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**Influence of Effective Social and Adaptive Behaviour on  
Personality Adjustment of Gifted underachievers and  
Students with Learning Disabilities in Egbeda Local  
Government, Ibadan**

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**Abstract**

*This study investigated the influence of effective social and adaptive behaviour on personality adjustment among gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities in Egbeda Local Government, Oyo State, Nigeria. The sample consisted of 205 SS1 and SS2 students (males=75, females=130), who were randomly selected in Egbeda Local Government. Instruments (self developed questionnaires) were used to measure the influence of social and adaptive behaviour on personality adjustment of these students. Data collected were analysed using Analysis of co-variance (ANOVA), Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis. Results of the findings indicated that, effective social and adaptive behaviour can influence openness to expression, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism (personality adjustment) of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities. Also, gender had a significant relationship with personality adjustment.*

**Key Words:** Effective social behaviour, Adaptive behaviour, Gifted underachievers, Learning disabilities, Personality adjustment.

## **Introduction**

Personality has no universally accepted definition. Personality is a state of a person's existence as an individual. It implies all the physical and mental qualities of an individual established over time. The general concept of personality affirms that it is the establishment over a period of time an individual's unique patterns of capacities, motives, values predisposing his response in a characteristic manner to situation and stimuli in his environment (Sokan and Akinade, 1994). The problem of personality adjustment is compounded when school serves as a place that makes no allowances for the shortcomings of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities. Teachers are unable to comprehend their difficulties neither are they competent in handling their social skills. Gifted underachievers are those individuals who have the potentials to exhibit superior performance on measures of expected achievement (i.e standardized achievement test scores or cognitive or intellectual ability assessment), but their actual performance always fall below what their potentials indicate (Reis and McCoach, 2000). Obani (2006) postulates that students with learning disabilities are those who are average or above average intelligence as measured by intelligence tests that perform averagely, above average and sometimes very poorly because they experience undue difficulties in learning to read, write or spell. The high academic performance inconsistency and unpredictability characterized by gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities may account for these students poor perform. Ironically, such random moments of underachievement might worsen the matter because the teacher assumes that the student could do it if he works harder. She attributes the cause of failure to bad behaviour, poor attitude or lack of motivation. The student might develop low self-concept because the teacher intensifies the student's anxiety, frustration through increased impatience and several blames due to her inexperience. Eventually, these maladaptive behaviours lead to negative thoughts and views. This type of classroom climate eventually turns students off the school (Coil 2007). Also, school structure and peer influence may inadvertently hinder student's ability to perform at his expected ability. It is easy for school personnel

to forget students with unique needs in large schools (Seeley, 2004). These students boredom in the classroom often lead to behavioural problems. Therefore, their behavioural disruption coupled with the underlying factors need to be addressed. On the other hand, positive view about themselves enhances feelings of self-worth and self-concept which are essential prerequisite for personality adjustment.

Personality traits are broad domains. These are dimensions of personality that are used to describe human personality. Komarraju, Karau, Schmack and Avdic (2011) adopted the Big Five Personality traits. These traits are based on factors which is called the Five Factor Model. The Big five factors are openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism. Acronyms commonly used to refer to the five traits collectively are OCEAN, NEOAC or CANOE. Under each global factor there is a cluster or correlated qualities as gregariousness, assertiveness, excitement seeking, warmth activity and positive emotions. These Big Five models are able to account for different traits in personality without overlapping. It is a self-descriptions and observations which consist of five-factor structure found across a wide range of participants of different ages and of different cultures. The summary of the factors of the Big Five and their constituent traits, which form the acronym OCEAN are relevant to the study on gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities.

O stands for openness to experience. This reflects the degree of intellectual curiosity, creativity and a preference for novelty and variety of a person. C means conscientiousness. It is a tendency to be organised and dependable. E is extraversion, which is energy to surge towards positive emotions, assertiveness and sociability. A refers to agreeableness. This is a tendency to be compassionate and cooperative rather than suspicious and antagonistic toward others. Lastly, N is neuroticism, which reveals the tendency to experience unpleasant emotions easily.

Competences in social skills are needed by every student for successful daily living (Lerner 2003). Acquisition of these



skills enable students to interact with their peers, teachers and others successfully. They accurately recognise and sensitively respond to emotion expressed by others, while their desires and preferences are expressed in socially acceptable ways. These enable them to identify and solve social problems which are beneficial to personality adjustment. Consequently, competencies in some social skills have the potentials to influence personality adjustment of students with behavioural disorder. These would enable them to relate positively with others. Furthermore, they would have accurate and age-appropriate social cognition which brings about effective social behaviour while adaptive behaviour is ensued.

