The Effects of Social Engagements to the Academic Pursuits on Nursing Students

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Abstract

This study investigates how social engagement impacts third-year nursing students' academic performance and well-being. While social support benefits academic engagement, more research is needed on nursing students' unique challenges and social experiences. This quantitative correlational study investigated the relationship between social engagements and academic achievements among third-year students. Data were collected through face-to-face surveys using Likert scale questions from 306 participants at a prominent school in Quezon City. Purposive sampling was employed, focusing on students involved in extracurricular activities. Findings revealed that majority of respondents were 21 years old (55.23%), predominantly female (73.86%), and had a weekly allowance below PHP 1,000 (51.31%). Social engagements was generally low, with the highest participation in birthday celebrations (mean: 3.085, "Moderately Engaged") and the lowest in dance troupe activities (mean: 1.428, "Not Engaged at All"). Despite low engagement, students perceived social interactions as beneficial, enhancing academic satisfaction (mean: 3.159, "Agree"), cognitive function (mean: 3.189, "Agree"), and mental health (mean: 3.25, "Agree"). A weak positive correlation was found between social engagement and academic performance (Pearson R = 0.340, p < 0.001). The findings concluded that even limited social interactionl benefits nursing students. To balance academics and social life, researchers recommended promoting extracurricular clubs and wellness programs, acknowledging the importance of social connections for academic success.

Keywords:
Academic Pursuits, Nursing Education, Socialization, Social Engagement

INTRODUCTION

It was widely recognized that parties, events, and social gatherings significantly shaped and enriched the college experience (Sutton, 2021). These settings served multiple purposes, facilitating meaningful interactions, fostering lasting friendships, and creating memorable experiences (Nelson, 2019). Biomed Central Public Health (2023) highlighted that enhancing university students' academic engagement was crucial for their development in higher education and ultimately improved the caliber of talent nurtured in undergraduate schools, which was noteworthy. Moreover, the overall influence of social support greatly affected academic involvement, with a cumulative impact of 0.707. This included a direct influence of 0.061, 8.6% of the total impact, and an indirect influence of 0.646, accounting for 91.4% of the overall effect (Chen, 2023). The influence of city life encouraged students to engage in these experiences, enriching their university experience (Houle, 2019).

Attending these social activities provided opportunities for stress reduction, contact, and reassurance, but they also provided challenges such as time constraints, diversions, and emotional support (Mofatteh, 2020). In stressful situations related to their lessons obligations, responsibilities, and pressures during the semester, the researchers treated themselves with alcohol. Initially, the idea of celebrating the little achievements with friends seemed to offer a brief escape from clinical rotations and examinations. However, they later came to appreciate the harm that it brought into their lives and their ability to focus on the lessons in school. Part of being a nursing student, one of the members went out and participated in a medical mission that helped them gain academic satisfaction as they could apply what they had learned from school (Lomibao et al., 2024). The nursing field imposed unique academic challenges, including rigorous coursework, practical clinical rotations, and hands-on training. Balancing these responsibilities alongside the social aspects of university life proved quite demanding, especially in countries like the Philippines, where enhancing nursing education was a priority (Appiah, 2020). While participating in social activities provided advantages such as stress relief and improved communication skills (Saculingan et al., 2024), it was crucial to acknowledge potential downsides that could impact academic achievement, particularly for nursing students. Excessive socializing could disrupt study routines, class attendance, and assignment completion, causing distractions and making it challenging to stay focused.

While previous studies had explored the effects of social interactions on students' academic performance and commitment, more research was needed specific to nursing education. The researchers conducted a study to investigate how social involvement impacts the academic performance of nursing students. The objective was to analyze how participating in social activities thoroughly affects nursing students. The study examined the balance between online interactions and face-to-face social events and their effects on the nursing academic journey. Additionally, it aimed to identify both the benefits and challenges of these social interactions to understand better the factors influencing academic outcomes in nursing education.

