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Study on Openness to Experience and Neurotic Personality Trait among Young Adult Artists

Ghazal Soni[1], Dr. Neerja Pandey[2]
Amity Institute of Behavioral and Allied Science, Amity University Uttar Pradesh Lucknow

Abstract: ***The purpose of this research is to study openness to experience and neuroticism on fine artists in comparison with non-artists. The sample size used is 80 individuals, 40 artists and 40 non-artists. Standardized and quantitative personality assessment Neo-ffi has been used to collect and measure the data. The review on previously existing researches indicated that artists scored higher on openness to experience and exhibit higher measures of neuroticism too. The present results highlight a significant difference between the two groups in both openness and neuroticism traits, inferring that artists are more open to experience than non-artists and exhibit slightly higher tendency towards neuroticism than non-artists. This theme of research can help understanding the mental health and behaviors of creative people and recognize the knowledge of aesthetics along with the background that leads to a final artwork. It can help acknowledge the personality of creative people and guide them effectively as well as nurture the creativity.***

Keywords: Personality traits, Openness to experience, Neuroticism, Young adults, Creative Fine Artists.

I. INTRODUCTION

Personality traits are a pattern which tell how a person thinks, feels, and behaves. Personality is a term coming from Latin word “persona” meaning a mask. The Greek actors used masks while acting on stage to portray their characters. Personality can be understood as an organization that optimize individual’s psychological system that explains specific behaviors we well as thoughts Allport (1961). With a greater focus on behavioral aspects of personality. Watson (1919) explained behaviorism where the personality was understood as ‘maintained’ feeling, behavior and environment coming across as a collective pattern. Every part of our life is governed by personality traits as they regulate our social circle, career paths, family and relationship, academics and motivation, well-being and many other cognitive as well as emotional aspects of behavior. The present framework used by researchers was given by Costa & McCrae (1992), which focused on behavior, emotions, and thoughts rather than using fixed traits to describe personality types. They refined the Five Factor Model (FFM) by publishing NEO Personality Inventory and NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI).

A. Openness to Experience

People with high Openness to Experience have deep interest in abstract ideas, aesthetics, novelty, curiosity, creativity, appreciation for art. Raymond Cattell (1947) observed openness to experience as a trait having sub-qualities like "Intellectual" "Imaginative" and "Bohemian". Later, Fiske (1949) included the "Culture" aspect that reflected diverse interests, which was further investigated and concluded by Norman (1963) for "Inquiring Intellect" that focused largely on intellectual refinement and artistic parameters to perceive the world. The NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R) described Openness having subparts like Fantasy, Feelings, Ideas, Aesthetics, Actions, and Values. In behavioral aspects, they carry emotional depth, learn through experiences, and seek variety in activities. They are observed beinggood at adapting to changes and manage to adjust in new environments well. On the other hand, people scoring low on openness to experience are more practical and prefer stability, they tend to follow routines well and face difficulty for managing changes in life.

B. Neuroticism

In modern days, findings proposed by David H. Barlow (2014) are accepted and taken into consideration which explains the trait as combination of genetic as well as environmental factors. People with high levels of neuroticism are prone to overthinking, worrying and achieving perfection due to underlying tendencies like self-criticism, fear of failure, panic and pessimism, talking about behavioral grounds they are shy, introvert, introspective, overly dependent, self-conscious and complaining. Among today’s young adult population, certain qualities like creativity, sensitivity, reassurance-seeking, avoidance for conflict, low self-worth and self-doubt are found. Thus, possibility of emotional instability and distress rises due to difficulty in coping with new and stressful situations. Anxiety is closely related to neuroticism as many complex and negative emotions are showcased which also impacts an individual’s quality of life, work performance, immunity and overall health.