Deficiency in social competencies has battered the personality of some students, especially gifted underachievers and students with learning difficulties. At times they are abused and ridiculed by the teacher in the presence of their mates. These students perceive themselves negatively because they are faced with many challenges which hinder them to become well adapted individuals psychologically and socially. The way they perceive themselves and the response from outside mould a concept of an insecure and threatening world and a view of themselves as inept. Unfavourable social experiences lead to disappointment, frustration, feeling of incompetence, lack of self-worth and poor self-concept (Silver 1992, 1995a).

The battering of the developing personality continues and increases in the school when the teachers are not skilful to handle the situation. The battered personality has to be rebuilt through activities in social skills so that their self-esteem, self-concept and interest in learning could be enhanced. Obviously, positive view about themselves enhances feelings of self worth and this rekindles an interest in learning. This study would be of great significance to curriculum planners, teachers, social workers, special educators, counsellors, and other stakeholders. This would enable them to understand these students better and have empathy for them rather than leaving them to their fate.

It would be useful to curriculum planners and teachers who want to develop instructional programmes that could enhance personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities.

The finding would be of immense benefit and help to social workers on the potentials of these social skills in enhancing the personality adjustment of these students.

This would add to knowledge of other special educators and counsellors on how to relate and help gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities in order to overcome their social disabilities, thereby enhancing their personality adjustment while they excel in their academic pursuit as well.

Additional, it would eradicate the use of derogatory language used by parents and teachers on gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities. Rather, they will accept them and look for ways of helping them rather than insulting them.

Lastly, it revealed how effective social and adaptive behaviour could help these students to overcome academic challenges.

### **Statement of the Problem**

It has been observed that social skills (social and adaptive behaviour) have very great influence on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities. Although, some researchers have tried to find solution to the problem but it still persist. Despite their efforts the problem is yet to be averted. Oyedokun (2014) asserts psychosocial variables as predictors of school adjustment of students with learning disabilities. The study reveals significant composite effects of self concept and emotional intelligence on the social adjustment of students with learning disabilities. Engerelberg and Sjoberg (2004) affirm a positive relationship between social skills and adjustment. Adeyemi (2003) avers the importance of emotional intelligence on students' adjustment in his study. Likewise, Fehintola (2012) avers a significant relationship between mass media, family factor, peer factor, self-concept

and emotional deprivation and delinquent behaviour among secondary school students. Furthermore, the researchers observe that no person has worked on influence of social skills on personality adjustment. Therefore, they are prompted to examine the influence of effective social and adaptive behaviour on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study was designed to investigate the influence of social skill on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities in Egbeda Local Government, Oyo State. Specifically, the study determined the joint effect and relative contributions of the independent variables on the dependent variable, the significant relationship of the independent variables and the significance of gender difference on personality adjustment.

### **Scope of the Study**

This study covered all gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities in four public Senior Secondary Schools in Egbeda Local Government, Oyo State. It investigated the effect of social and adaptive behaviour on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the joint contribution of independent variables (social and adaptive behaviour) on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities?
2. What is the relative contribution of independent variables on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities?
3. Is there any significant relationship among the independent variables (social and adaptive behaviour) on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities?

4. Is there any significant gender difference on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities?

## **Literature Review**

### **Social Skills and Gifted underachievers and Students with Learning Disabilities**

Competency in social skills for successful daily living is a necessity for every human being. This would enable them to identify and solve problems in a socially acceptable manner. Social competence means student's ability to exhibit social skills which are necessary traits for personality adjustment. Deficit in social skills might be a primary disability of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities. Anti-social behaviour could result to academic and learning problem.

However, it could be a secondary disability if it is the failure to learn that creates emotional and social problem. In order to avoid these problems the affective domains should be recognised as an integral part of education for learners who are leaders of tomorrow. The high rate of failure in school examinations can be attributed to these disabilities which have always been of great concern to all stakeholders. In spite of the fact that students need social competence for social interaction and academic attainment makes researchers to venture on these areas to enable the policy makers come up with realistic policy which will ensure that the goal of Universal Basic Education is attained.

In the same vein, not all gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities express deficit in social skills because for some social sphere is an area of strength. They are socially competent at making and maintaining friends. Vaughn and Haager (1994) and Voeller (1994) estimated that as many as one third of students with learning disabilities have problems with social skills. Also, disruptive behaviours result as gifted underachievers seek attention. The students withdraw and claim no interest in having friends. Therefore, severe damage to mental health and social development occur

(Siegle and McCoach 2009). Despite their social disabilities, some do well in academic domains while others have both social and academic disabilities.

