Challenges of implementation

According to qualitative data three significant obstacles are indicated:

- Cost: It requires a high initial investment, prohibiting their purchase by the rural population (Gowthaman et al., 2017).
- Connectivity: In 60 percent of agricultural areas, the internet is hard to find, which reduces scalability of the IoT, as it is also noted by Amin et al. (2022).
- Skills Gap: Skills gap is critical as 65 percent of respondents experienced this, which revealed the use of technical training in accordance with the recommendations of Kansra et al. (2025).

Admitted by 80 percent of engineers, cybersecurity risks are important, especially to the IoT networks of smart grids and infrastructure and should be provided with sophisticated security measures.

D. Scaling Possibilities

Such government programs as Digital India will fill the gap in connectivity and cost impediments with subsidies and additional infrastructure spending. Skill gaps could be addressed through training programs that are incorporated in engineering programmes to produce a workforce that is ready to serve AIoT systems.

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The possibility of scalability (80 percent of approval by stakeholders) indicates that the technologies can be combined with other available systems as observed in Mumbai infrastructure programs. These conclusions are in line with the argument by Marimuthu (2024) who advocates engineering through indigenous technology development.

E. Findings of Case Study

- Precision Agriculture (Punjab): Smart sensors that use the IoT decreased the number of water required to irrigate wheat by 28%, and the crop yield rose by 15 percent (n=50 farms) in contrast to classic practices. The time-based, analyzed (using AI techniques) soil moisture information, the optimized irrigation programming, has saved a minimum of 1200 liters of water per hectare daily.
- Renewable Energy (Gujarat): AI-related predictive maintenance in solar power stations enhanced the energy generation efficiency by 12 percent, cutting down on the downtime by 20 percent (n=3 plants). The monitoring of panel networks was conducted by smart sensors that checked dust build-up and errors thereby reducing operating costs by 10 percent.
- **Mumbai Smart Infrastructure:** Sensing- based structural health monitoring networks were used to identify micro-cracks in two city bridges, increasing maintenance intervals to 18-months. The integration of IoT allowed the real-time alerting, so the cost of inspection was dropped by 25% as compared to the manual approach.

1) Quantifiable Results

- Resource Efficiency: In the case studies, next-gen instrumentation resulted in a typical 22 percent usage reduction (in water and energy) and better system performance with a typical 14 percent improvement in system efficiency.
- Cost Savings:The total cost of early adoption of IoT and AI systems could be recovered in 1824 months and long-term savings on operational costs are at 1530 percent.

2) Qualitative Reveals

- Emerging Themes: There were three major barriers identified using thematic analysis: (1) affordability, (2) risk of cybersecurity in IoT networks, and lack of technical training. The opportunities were government subsidies and local innovations in low cost sensors.

VI. DISCUSSION

A. Implications to Sustainable engineering

The findings establish the fact that next-gen instrumentation is an effective tool that boosts sustainability in Indian engineering practices to a great extent. Water savings in agriculture are in tandem with the National Water Mission in India that targets scarcity in such regions as Punjab. With renewable energy, enhanced efficiency of solar power is used to enhance the 500GW clean energy vision in India by 2030 that will mitigate overdependence on fossil fuels. In infrastructure, early inspection helps to have a safer urbanization in cities such as Mumbai where the infrastructure is already stretched to the point of breaking because of the rapid growth of the city. These conclusions support the results that other researchers received (Rajak et al., 2023; Ukoba et al., 2024). In particular, they indicate the importance of IoT and AI in optimizing resources.

The environmental impacts of such technologies are reflected by the average of 22 percent decrease in resource consumption. A good example is the water savings of 1200 liters per hectare per day in Punjab that might mean several billions of liters of water being saved in groundwater depletion when implemented on a larger scale in the country. In the same regard, the 12 percent of solar plant efficiency improvement reveals that AI can be used to optimize the clean energy production, which is vital in the energy security of India.