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C. Relevance to Artist population

Artist population interestingly inhibits qualities and traits like creativity, observation skills, perfectionism, empathy, expressiveness, openness but also vulnerability, introversion and self-doubt which stem their motivation too. Charles Batteux in Principe(1746), defined fine arts as a medium that satisfies the need for beauty and "good sense," identifying painting, sculpture, architecture, music, and dance. A creative person stands out having qualities like originality, problem-solving and meaning-making also involving individual learning, knowledge, imagination and motivation to pour out ideas into a three dimensional work. In today's population, young adults are turning towards creativity to express themselves, cope with stress or simply make meaning out of experiences and contributing to the society in their unique ways, present youth respects the idea of creativity and the exploration of their emotions, meanwhile artists face burnout through the routine, academic pressure, social expectations and above all, forming their identity and making place as an individual among their own community. The conflicts and challenges mentioned earlier contribute to several changes in mental health of a being whether it reflects decline or improvement in quality. Overall, majority of artists tend to showcase neuroticism as a common personality trait and presence of emotional states like anxiety and depression.

D. RATIONALE

The personality has been a matter of keen interest when it comes to creativity and art. Fine artists possess unique personality traits as a group, considering psychological theories, BigFive is one of the descriptive model to work with. NEO-ffi assessment has been used in this study to learn about personality traits, like openness and neuroticism related to fine artists. Artists usually are good at expressing their emotions and in search of inspiration to create their artworks as well as learn more about the world which makes them falling into category of having good openness to experience and similarly, neuroticism too. This study helps in understanding the complexities in personality of artists and getting insight on their behavior and mental well-being. The assessment has been circulated among the young fine artists, aged between 18 to 25 years, which might help discover more about the present population and hypothetically predict the coming generation's behaviors and personality shifts.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter involves past literature reviews by researchers who explored personality traits and creative artists and other researches that contribute to the same theme of the study.

Through their study Barrick and Mount (1991) referred Openness to experience as a personality trait that showcases the level of an individual's imagination or fascination which leads us back to whenBarron and Harrington (1981) in their study found individuals with high scores of openness engaged in creative activities more than the others when measured.Feist (1998) conducted a study on artists as well as scientists and with the results stated openness to experience as a differentiating feature among artist population as they tend to be extravert, impulsive, ambitious and high in autonomy as compared to the scientists. In their research, Wolfradt and Pretz (2001) confirmed correlation of openness to experience with creative thinking, similarly, Burch, Pavelis, Hemsley, and Corr (2006) from their findings highlighted artists having more degree of openness as compared to non-artist research samples. A study on creative individuals by Ivcevic et al. 2007suggested creative individuals naturally open to new experiences, mentally flexible, emotionally stable and deeply self-reflective. He also stated they are capable of expressing their emotions and contributing their psyche into creative areas, these qualities direct towards personality traits like openness to experience.Silvia et al. 2009 found a positive significant relationship across multiple domains like art, science and everyday creativity which agreed with further following findings by Nusbaum, E. C., Martin, C., & O'Conner, A. (2009) where they investigated the effects of openness to experience upon divergent thinking and discovered the presence of openness to experience, good self-concept, creativity determining the trait as a consistent predictor of creativity. In his research, Kaufman et al. (2010) suggested the positive correlation of openness to experience in creative activities under artistic and emotional expression domains. A study on creative artists led Karwowski, Lebuda, and Wiśniewska (2013) to highlight openness to experience being positively associated with all creative styles. Similarly, many previous studies such as by Funder (2001) Hu et al. (2011) Taki et al. (2013) have indicated that openness to experience is a stable personality factor strongly related to creativity in the real world. In a research by Benedek et al. (2012) it was found openness to experience positively related to divergent thinking, playing an important role in abstract and creative thinking and further a research on creativity and openness by N. Jahansa and R. Nickbakhsh (2014) gave insight on a positive and significant relationship among openness to experience and creativity. With the findings from their study, Li W, Li X, Huang L, Kong X, Yang W, Wei D, et al. (2015) reflected that individuals with high openness to experience engage more in creative activities,giving them exposure to seek greater knowledge and a wide range of experiences which helps them generate ideas during the whole creative process.

