

The Psychometrician Licensure Examinations (PmLE): Impact to the Behavioral Science Curriculum

Peter Howard R. Obias

obias.phr@pnu.edu.ph

Philippine Normal University

Manila

Abstract This research determined the three year performance of the National Center for Teacher Education examinees in the Psychometrician Licensure Examinations. A purposive and stratified sampling determined those Psychology majors who took the first three years (2014-2016) of the Psychometrician Licensure Examinations. Data culled from the published list of schools performance of the Psychometrician Licensure Examination under the provision of RA 8981 (PRC Modernization Act of 2000 Section 7) revealed that the trend in the number of examinees tended to increase, but this trend is matched by a decreasing passing rate. There were more examinees for the Psychometrician Licensure Examination in the succeeding years, but a gradual decrease is observed in the performance rate of passers. The University ranked 18th in the overall nationwide survey and currently belonged to the top 26 schools out of the 272 schools that took the licensure examinations. Moreover, the current curriculum of the Behavioral Science has been modified to improve the performance of the students in the licensure examination. Analysis of the curriculum also showed that there is a need to intensify the teaching of courses prescribed by the Professional Regulation Commission.

Keywords: Behavioral Science Curriculum, National Center for Teacher Education, Professional Regulation Commission, Psychometrician Licensure Examination

Introduction

The goal of maintaining and sustaining the standard of well-being relies on cognitive abilities during continuing education towards readiness to use the acquired potential in the professional field. Schultz (1960), a Nobel Prize winner in his Human Capital Theory, described education not as consumer good, but as an investment in the human capital procurement, comparable with capital goods (Bouchard, 2008). Quality education is a natural result of the advancement of knowledge and technology alongside the multiple resources. Multiple resources are aggregates of acquired knowledge, skills, motivation, and energy, which are attained by individuals through formal education. It also takes into account instinctual abilities and capacity (physical, intellectual, personological, and capabilities predetermined by heredity), nurtured during the developmental stages of life through the transfer of knowledge between generations. According to Barrow and Smith (2005), human capital is a competitive edge in education that becomes a source for globalization. Human capital is an achievement in education that becomes an asset for the future: income, satisfactions of needs and welfare and other properties, and contributing to creation of personal, social, and economic well-being. Hence, the challenge in education is to produce more educated workforce to be suitably employed and to earn higher wages (Jones & Ramchand, 2013). Human capital is a continuous process of being professional, which includes licensure examination as basis of possessing the intellectual potential by individuals in different degrees of specialization. The aforementioned statements reflect one of the agenda of the University.

Specialty board certification has become an essential step in assuring both consumers and other professionals that one has met the qualifications to practice in a particular area of specialization (Dattilio & Gordon, 2000). Board certification

is a significant asset of giving credentials, regardless of being a requirement; but rather, licensing has been originally formulated as an entry level criterion for being professionals. Thus, board certification was initially devised as a way to exclude charlatans and unethical practitioners from the ranks of legitimate professionals who offer their services to the public (Bent et al., 1999). The University and its system has consistently topped the Licensure Examination for Teachers. It has been producing candidates in the top 10 and has achieved as one of the high passing rate, to be in the top performing schools for teachers. Likewise, the University has succeeded before with a higher rate of passers in the Library Science licensure. In the latest result of the Licensure Examination for Guidance Counselors, it has been in good standing and with candidates in the top 10.

These licensure examinations are relevant to the University, because they signify branding of being prestigious in the curricular programs. The University does not only produce quality teachers, but students also excel in other disciplines allied to education and line-up to its expectation of caliber graduates as human capitals, locally and globally. It may not be a comprehensive university, but highly rated in the different licensure examinations of its courses offered, as expected of being the *National Center for Teacher Education (NCTE)*.

The National Register, the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB), and the American Board of Professional Psychology, have undertaken the mission of initiating reciprocity agreements or other arrangements to enable psychologists to move their practices more freely (Hall & Boucher, 2003). Canada appears to be moving towards a solution to the issue in response to provide national standards in professional training, competency, and licensure requirements (Kim & Vande Creek, 2003). Similar efforts are also under way in Europe (Hall & Lunt, 2005). Additionally, as new modes

of practice such as telehealth and Internet counseling become more common, licensure mobility will presumably become more important to the practice and livelihood of many clinicians (Fagan, Liss, Ax, Resnisk & Moody, 2007).