### **Personality Adjustment and Traits**

It has been found that, personality has no universally accepted definition. It implies all the physical and mental qualities of an individual established over time. The general concept of personality affirms that, it is the establishment over a period of time an individual's unique patterns of capacities, motives, values predisposing his response in a characteristic manner to situation and stimuli in his environment (Sokan and Akinade, 1994). Oladele (1989) affirms that it is the unique and distinctive characteristics which set a person apart from another. Personality includes one's outward appearance, one's role in life, the totality of one's qualities or attributes, the way one really is, one's general habitual behaviour like politeness, submissiveness and talkativeness.

The most comprehensive emphases of these numerous definitions are unique qualities of the individual and the integration of the physical, mental, moral, emotional and social qualities as manifested by individual to other people. Personality is more or less stable and enduring organization of a person's character, temperament, intellect and physique which determine his unique adjustment to his environment. Factually, personality is an organised self-concept, self-attitudes, self-values, ambitions and all behavioural dispositions peculiar to an individual as a unique being or person. It is a broad concept that involves all facet of all human behaviour and it encompasses aspect of developmental, social, experimental, physiological and clinical psychology.

Personality is a growing and dynamic entity. Every individual has certain endowments that help him to develop his personality as he grows and interact with variety of people. The child gradually finds himself as he experiments with various roles and finally achieves personal identity at least in

connection with dominant values. These are some of the factors which influence personality adjustment.

**The adaptive behaviour:** This would enable them to have peace within themselves and with people around them. Students must not exhibit behavioural problems that would infer with social functioning. There shouldn't be evidence of destructive behaviour, anxiety, attention problems or lack of self control. There must be absent of fear and worry that might lead to depression or unhealthy condition (Most and Greenbank 2000).

**Evidence of effective social behaviour:** Acquisition of social skill would enhance acceptance rather than rejection ( Adeleke 2013). Students need recognition and acceptance by their mates, peers, parents, teachers and other significant persons for positive self concept and self worth. This would enable them to initiate contact with others, and respond cooperatively to request.

### **Outdoor Activities and Social Skills in Personality Adjustment**

Outdoor activity is one of the therapeutic approaches in acquiring competence in social skills. Outdoor recreation is a leisure pursuit engaged in outdoor settings. Adventures like racing, bicycling, camping, hunting, photography and street-walk are some activities that enhance spirit of sportsmanship because they are team games. These activities serve two primary purposes: beneficial and pleasurable appreciation.

The beneficial use of outdoor activities is for physical and social reward which is primarily on learning goal rather than performance goal (Rolston 1985).The physical and social settings of these activities enhance physical health and achievement. Also, the ties of students with social disability are built through these activities. These serve as agents of finding peace in nature, enjoying life and relaxation which is the pleasurable appreciation. These students should be allowed to demonstrate their skills through activities like nature study, aesthetic contemplation, painting, historical

research and indigenous culture could enhance their skills (Adeleke 2013).

Successful accomplishment in these activities strengthens their social competencies. The quality of life of those with social disability is enhanced through recreational programmes. Their social lives are improved through integration of programmes like community based leisure. These interactions help to establish healthy communication, understanding and forming relationship that will boost self-esteem and self-image of students with deficit in social skills.

### **Research Design**

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design of the "ex-post facto type". This was because the researcher did not manipulate any variable. The independent variables in the study are effective social behaviour and adaptive behaviour while the dependent variables are personality adjustment traits which are openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism. The moderating variable is gender (male and female)

### **Population**

The population of this study comprised all gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities in four public Senior Secondary Schools in Egbeda Local Government Area of Oyo State.

### **Sample and sampling Technique**

Four Senior Secondary Schools were randomly selected for this study. Two hundred and five gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities were identified by the researchers through nominations of parents, teachers and peer group of this group of students. Additionally, the continuous assessment of the students revealed that they have been underachieving consistently for the past one year. Also, these students were subjected to The Pupils Rating Scale which confirms them as students with learning disabilities. These respondents were evenly distributed among the gender and SS1/SS2 to ensure equal chance of participation in the study. Eventually, seventy-five male and

one hundred and thirty female were selected as respondents from the schools, while eighty five were SS1 and one hundred and twenty were SS2 students respectively.