Nursing students were interested in identifying the multifaceted effects of social integration to enable them to strike a balance between their academic pursuits and social lives. These realizations help students be better prepared to manage their overall college experience. From the presented results, nursing educators and academic institutions received insights into the students' difficulties in striking a work-life balance. Given this understanding, it would be possible for educators and nursing educational institutions to put policies and structures that support nursing students as they balance these important aspects of their lives but in a way that they do not have to sacrifice. Last but not least, this study sought to expand the relatively scarce discussion on social engagement and academic performance, particularly in the context of nursing education. In this way, the research was designed to assist with the development of these ideas and attempts to provoke further discussions with the intent of establishing a broader debate for the subsequent studies.

METHOD

1. Design
    The research design used in this study was Quantitative Correlational research. This method was chosen to examine and measure the relationship between two key factors: social interactions and academic success among nursing students. Quantitative Correlational research allows for a systematic analysis of how changes in one factor relate to changes in another. In this case, it explores whether social interactions had an impact on academic performance.

    The main reason for selecting a Quantitative Correlational method was its ability to study relationships between factors using numerical data. As Creswell (2019) noted, this method is particularly useful for examining how variables relate to each other without manipulating them, making it ideal for exploring the complex links between social interactions and academic success.
2. PNumber of samples and sampling techniques
    The explanation of this section consists of:
    The study was conducted with 3rd year nursing students. The respondents were surveyed in the library, student lounges, and common areas such as corridors, and dining halls of the University. The researchers chose the place of implementation that consists of nursing students who are socially engaged, which is the target population of the study.

The authors utilized purposive sampling to select participants that were representative of the specific characteristics desired in relation to the research objectives. This strategy helped to ensure that the characteristics of the sample corresponded with the study's intent (Andrade, 2020).

The researchers' inclusion criteria required participants to be: (1) aged 20 to 30 years; (2) students in Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines; (3) currently enrolled as third-year nursing students; (4) able to read and understand English; and (5) willing to participate.

The exclusion criteria were that students must not be: (1) <20 or >30 years; (2) Not in the 3rd year and is NOT a nursing student of Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines; (3) Unable to read and understand English language; and have NO willingness to participate.

Researchers chose one of the most respected and admired universities in the Philippines, established in 1996, it offers allied health programs at Quezon City, located inside the Barangay Greater Lagro, in the academic year 2023-2024. The conducting of the study started in the last week of May 2024 and ended in the first week of June 2024.

3. Instruments

The researchers utilized a self-designed survey questionnaire, which was developed based on the relevant existing literature. The questionnaire aimed to assess the effect of social engagements on the academic pursuits of nursing students in a particular school located in Quezon City. To ensure the questionnaire's validity, it was validated by professionals such as the guidance counselor, tenured faculty, and nursing informatics professor. The validators were given a letter of consent before validating the questionnaire. Additionally, a grammarian proofread the manuscript to ensure its accuracy.

The survey questionnaires that were developed included checkboxes and rating scale questions for the respondents to fill out. The survey questionnaire was divided into three parts: Part I consisted of the demographic profile of the respondents, aiming to answer the name, sex, age, and socioeconomic status. Part II questions were presented in a checkbox format, focusing on the various forms of social engagement that nursing students attended and participated in. This part also included an option about how long a student spent on that social engagement in a week. The respondents were required to check the applicable boxes to indicate their participation in each activity and choose their level of participation. The questions primarily addressed the different types of social engagements and duration of participation. Respondents were given ample time and space to answer these surveys, and researchers expected unbiased responses. Part III of the questionnaire was designed to assess the influence of social engagement on academic endeavors. It employed a scale of 1-4, where 1 denoted Strongly Disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 Agree, and 4 Strongly Agree. This section provided insights into the impact of social activities on academic performance. The acceptance level, computed using the Likert scale, was set to surpass 0.7, which indicates an acceptable level of reliability.

The pilot study required 30 respondents to assess and validate the research instrument. Ethical considerations were prioritized, with approval obtained from relevant review boards. Participants received full information on the study's purpose, risks, and benefits. The research aimed to enhance the questionnaire's quality and reliability, contributing to valid study findings.

4. Data collection

The data collection procedure for the study began with the researcher adviser's approval of the proposed title, "The Effects of Social Engagements to the Academic Pursuits on Nursing Students" As soon as the title was approved, the paper was submitted to the Research Development and Innovation Center (RDIC) in February 2024 to ensure that the study complied with the protection of the participants' rights and well-being with the guidance of the ethics committee.