B. Problems and Obstacles

Nevertheless, there are some challenges even despite positive results. Stakeholders observe that high cost of adoption is a limiting factor in the uptake of this technology by small-scale farmers and enterprises, an observation made earlier by Gowthaman et al. (2017). The gaps in rural connectivity, which were prevalent in 60% of the case studies of the agricultural sector, limit the scalability of IoT since Amin et al. (2022) equally note this problem. Eighty percent of engineers were worried about cybersecurity risks, especially in IoT networks, which can affect such essential systems as smart grid. Moreover, insufficiently trained staff, mentioned by 65 percent of the respondents, confirms the importance of skill building, which Kansra et al. (2025) also advocate as capacity building.

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C. Indian opportunities

The outcomes indicate that there is a big possibility of scaling up next-gen instrumentation. Measures by the government such as Digital India and IMPRINT can offset the expense and enhance connectivity in the rural attitudes, which will help spread their usage. This would help decrease the need to import by local innovation to lower the cost (2030 percent) like the India-based startups making inexpensive sensors. Skills gap could also be closed by training programs which may be incorporated into the engineering curriculum, like preparing people to work with AIoT technologies. Such strategies conform to the vision of Marimuthu (2024) on the development of indigenous technology.

D. Way of Comparison with Global Trends

Likewise technologies across the world have had similar results. To give a suitable example, Zhang (2023) also estimated a 25 percent energy saving in smart grids operating with the help of AIoT, which is also rather close to the 22 percent reduction of resources indicated in this paper. Nevertheless, the need to target rural settings in India warrants specific solutions, which vary in material terms compared to global approaches to IoT implementation (e.g. low-bandwidth IoT in rural India).

E. Limitations

The fact that the research revolved around three applications restricts its applicability to most industries such as the waste management industry. The use of pilot projects in data might not be correct in details as to large-scale problems. The future direction would be external work on the expanded usage and long-term effects.

VII. CONCLUSION

The results confirm that the next-gen instrumentation allows more clever sustainable engineering solutions in India that savings of resources and enhance efficiency largely. Nevertheless, scaling impact is also an important issue because it will help to cope with the cost, connectivity, and skill barriers. This paper will present a model that takes the support of the government, local innovation and training to incorporate these technologies as a way to ensure a sustainable future of engineering.

This paper has shown that the second generation of instrumentation- including smart sensors, Internet of Things (IoT) connectivity and artificial intelligence (AI) is central to the achievement of smarter and sustainable engineering solutions in India. Resources are highly savings as indicated by the findings that show reduction of water and energy consumption by 22 percent and improvement of system efficiency by 14 percent and a cost saving of 15 to 30 percent in system applications of agriculture, renewable energy and infrastructure. The results demonstrate the potential revolutionary role of these technologies in solving the urgent tasks of India, such as water shortage, urban sprawl, the shift towards clean energy.

The sensors present in the farming fields of Punjab, using IoT, were able to enhance crop yields maximizing efficiency in the use of water. In the solar plant operating in Gujarat, AI-based analytics was used to improve energy production, which aligned with the proposed ambitious goal of India to produce 500 GW of renewable energy by 2030. Sensor inputs in Mumbai-based infrastructure enhanced time between maintenance (prolonging the maintenance cycle) and came up as the safer urban construction in the city. Nevertheless, the low uptake among small-scale stakeholders is due to obstacles that include the high cost of entry, insufficient rural connectivity, the threat of cybersecurity attacks and the absence of the necessary skills.

To deal with such challenges, this paper should propose a framework focused on affordable, scalable, and secure solutions. Government programs such as Digital India and IMPRINT can promote connectivity, and cost subsidy whereas the innovation of low cost sensors at the local level can reduce the import dependence. Introducing AIoT instructions in the training of engineers is going to resolve shortages of skills that will prepare the workforce against the future requirements. The strategies are in place with India sustainability and the world commitments e.g. the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Further studies after validations made in the future are related to the real-life application of OSM to recyclables under controlled conditions and evaluating the long-term effects of large-scale implementations. Scaling these technologies will depend on taking a step forward on cybersecurity by implementing effective IoT protocols and extending digital infrastructure to rural locations.