**Instrumentation: The following instruments were used in the course of this study:**

1. The Pupils Rating Scale Revised.
2. Social Skills Scale (A self developed questionnaire) on effective social behaviour and adaptive behaviour.
3. Personality Adjustment Scale (Personality Adjustment questionnaire)

### **Validity and Reliability of Instrument**

1. **The Pupils Rating Scale:** Ikujuni (1995) used this scale to screen children with learning disabilities and found it to be very suitable and useful. He got a reliability coefficient of 0.86. Kano (2004) used the same scale in screening children with learning disabilities and got a significant inter items correlation with coefficient alpha of 0.91, as well as a reliability coefficient of 0.74 respectively.
2. **Social Skills Scale:** The instrument was validated by the researchers during a field test and a reliability Cronbach's Alpha of 0.53 was got for Effective Social Behaviour and 0.71 was got for Adaptive Behaviour in the inter item correlation.
3. **Personality Adjustment Scale:** The instrument was validated by the researchers during a field test, while the reliability Cronbach's Alpha of 0.78 was derived in the scale.

The researchers spent two weeks to collect the data. Permission was taken from the school principals, who in turn appealed to the class teachers of SSS 1 and 2 students for their maximum cooperation. Questionnaires (Social Skills Scale and Personality Adjustment Scale) were administered with the help of the research assistants. The questionnaires were correctly filled and retrieved from the students. The responses of respondents were collected as data for analysis. The data collected were analysed using Simple Percentage, Frequency Count, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), Pearson



Product Moment Correlation (PPMC), Multiple Regression Analysis and T-test.

### Result of Findings

This chapter presents the result of an investigation on the influence of effective social and adaptive behaviour on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities in Egbeda Local Government area of Oyo State. Four research questions were formulated and analyzed in the study. The data were analyzed using frequency counts percentage, (PPMC) Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis. The summary was analyzed under the following sub-headings;

### Demographic Data of Respondents

**Table 1: Classes of respondents**

Variables		Frequency	Percentage
Class	SS1	85	41.5
	SS2	120	58.5
<b>Total</b>		<b>205</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 1 revealed that 58.5% of the total respondents were in SS2, while 41.5% respondents of them were in SS1. This implies that students from SS2 has high percentage of the total respondents.

**Table 2: Gender of respondents**

Variables		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	75	36.6
	Female	130	63.4
<b>Total</b>		<b>205</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 2 revealed distribution of the respondents by gender. There are 63.4% female respondents while male are 36.6%. This implies that female has high percentage of the total respondents.

## Research Questions

### Research questions 1

What is the composite effect of the independent variables (effective social and adaptive behaviour) on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities?

**Table 3: Summary of Regression Analysis for the joint contributions of independent variables to the prediction of personality adjustment of students**

R=0.724						
R Square=0.524						
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup> =0.519						
Std Error of the Est.=5.574						
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean square	F	P	Remark
Regression	6912.498	2	3456.249	111.258	0.000	Sig.
Residual	6275.180	202	31.065			
Total	13187.678	204				

Table 3 shows that there was significant joint effect of the independent variables (effective social and adaptive behaviour) on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities. The table also shows a coefficient of multiple correlation (R) of 0.724 and a multiple R square of 0.524. This means that 51.9% (adj.  $r^2=0.519$ ) of the variance in the personality adjustment of respondents is accounted for by the independent variables, when taken together. The significance of the composite contribution was tested at  $p < 0.05$  using the F-ratio at the degree of freedom ( $df = 2/202$ ). The table also shows that the analysis of variance for the regression yielded a F-ratio of 111.258 (significant at 0.05 level). This implies that the joint contribution of the independent variables on the dependent variables was significant and that other variables not included in this model may have accounted for the remaining variance.

### Research questions 2

What is the relative contribution of each of the independent variables (effective social and adaptive behaviour) on

personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities?

**Table 4 shows the relative effect of the Independent variables to the prediction of personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities.**

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)		Standardized Coefficients	T	P	Remark
	(B)	Std. Error	Beta			
Constant (Personality Adjustment)	17.127	4.898	-	3.496	.001	
Effective social behaviour	.863	.165	.284	5.244	.000	sig.
Adaptive behaviour	-.549	.054	-.551	-10.176	.000	sig.

Table 4 reveals that there was relative contribution of each of the independent variables (effective social and adaptive behaviour) on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities. In terms of magnitude, adaptive behaviour contributions to the prediction of personality adjustment ( $\beta = -0.551$ ,  $t = -10.176$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ), while the magnitude of effective social behaviour contributions to the prediction of personality adjustment ( $\beta = 0.284$ ,  $t = 5.244$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). In a nutshell, there was relative contribution of each of the independent variables (effective social and adaptive behaviour) on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities.