In May 2024, a communication letter was sent to the program head of nursing requesting permission to conduct the study on "The Effects of Social Engagements to the Academic Pursuits on Nursing Students". After the approval of the program head, the researchers began to conduct the pilot study with the respondents.

The researchers started the data collection for the respondents at the end of May 2024 after the study passed through the level of reliability on the pilot study. Prior to obtaining the survey questionnaires, researchers informed the participants through informed consent. The researchers ensured that no one was coerced to complete the survey. The researchers based the survey according to the accessibility factors of the respondents such as availability and willingness to answer the questionnaire.

Once the data was collected, in June 2024, the researchers put all of their work analyzing data. The data collected was evaluated, interpreted, and presented by the researchers. Adhering to the ethical guidelines, the researchers ensured that the data collected was accessible only to the researchers. Furthermore, to ensure the protection of the privacy of the respondents, the researchers coded the participants as "Respondent 1" and similar labels for other participants. Following the completion of the study, all copies and formats of the collected data were completely erased, leaving only the results to guarantee the precision and veracity of the study. For three years, the collected data will be stored in a safe and anonymous location. In adhering the Republic Act of the Philippines 10173, also known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012, the researchers will be the only one who will have access to the gathered data to secure confidentiality and privacy.

5. Data Analysis

The researchers used statistical methods to analyze the data. This included details of the tools and procedures that were employed to justify the collected information. This technique was applied to determine the pattern, relationship, and distinctions between two variables as well as to assess the strength of those relationships. The goal of the researchers was to provide a straightforward and clear explanation of the steps to thoroughly examine the findings. Following the collection of data from the surveys, the researchers consulted with and sought out an expert to assess the data gathered. To ensure the accuracy of the result, all of these data analyses were done with "JASP", a statistical software that is accessible and easy to use for the researcher,

For Statement of Problem #1, the aim was to know the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, and socioeconomic level. This was utilized using descriptive statistics such as Frequency, Percentage, or Ranking. The researchers utilized the Frequency distribution. The result provided a basic description and summary of participants' responses using these measures.

For Statement of Problem #2, the focus was on identifying the various forms of social engagement that nursing students attend. The analysis utilized weighted mean, standard deviation, and verbal interpretation to examine the social activities attended by nursing students. The weighted mean, calculated by dividing the sum of weighted scores by the total weight, helped determine the average level of social engagement. Meanwhile, the standard deviation indicated the extent to which the engagement levels varied from the mean. A higher standard deviation suggested greater variability in engagement levels. These statistical measures aided the researchers in understanding the range and distribution of social engagement among nursing students.

Tabel 1. Interpretation of variable

Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1.00 – 1.75	Not Engaged at All
1.76 – 2.50	Slightly Engaged
2.51 – 3.25	Moderately Engaged
3.26 – 4.00	Highly Engaged

For Statement of the Problem #3, the focus was on how social engagements affect the academic pursuits of nursing students. Weighted mean, standard deviation, and verbal interpretation were used. The weighted mean, calculated by dividing the sum of weighted scores by the total weight, helped determine the average level of perceived effect of social engagement on academic pursuit. Meanwhile, the standard deviation indicated the extent to which the engagement levels varied from the mean. A higher standard deviation suggested greater variability in engagement levels. This was utilized to determine the level of social engagement that affects the academic performance of nursing students. Aside from the

weighted mean and standard deviation, verbal interpretation was used to interpret the overall weighted mean.

For Statement of Problem #4, the researchers utilized the Pearson correlation coefficient to test the significant relationship between social engagement and the academic pursuits of nursing students. It assessed the strength of a linear connection between two variables. This helped to figure out the connection between social engagement and academic pursuits among nursing students. By using Likert Scale questions, researchers collected and understood data more efficiently. The researchers employed methods like frequency and mean (1.00-1.75 for "Strongly Disagree", 1.76-2.50 for "Disagree", 2.51-3.25 for "Agree", and 3.26-4.00 for "Strongly Agree"), standard deviation, and Pearson's correlation to assess the central tendency and variability of the survey responses.

6. Research Ethics

Careful adherence applicable to ethical standards was conducted for this study. This was to respect the chosen respondents' right to self-determination; a consent form was provided along with the verbal declaration of intent.