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Judge & Zapata (2015) explored the concept of openness in relation with art and creativity, justified their results in favor of hypothesis, explained open individuals indulge in beauty of culture, and appreciation for art. They also stated openness as an encouraging element for exploration that follows a creative expression. In his research work, Feist (2015) increasingly focused on personality traits and their relation with artistic creativity and highlighted creative people being more open to new experiences, confident, self-accepting and driven. A diversified study on artists by Kaufman et al. (2016) highlighted 'openness' as a predicted achievement in the fields of creativity such as visual arts, music, and creative writing, and it somewhat agrees with a research conducted by Iqra Abdullah, Rozeyta Omar, Siti Aisyha Panatik (2016) reported creative individual having high levels of openness to experience than others and those scored low on openness were less creative.Karwowski and Beghetto (2018) held a research among college students, found openness to experience positively associated with creative processes.While a research by Jirásek, M., & Sudzina, F. (2020) concluded the results stating that openness to experience is a trait directly connected to artistic creativity. The most recent studies by Louise Taylor Bunce and Elizabeth A. Boerger (2022) highlighted a 'mediating' role of openness to reach the creative process to complete a creative product and findings by Tanu Shree Sharma, Dr. K. M. Tripathi (2023) found a significant correlation of openness to experience with creativity across all creative domains indicating a strong relationship between the two phenomena. For neuroticism, Rogers (1961)from the school of Humanistic psychology, explained the action of entire creative process resulting into a product as representation of ''man's tendency to actualize himself, to become his potentialities.'' Hirsch, N.D.M. (1931) in their study, suggested "extremes" reception towards the social as well as physical world play a great role in shaping emotional grounds, from which an individual sensitive to criticism, learns to escape from the comments, taunts, insult or pain through channeling extreme emotions into creative art. In a research on creativity and neuroticism, Fromm, E. (1959) highlighted flexibility in rationality and emotionality as markers through which experiencing objective as well as subjective situations, helps and individual indulge in a state of creating something impactful through acceptance. In the finding of the study by Rothenberg (1990) neuroticism can be concluded as a force providinga ground for a creator to get in touch with his sensitive sides, sufferings and experience which serves as an ingredient portray emotionsinto a finalcreative product. In a study on creativity, Jamison, K.R. (1985) highlighted that throughout an entire creative cycle there are several components such as perceptions and experiences that act like raw materials leading to a spectrum required to build up a creative product. In conclusion to his study,E.F. Hammer (1961) stated that artworks require a guiding motive which includes basically tensions, inner conflicts and emotions difficult to deal with. The study suggested behind every idea of an art is a complex background work. With his findings, Hirsch (1931) asserts Freud's findings on artistic creations and how they transform from imagination and fantasies to final work due to an artist's displeasure or disinterest in the real world and its systems, suggesting that they balance their unfulfilled desires and disappointments by escaping their neurotic tendencies in a very harmless yet impactful manner.In his papers, Freud (1948)explained the phenomena of 'sublimation' of repressed desires in unconscious mind which is brought out in real world through creativity. Lombroso, C. (1891) introduced the 'madness theory' which found links between psychological instability and art. In his study, Bass et al. (2008) stated that negative emotions and moods can encourage creative performances as compared to positive emotions. In a research on creativity and neuroticism, Carson (2011) found risk tendencies with pathological basis such as drug addiction, alcoholism, depression and even schizophrenia among population with high creativity. It somewhat supports findings by Ludwig (1998) on relationship of mental illness linking with various fields of art, majorly visual arts. The author Hammer, E.F. (1961) believed it was important for one to experience insecurity, inner tension, pathology and anxiety to motivate their creative self to reach a flow state. Later on, (Freud, 1975) discovered a positive relation between neuroses and artwork. In their research, Stetson, Katherine L. (1991) concluded a clear relationship between creativity, neurosis and mood disorders. Further, (Feist, 1998) in his comparative study among artists and scientists, mentioned artists as more anxious, stressed, emotional, and sensitive individuals, whereas scientists were found to be more stable.A study held on visual artists by Burch, Pavelis, Hemsley, and Corr (2006) concluded with visual artists having more neuroticism than non-artist population. Later on, the key aspects behind the process were explained by Papworth et al. (2008) indicating higher mental instability with risks of substance abuse, suicidal tendencies and mood disorders among artists.In his research Karwowski (2013) reflected on major characteristics of neuroticism such as tension, low self-esteem, and negative emotions negatively related to creativity, further explaining people with high neuroticism lack confidence and trust in their creative abilities and potential to carry out a creative task. Further, through her study on creativity, Silvia et al. (2012) found a positive relationship between neuroticism and artistic creativity which shares synthesis with (Leung et al. 2014) which explained a creative benefit of negative emotions with highly neurotic individuals to generate creative outputs irrespective of negative or positive moods.Lama M. et al. (2017) in his research work explained a positive correlation of artists with neuroticism which seems to be verified further byresearch on artistic perfectionism by Stricter J. et al (2019) highlighted a positive association with Neuroticism.