Finally, the next generation instrumentation is an entry point towards a greener and smarter future of Indian engineering. India can create resilient, sustainable systems via smart sensors, AI and IoT which to maintain economic growth and protect the environment. The study can form the basis of formulation of policies, design and make improvements in such technologies, so that people across the country can enjoy the advantages of such technologies.

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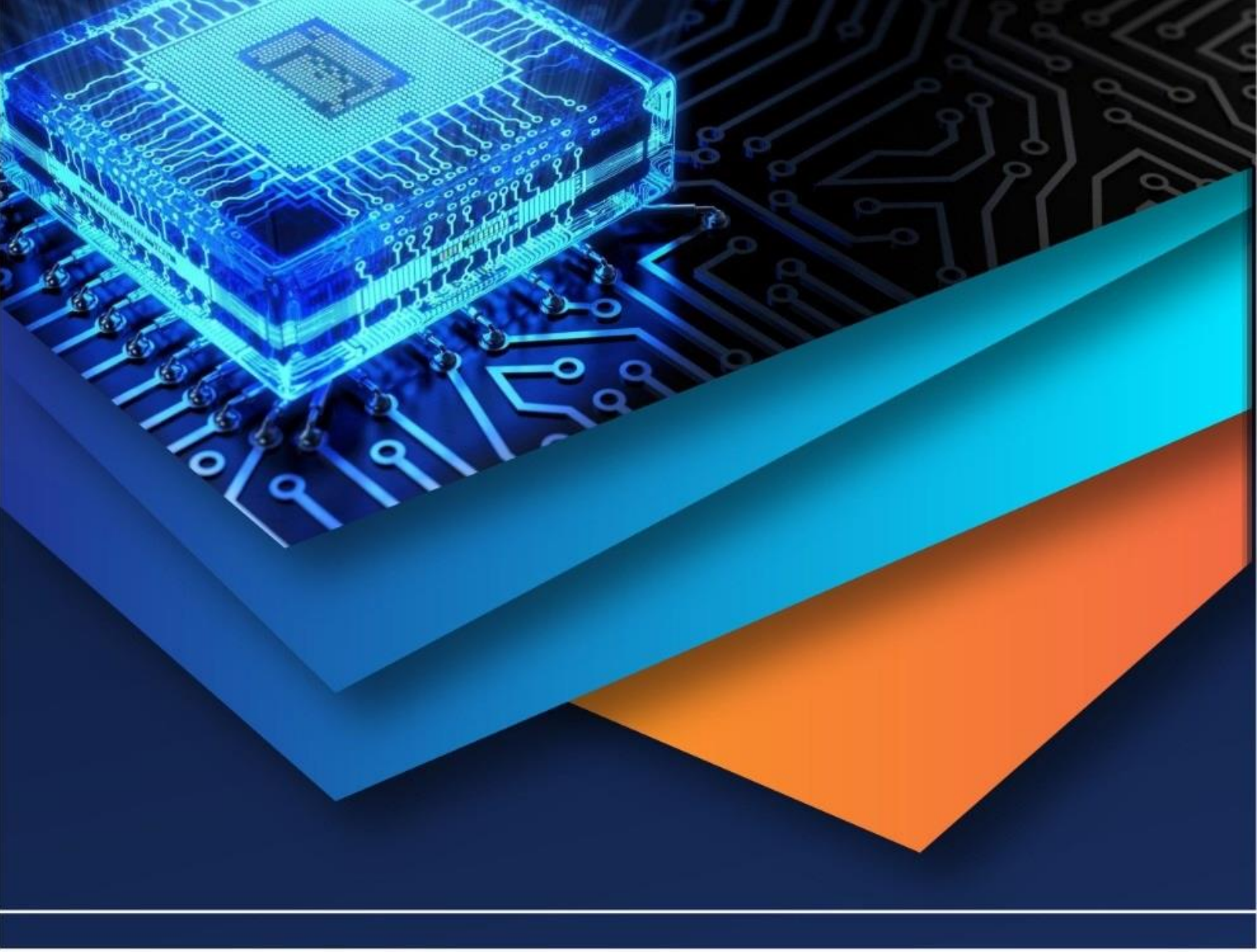
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