As claimed by Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards [APSB] (2000), it is the responsibility of the individual psychologist to obtain credentials that reflect specialty training and qualify as competent in the specified field. Board certification is not only important but is a must and a way to delineate advanced qualifications and standards of excellence as the field of psychology continues to expand. To date, the University as an NCTE has another licensure to partake—the Psychologist and Psychometrician examinations. There were no examinees for Psychologist Licensure Examination (PsyLE), since its graduate program is not aligned to the prescribed degree stipulated for psychologist, however, graduates took the examination for psychometricians instead. Having stated, this is the rationale behind its goal to update and upgrade its standing.

Bent, Packard, and Goldberg (1999), claimed that board certification of psychologists was designed to provide credentialing over and above these provided by the American Psychological Association and to issue certificate proficiency that would distinguish between basic training and more advanced levels of competence. Republic Act No. 10029, known as the Philippine Psychology Act of 2009, “recognizes that psychologists have an important role in nation-building and development. It shall nurture competent, upright, and assiduous psychologists where standard of practice and service shall be excellent and globally competitive through the administration of inviolable, effective and credible licensure examination and the imposition and promotion of regulatory measures, programs and activities that enhance their professional growth and well-being.” R.A 10029 organized by the Professional Regulatory Board (PRC) for psychometricians and psychologists mandates

the implementation and regulation of the profession (Garcia & Sison, 2015).

Thus, goal is to determine how the University's Psych-graduates faired or placed in the Psychometrician Licensure Examination (PmLE) and how this impact the BS-MA Psychology and Counseling straight program curriculum. It serves as an eye-opener in improving the status of the Behavioral Sciences program based on the outcome of the study. This also aims to up-skill the students and for the program to step-up with the current trends in the competitive globalization. It must embark its output to maintain and sustain its being NCTE. With this, it can contribute to its objective and can be resonated as part of the branding of the institution.

Framework of the Study

Figure 1 presents the Psychometrician Licensure Examination performance of schools and examinees on its first to third offerings. The data were based on R.A. 898 (PRC Modernization Act of 20007 Section 7). The framework identifies the number of schools, examinees, and results based on the national passing rate enabling to establish the overall performance. These outputs will project the examinees' standing compared to other schools. Also, it seeks to determine the impact to the current Behavioral Science Curriculum in the succeeding batches. The study did not include performance rating of the Psychologist Licensure Examination, since there were no participants or examinees for the past three years

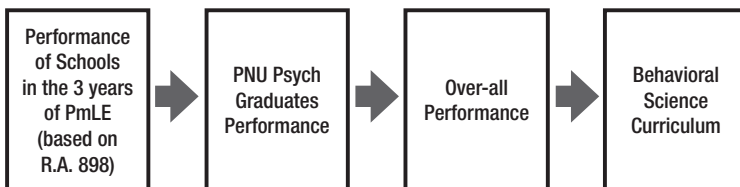


Figure 1. The PmLE of PNU Psych-grad

Purposes of the Research

This research aimed to determine the performance of the Psychology examinees of the National Center for Teacher Education in the 3 PmLE.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following queries:

1. What is the profile of the examinees in the PmLE?
2. What is the performance rating of the examinees in the PmLE in year 2014, 2015, 2016, and from 2014-2016
3. What is the impact of the PmLE to the Behavioral Science curriculum?

Methodology

Descriptive quantitative-qualitative design focused on the gathered relevant information with emphasis on the Psychometrician Licensure Examination of the students. A purposive non-probability sampling was utilized and stratified according to schools, number of examinees and performance ratings. The examinees were graduates of the AB or BS Psychology of the University.

All the schools with 50% performance rating and usually way above the national passing rate were considered in the study. Then, the schools were ranked respectively on two aspects: *number of examinees and percentages of the overall performance rating*. Firstly, the schools were arranged according to the number of examinees. The cut-off for ranking is determined whether as to Top 10, Top 20 or Top 30 depending on where the University is ranked. For instance, if the University is in the 18th position, this will be the basis for the Top 20 schools. If not even within the Top

30 schools; then, it will be considered out of the Top Schools. Secondly, after the cut-off was determined on the number of examinees; the schools that made it to this level will be arranged again from highest to lowest, this time according to the percentage of the overall performance rating of the schools and not on the number of examinees. The process specifically established the rank of the University. Based on the examples, the University is in the 18th position in terms of number of examinees, but when the performance rating is applied it can be in the 16th or 20th position.