A research by Hart CL, Lemon R, Curtis DA, Griffith JD (2020) added, neuroticism closely linked with emotional instability and mental health issues as artists possess high levels of emotional sensitivity, neurotic tendencies and a strong reactivity in their artistic pursuits.The most recent study by Tanu Shree Sharma, Dr. K. M. Tripathi (2023) found a significant correlation between Neuroticism and creativity, suggesting a strong relationship between the two.

III. METHODOLOGY

The objective of the study was to study personality traits like openness to experience and neuroticism among fine artists with the Hypotheses: H1: There will be a significant difference between Artist and Non-Artists population for Openness to Experience and H2: There will be a significant difference between Artist and Non-Artists population for Neuroticism. The variables used were Openness to Experience and Neuroticism and the tools used was NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI). The sample details are Sample size: 80, divided equally as 40 artists and 40 non-artists, Sample Population: Young fine artists between age group of 18 to 25 years and Sampling Technique: Purposive Sampling Technique. Inclusion criteria were Participant must be aged between 18 to 25 years of age, Able to read and comprehend English, Willing to participate voluntarily and Exclusion criteria were Participants out of the age criteria, Participants not able to read and comprehend English. Research Designed used was Quantitative Research Design.

Procedure

- The tools required for assessment were selected.
- The questionnaires were administered online through Google Forms.
- Participants were informed about the purpose of the study.
- Informed consent was obtained from all participants.
- Respondents were instructed to respond honestly to all items, and confidentiality of their responses was assured.
- There was no time limit for completion of the questionnaires.
- After completion, the responses were collected and prepared for statistical analysis using SPSS.

IV. RESULT ANALYSIS

The objective of this study was to study Openness to experience and Neuroticism among artists in comparison with non-artists. SPSS was used to analyze the data collected from respondents. In order to examine the difference between artists and non-artists, p value and cohen's d has been calculated.

Table.1 Descriptive Analysis for Openness to experience (NEO-FFI) of artists and non-artists.

Openness	Mean	Mean Diff	SD	t value	df	p value	Significance	cohen's d
Artists	29.875	3.9	4.665	3.952	77.1	0.0002	(p< .05)	0.88
Non-Artist	25.975		4.144					

Table.1 represents a significant difference between artists and non-artists for openness to experience. Thus, in this case, Hypothesis 1 is approved and accepted at p value 0.0002 (p< .05) and Cohen's d=0.88 level of significance. This indicates a significant large difference between the two groups. The significant difference indicates that artists are more open to experiences than the non-artists.

Table.2 Descriptive Analysis for neuroticism (NEO-FFI) for artists and non-artists.

Neurotcism	Mean	Mean Diff	SD	t value	df	p value	Significance	cohen's d
Artists	30.125	4.175	7.808	2.402	78	0.0186	(p< .05)	0.54
Non-Artist	25.95		7.739					

Table.2 representsa significant difference between artists and non-artists for neuroticism. Thus, in this case, Hypothesis 2 is approved and accepted at p value 0.019 (p< .05) and Cohen's d=0.54 level of significance. This indicates a significant difference between the two groups. The significant difference indicates that artists are slightly more neurotic than the non artists.

V. DISCUSSION

The present study focuses on comparing personality traits like Openness to experience and Neuroticism among young artist and non-artist population. The findings represented in Table.1 indicated a statistically significant difference between the two groups for Openness to experience trait with t(78)=3.96, p=0.0002 (p< .05). Thus, the hypothesis stating there will be a significant difference between artists and non-artists population for openness to experience was accepted.

The significant difference between artists and non-artists indicate that artists are more open to experiences when compared as they are known to have a unique vision and ability to portray their imagination into artworks is commendable which separates them from rest of population.