Autonomy was the capacity for self-determination in which an individual could choose for himself or herself without outside pressure or influence. Before the survey was done, respondents received a detailed briefing and important details regarding the goal of the study in view of ethical research considerations. Anyone had the right to decline participation in the study and in answering the questions as they saw fit because neither was required. Informed consent processes were essential, and participants were fully aware of what their involvement entailed. Through this method, selected respondents were ensured that they were aware of the processes, rewards, and risks involved in participating in the study. This survey might have taken some time and relied on the students' free time as they might have had lots of academic responsibilities. When the participants discontinued their participation, the researchers did not treat them unfairly; instead, they respected the participants' decision to stop their participation.

In compliance with RA 10173, which is known as Data Privacy Act, all data collected was saved and handled with highest confidentiality, with no names or identities of research participants disclosed in order to protect their privacy, anonymity, and possible harm. The researchers ensured that veracity was maintained throughout the study. It was conducted in an honest, transparent, and ethical way, staying true to their commitment to truth. They recognized that upholding these values would help them earn trust and ensure credibility of the study's findings. By carefully handling and safeguarding the data, the researchers protected the privacy and confidentiality of the participants. They also promised to destroy all responses once the study was completed and submitted.

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In line with the principle of beneficence, the participants were protected from any harm. The study aimed to uphold the participants' autonomy, dignity, and well-being by prioritizing their best interests. The goal was to provide insights that would positively impact the lives of nursing students. Following the principle of nonmaleficence, the researchers ensured that no harm came to the participants during the study. They assured participants that their information would not be misused or shared with third parties. Any attempt to falsify or withhold information was avoided and steps were taken to protect participants and uphold the integrity of the study.

The principle of justice wa respected, ensuring fairness throughout the research process. The researchers provided clear information about the study's purpose, procedures, and any potential risks. All of the participants were treated equally, with no bias or favoritism, to ensure that fairness and justice were served. By incorporating these ethical considerations, the researchers contributed valuable knowledge while safeguarding the rights and well-being of participants. Respondents also gained a deeper understanding of the importance of social engagement in college and how it can support their academic progress

RESULT

This chapter provided detailed support for the study's results, including an analysis and interpretation of the collected data to validate the conclusions on Table 2-6.

Table 2. Demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, and socioeconomic status (N= 306)

Demographic Profile	n	%
Age		
20 years old	54	17.647
21 years old	169	55.229
22 years old	56	18.301
23 years old	18	5.882
24 years old	7	2.288
25 years old	1	0.327
28 years old	1	0.327
Sex		
Female	226	73.856
Male	80	26.144
Socioeconomic Status		
< PHP 1,000	157	51.307
PHP 1,100 - PHP 1,500	73	23.856
PHP 1,501 -PHP 2,000	30	9.804
PHP 2,001 - PHP 2,500	13	4.248
PHP 2,501 - PHP 3,000	12	3.922
> PHP 3,000	21	6.863

Table 3. Level of engagement of nursing students on different forms of social engagement

Social Engagement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Extracurricular activities	1.750	0.982	Not Engaged at All
Sports	1.928	1.066	Slightly Engaged
Dance troupe	1.428	0.812	Not Engaged at All
School org	1.895	1.069	Slightly Engaged
Celebration	2.395	0.961	Slightly Engaged
Birthday	3.085	0.872	Moderately Engaged
Bar	1.683	0.945	Not Engaged at All
Sleepover	2.418	1.066	Slightly Engaged
Volunteer programs	1.724	1.010	Not Engaged at All
Red cross	1.889	1.072	Slightly Engaged
Parish youth	1.611	0.956	Not Engaged at All
Sn association	1.673	1.001	Not Engaged at All
Overall engagement	1.957	0.984	Slightly Engaged

Note: 1.00 – 1.75 = Not Engaged at All, 1.76 – 2.50 = Slightly Engaged, 2.51 – 3.25 = Moderately Engaged and 3.26 – 4.00 = Highly Engaged

Table 4. Perceived effects of these social engagements to the academic pursuits of nursing students