### Research question 3

Is there any significant relationship among the independent variables (effective social and adaptive behaviour) on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities?

**Table 5 Correlation between effective social and adaptive behaviour on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities**

Variables	$\bar{X}$	S.D	1	2	3	P	Remark
Personality Adjustment	26.78	8.040	1.000				
Effective social behaviour	25.61	2.648	.529**	-.445**		.000	Sig
Adaptive behaviour	22.66	8.070	.678**	1.000	1.000	.000	Sig

\*Correlation Significant at  $p < 0.05$  level.

The above table 5 shows (r) that, there is a significant relationship between the variables (effective social and adaptive behaviour) on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities. That is, personality adjustment has significant correlation with absence of maladaptive behaviour ( $r=0.678$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ), also with effective social behaviour ( $r=0.529$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). Since  $p$  was lesser than 0.05 level of significance. That is, there is significant relationship between the independent variables (effective social and adaptive behaviour) on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities.

#### Research Question 4

Is there any significant gender difference on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities?

**Table 6 Shows the T-Test Summary of Gender Difference on Personality Adjustment**

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Dev	t. Cal	t. Crit	df.	Sig. (2 tail)
Personality Adjustment	Male	75	28.32	7.63	2.10	1.990	203	0.036
	Female	130	25.88	8.16	6			

The table 6 shows there was a significant gender difference on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities. It was observed that the t-Calculated value was lesser than t-Critical values ( $t\text{-Cal}=2.106 > t\text{-Crit.} = 1.990$ ), ( $P < 0.05$ ). The research question

is accepted because there is a significant difference. Therefore it was concluded that, there is a significant gender difference on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities.

### **Discussion of Findings**

This study investigated the influence of effective social behaviour and absence of maladaptive behaviour on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities. To carry out the investigation, four research questions were formulated and tested. Also, research instruments tagged social skill scale were used to determine the influence of effective social behaviour and absence of maladaptive behaviour on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities. The data collected were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages, t-test, (PPMC) Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Regression Analysis. The study revealed that; There is a significant relationship between independent variables (effective social and adaptive behaviour) on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities. This finding corroborates with the finding of Nelson (2005), which affirms that emotional intelligence is an important predictor that can help students to maintain successful adjustment during transition.

There is a significant joint effect of the independent variables (effective social and adaptive behaviour) and personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities. Oyedokun's (2014) finding is in line with this result, because he affirms that there is joint effect of self-concept, emotional intelligence, socio-economic status and gender on school adjustment of students with learning disabilities

There is a relative contribution of each of the independent variables (effective social and adaptive social behaviour) on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities. This finding corroborates with Fehintola (2012). He postulates that there is a positive relationship between the independent variables (mass-media,

family behaviour, peer factor, self-concept and emotional deprivation) and adolescent delinquent behaviour in secondary school.

There is a significant gender difference on personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities. It means that male students are likely to experience more personality adjustment than their female counterparts. Furthermore, Oyedokun (2014) support this finding. He asserts that there is a significant relationship between gender and school adjustment of students with learning disabilities

### **Conclusion**

The result of the findings is evidence that effective social and adaptive behaviour (social skills) can influence personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities. Therefore, these social skills should not be under rated. Also, the findings reveal that personality can be adjusted through acquisition of social and adaptive behaviour. That is, the two social skills can influence personality adjustment of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities. Hence, strategies to enhance personality adjustment should be focused on social skills rather than academic instructional skills alone.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study the researchers would like to give these recommendations:

1. Curriculum planners should integrate social skills in the school co-curricular activities while implementation of the programme must be ensured.
2. Teachers should have adequate knowledge of relevant teaching strategies on social skills as they continue to be good models and mentors to gifted underachievers and students with learning disability.
3. The government should employ special need teachers while counselling service should be made available to complement the work of special need teachers.
4. The government should make provision for induction courses and in-service training like seminars and

workshops for both special need teachers and normal teachers. These would make them to be skilful to develop additional programmes that could enhance social skills.

5. Parents should provide for the needs of their children, especially the gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities, because inferiority complex could hinder their personality adjustment.
6. Other stakeholders could organise educative programmes on social skills that could enlighten parents of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities, in order to enhance effective social and adaptive behaviour.
7. All these would go a long way to enhance effective social and adaptive behaviour of gifted underachievers and students with learning disabilities.

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