These results align with the findings of previous researches as mentioned by Burch, Pavelis, Hemsley, and Corr (2006) that visual artists inhibit more degree of openness and Ivcevic et al. (2007) highlighted creative artists naturally open to new experiences and mentally flexible making them capable of expressing their emotions into creative areas. Later on, new studies by Funder (2001), Kaufman et al. (2010) showcased direct relationship of openness to experience in creative activities under artistic domains, also mentioned the same by Karwowski, Lebuda, and Wiśniewska (2013), Hu et al. (2011), Taki et al. (2013). Over the decade, researchers like Judge & Zapata (2015) and Karwowski and Beghetto (2018) gained clarity on personality trait like openness being strongly related to artistic population proposing findings that open individuals appreciate and indulge in the beauty of culture as it serves as an encouraging element to explore and as mentioned by Feist (2015) it helps them generate a creative expression along with other strengths too like confidence and self-acceptance.As stated earlier by Barrick and Mount (1991) that Openness to experience reveals the level of an individual's imagination or fascination and demanding qualities for creation such as curiosity, novelty-seeking, intellect, understanding for aesthetics and autonomy are greatly important to channel the emotions and experiences into a real world artwork. Proposed by Louise Taylor Bunce and Elizabeth A. Boerger (2022), for an artist, it is now confirmed that openness to experience plays an integral role that 'mediates' a creative thought process and product. Thus, the present study acknowledge the most possible recent findings from Tanu Shree Sharma, Dr. K. M. Tripathi (2023) that reflects a significant relation of openness to experience with creativity across all creative domains.

The findings represented in Table.2 indicated a statistically significant but slight difference between the two groups for neurotic trait with t(78)=2.402, p=0.0186 (p< .05). Thus, the hypothesis stating there will be a significant difference between artists and non-artists population for neuroticism was accepted.

The significant difference between artists and non-artists indicate that artists are slightly more neurotic when compared as artists and non-artists both experience negative emotions especially during the young adulthood, but the weightage of neurotic trait is slightly more in the artist population.

The present research work acknowledges and aligns well with the concepts and learning from previous authors and their work as the initial researches showed a remarkable difference between artists and non-artists as mentioned by Freud (1975) who found positive relation between neuroses and artwork and further investigated by Silvia et al. (2012), Lama M. et al. (2017), and Stricter J. et al (2019) that neuroticism and artistic creativity are closely related. Mentioned by Leung et al. (2014) an artist experiences a creative benefit of negative emotions to generate creative outputs. In the study by Burch, Pavelis, Hemsley, and Corr 2(006) is clearly confirmed that visual artists have more neuroticism than non-artist population. The recent findings fromHart CL, Lemon R, Curtis DA, Griffith JD (2020)gave insight to understand that artists possess high level of emotional sensitivity and a strong reactivity and mentioned by Tanu Shree Sharma, Dr. K. M. Tripathi (2023) emotional sensitivity helps individual in shaping their negative emotions in creative products. The authors Hirsch, N.D.M. (1931) and Rothenberg (1990) in their study, explained that sensitivity to criticism makes an individual learn to escape from insults or pain by providing the ground for the creator to be in touch with emotions, sufferings and experience serving as an ingredient to creative a final product.Ideas proposed and accepted at present by E.F. Hammer (1961) and Bass et al. (2008) indicate that negative emotions difficult to deal with are known to act as a guiding motive that encourage artistic expression more as compared to positive emotions to reach a flow state for understanding that behind every idea of an art is a complex background of emotions.

VI. CONCLUSION

The present research highlighted the difference in personality traits like Openness to experience and neuroticism between two groups, artists and non-artists. According to the literature, artists score more on both the traits as Openness serves a guiding motive or source to seek inspiration for them to create and neuroticism plays a background role to encourage an artist for expressing the negative emotions that cannot be channeled in any other form.

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The scores on neuroticism did not show a clear distinction possibly as the young adults commonly tend to experience negative emotions like stress, anxiety or depressed states which make it slightly difficult to compare. Artist group indicated a clear distinction from non-artists as the creative processes require imagination, creative vision, novelty seeking and curiosity.

VII. FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

The present research used short sample size over a specific art form that is fine arts which minimally decreases the scope for understanding of overall artist community irrespective of art forms. The respondents were included with a diverse range like art students as well as hobby artists and content creators. The future researches can focus on one specific or other type of artists. The behaviors or data can be analyzed or monitored over time for better understanding. This topic can be helpful in psychology as well as the knowledge of aesthetics and assessing the potential qualities of a student to pursue a career.