Social Engagement will	Mean	Std. Deviation	Verbal Interpretation
Academic Satisfaction	3.159	0.479	Agree
Improve my academic standing.	3.056	0.658	Agree
Enhance my satisfaction with my academic	3.052	0.609	Agree
Help me to cope with the difficulties and	3.170	0.666	Agree
Allow me to have a good nursing school	3.327	0.646	Strongly Agree
Enhance my motivation and enthusiasm for	3.19	0.63	Agree
Cognitive function	3.189	0.497	Agree
Make me learn more about nursing	3.170	0.68	Agree
Sparked new ideas and insights that benefit	3.259	0.608	Agree
Improve my capacity to concentrate on	3.088	0.684	Agree
Help me sharpen my analytical skills.	3.203	0.632	Agree
Boost my decision-making skills.	3.232	0.597	Agree
Mental Health	3.250	0.536	Agree
Improve my self-esteem.	3.399	0.576	Strongly Agree
Reduce the stress and fatigue that I	3.173	0.737	Agree
Improves my mood and helps me stay	3.229	0.711	Agree
Help me throughout the challenges of	3.147	0.688	Agree
Give me a sense of having a balanced life	3.307	0.675	Strongly Agree
Overall	3.199	0.443	Agree

Note: 1.00 – 1.75 = Strongly Disagree, 1.76 – 2.50 = Disagree, 2.51 – 3.25 = Agree, and 3.26 – 4.00 = Strongly Agree

Table 5. Result of Test of Significant Relationship between the level of participation in social engagement to academic pursuits of nursing students using Pearson R

Variables	Pearson R	Interpretation	P-value	Decision	Meaning with
Level of participation vs. Effect on Academic Pursuits	0.340	Weak positive correlation	<0.001	Reject H_0	Significant Relationsip

Note: If p-value is less than (<) 0.05, then we will reject Ho.

Table 6. Proposed Action Plan to improve the academic pursuit of students related on their engagement in Social Engagement

Program	Objective	Strategies	Person Involved	Success Criteria
Mentorship Program	Enhance academic support through peer interactions	• Pair students with upperclassmen or alumni mentors • Regular mentor-mentee meetings • Workshops on study skills and time management	Faculty, Alumni, Upperclassmen	• Improved academic performance and satisfaction • Increased retention rates
Extracurricular Clubs	Foster balanced life and skill development	Promote a variety of clubs (sports, arts, volunteer work)	Faculty Advisors, Student Leaders	• Increased club participation • Enhanced student

Program	Objective	Strategies	Person Involved	Success Criteria
		• Encourage participation through incentives • Organize inter-club competitions and events		engagement and skills
Wellness Initiatives	Improve mental health and reduce stress	• Provide stress management workshop • Offer counseling and mental health resources • -Organize wellness activities like yoga and meditation sessions	Counseling Center, Wellness Coordinators	• Reduced stress levels • Improved self-esteem and emotional stability
Academic Workshops	Enhance cognitive function and academic performance	• - Conduct workshops on critical thinking, analytical skills, and decision- making • Invite guest speakers and industry experts • Interactive learning	Faculty, External Experts, Academic Advisors	• Improved cognitive skills • Higher academic achievement and engagement

DISCUSSION

This chapter discussed the study's findings, offering a detailed analysis and interpretation of the results to draw conclusions.

According to Fatykhova (2020), the results suggest a large need for social activities by the younger generation and students particularly with an orientation to communication. Findings may also have been biased because of the overrepresentation of women in the study: gender disparities exist even in social behaviors as well as academic performances. These results may have been influenced by the difference in gender, particularly in the context of academic stress (ChustHernández, 2021) and professional behaviors (Yilmaz, 2020). The nature and the amount of social interactions, as well as what was pursued academically, may have also been due to a difference in socioeconomic status level, which may have been created by financial constraints as well as other priorities. According to Tomaszewski (2020), evidence of the relationship between students' socioeconomic status and the engagement levels have emerged.

Students in the nursing profession did not exhibit general engagement since the aggregate average was Slightly Engaged'. This is due to heavy academic and clinical time schedules. Although the nursing students participated in these social activities, the participating level was also low for most of them. The studies on levels of involvement indicated that nursing students prefer some social activities over others. This preference may depend on various factors, including personal interests, the time available for the activities, and perceived value of the activities. A range of factors has had an influence on the participation of nursing students in social

activities, including factors such as self-efficacy, community impact, and professional identity (Shannon, 2023).