VIII. LIMITATIONS

This research collected a short sample size of 80, divided into two groups as 40 artists and 40 non-artists, it may affect the generalizability of results. Future researches can collect more samples to study the data better. The demographic homogeneity, targeted age group of 18 to 25 years here for the sample may restrict the generalization of results for further diverse population.

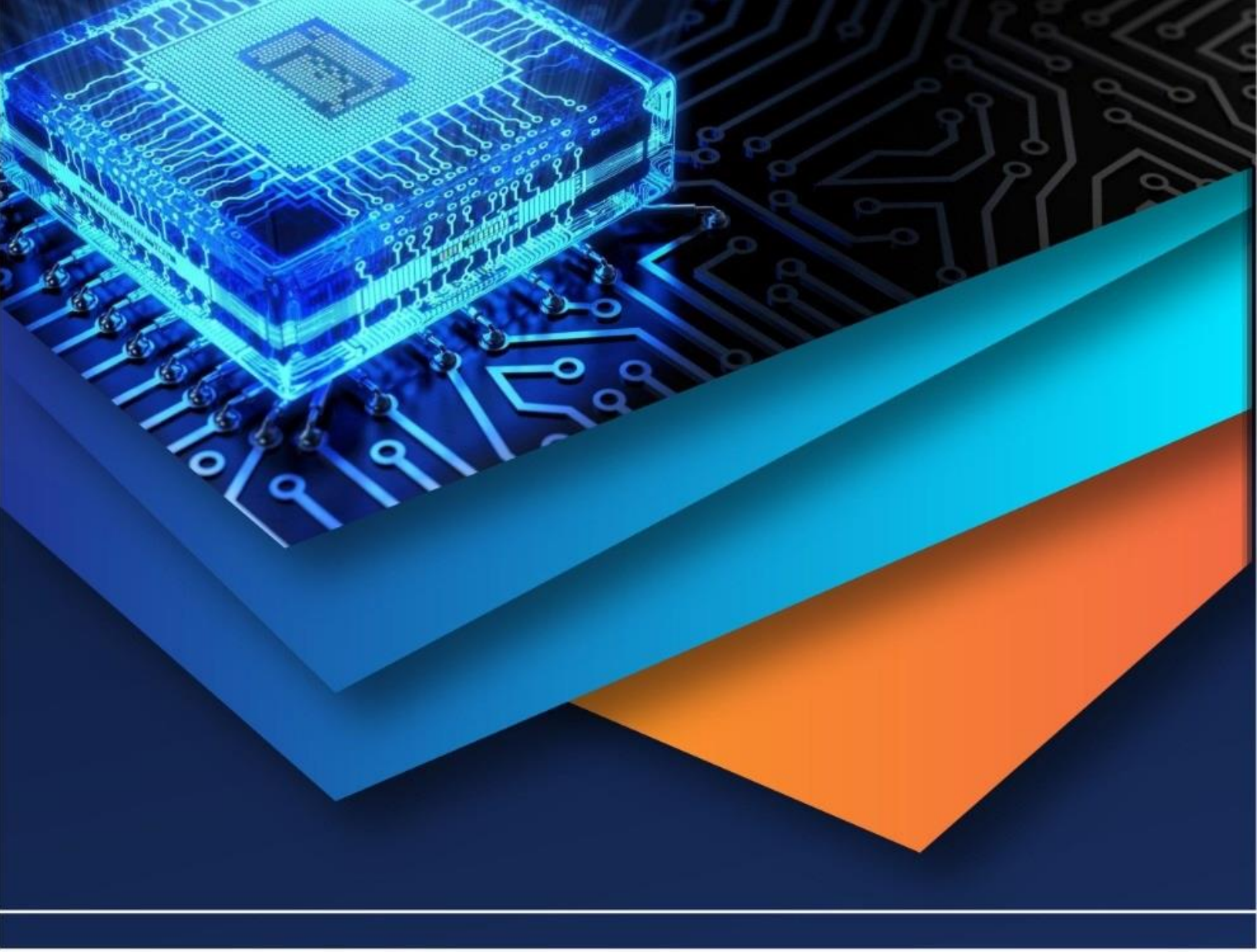
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