After the final analysis of results, it was discovered that nursing students considered social interaction to be beneficial since it enhanced both one's academic and personal lives. The high mean scores in various categories, including academic satisfaction, cognitive function, and mental health, indicated that students experienced increased motivation and support due to their social interactions. It provided an opportunity to develop leadership skills, socialization, mental health, improved academic performance, enhanced self- esteem and well-being, and protection against engaging in antisocial behaviors (O'Donnell et al., 2020; Sumague, 2023; Cabrejas, 2023).

Rejection of the null hypothesis indicated that increased participation in social engagements was associated with a slight but significant improvement in academic pursuits. This finding suggested that social activities could play a role in enhancing students' academic experiences and outcomes, potentially by providing a balanced life, reducing stress, and increasing motivation and satisfaction in their studies. The significant relationship supported the notion that integrating social engagements could have beneficial effects on students' academic lives, even if the impact was relatively modest. Zeydani et al. (2021) found that being socially engaged would enhance professional skills, self-confidence, knowledge, and awareness in undergraduate nursing students which could lead to high satisfaction and long-term personal gains.

Implementing recommendations collectively aimed to create a supportive and balanced environment that fostered academic excellence, personal development, and overall well-being. The

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mentorship program would provide tailored academic support, which was supported by Adorno (2021) who they highlighted the need for early engagement, self-awareness, and social support, which could be facilitated through structured mentorship programs and extracurricular clubs. Moreover, joining in groups would help develop skills and facilitate personal growth says the writer. Mental health and stress management in wellness which would improve the emotional health of students (Osaka et al., 2024), while academic workshops would help improve essential cognition and analysis skills necessary in achieving academic excellence. Mills (2021) elaborated the necessity for nursing students wellness promotion for educational institutions and placement agencies as he proposed wellness programs. Heagele (2024) also agreed with this recommendation and promoted more wellness activities in nursing class. Finally, Foley (2019) emphasized the incorporation of practice and simulation in relation to theory for better learning outcomes and the intrinsic motivation to learn.

CONCLUSION

This chapter presents a summary of the study's main conclusions and revisits the research objectives and questions that guided the investigation. The findings revealed valuable insights into the demographic profiles, levels of participation in social activities, and how nursing students perceive the impact of such engagements on their academic pursuits. Most respondents were young females from low-income backgrounds, making it essential to consider these demographic factors in interpreting the influence of social involvement on academic outcomes. While participation in social events like birthdays was relatively high, involvement in organized group activities such as volunteering and cultural clubs remained low. This suggests that academic pressures may limit students' capacity to engage in enriching extracurricular experiences, pointing to the importance of integrating these activities more seamlessly into academic life.

Despite the generally low participation in structured social engagements, most nursing students perceived social interactions as beneficial to their academic journey, particularly in improving mental health, academic satisfaction, and self-esteem. They viewed these engagements as enhancing their overall school experience and boosting motivation and cognitive function. Although the correlation between social participation and academic performance was weak, it still highlighted the positive potential of social activities in supporting student well-being and academic success. Based on these insights, the study recommends initiatives such as structured mentorship, wellness programs, academic workshops, and active promotion of student clubs. These measures aim to cultivate a more balanced and supportive environment, allowing nursing students to build resilience, improve

academic outcomes, and enjoy a more fulfilling educational experience.

Further insights from the research highlighted that students with roles in sports leadership, such as team captains, demonstrated a strong ability to balance academic and social responsibilities, suggesting the value of structured social roles. Meanwhile, some students experienced burnout due to academic demands, with many sacrificing social time or opting to work instead, which hindered their performance and well-being. Participation in volunteer work, however, emerged as a key activity that enhanced both academic and professional development by improving clinical confidence and communication skills. Moreover, students who consistently engaged in social activities benefited from stronger support networks, improved emotional resilience, and enhanced interpersonal abilities such as leadership and cooperation. Ultimately, these engagements not only enriched their college experience but also prepared them for future professional roles in the healthcare field.

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