The data was collected from the list published online on the performance of schools in the PmLE as provided by RA 8981 otherwise known as the PRC Modernization Act of 2000 Section 7 (m). The public presentation through social media is considered to be known and available for objective viewing and consumption. This published data eliminates any unethical considerations. The schools mentioned in this online source were presented in good light because of their good standing in the examination. No names of examinees were mentioned.

Data Collection and Analysis

The use of the national passing rate was the baseline for determining the *number of* schools, which qualified for the samples needed. The samples were then trimmed to those schools with 50% and above passing rate. The study did not include the standing of schools below the 50%. The ranking is predetermined from Top10 or up to Top 30. This schema was employed so that more representative of samples will be included to avoid biases and achieve a valid and reliable significant results.

The *number of examinees* was also the basis in categorizing which schools will compose the Top schools.

The 50 number of examinees were put into consideration, because this is the number required to be in the Top Performing School (TPS) and with 80% and above passing. Furthermore, Professional Regulations Commission (PRC) PmLE, considered two categories: (1) schools with more than 50 examinees and with 80% performance rating are to be classified as Top Performing School (TPS); and (2) schools below the 50 number examinees and above the percentage passing rate established by PRC can be classified to Top Schools but not TPS. The reason why some schools below the TPS requirements are able to be part in the Top Schools. So far at the moment for the past 3 years, UST has been solely considered for three consecutive in the TPS, but on its third year (2016 PmLE) University of the Philippines (UP) and Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila (PLM) were included, is the reason why the study was conceptualized to determine if PNU is among the Top schools when it comes to Psychology without considering the TPS.

In extent, there were some schools that obtained a higher percentage passing even higher than the TPS but was not included because it had one to two examinees, which may be attributed to the examinee and not merely the school. It is significant to have more number of examinees per school, which manifests a better reflection of the school's standard.

The study utilized a quantitative analysis on data already furnished (schools, number of examinees and passed, and performance percentages) by R.A. 898(PRC Modernization Act of 2007 Section 7). Since, there are no other types of variables and that with three years, comparative analysis is not enough to use other statistical designs (eg. Multiple regression, Multifactorial Design, Effect of Size, etc.), it warrants at least five years and more variables (eg. private and public schools, regional levels, among State Universities, etc) for comparative analysis.

Results and Discussion

Profile of the University examinees in the PmLE

The Psychology Program started in 1965 as Bachelor of Arts in Psychology having its last batch of graduates in 2002. In 1999, the programs was renamed as Bachelor of Science, and its graduates were in 2003-2017. **Table 1** supplies a total of 1915 Psychology undergraduates within 2000-2016 including the AB Psych-grad of 2000-2002. The graduates of 2000 onwards were employed at the time of the study, since these individuals are at the peak of their careers that such license is needed to maintain their job, likewise for those applying for the said job. For those graduates before 2000, may no longer be interested and already contented in whatever status they are at the moment be it married or already permanent with higher position. For some, they may not have the mental capacity to study or review because of their age and the long interval of time to be abreast of the current changes in the discipline. The 98 examinees from the three PmLE comprised 5.12%, from 19 examinees on the 1st PmLE, which increased to 33, and 46 on 3rd PmLE. This means that there is a possibility of having more graduates at least hundreds will partake in the future. If this estimate actualizes, then, it can contend for TPS which is more than 50 examinees but with a performance rating of 80%, and cannot afford to be below the 50% rating. This entails more consideration in preparation, curriculum improvement, and rigid instruction.

Table 1. PNUPsych-Grad 2000 – 2016

Batches	Graduates	PmLE
2016	71	
2015	72	
2014	63	1 st PmLE – 2014 = 19 examinees
2013	32	
2012	45	
2011	75	2 nd PmLE– 2015 = 33 examinees
2010	108	
2009	125	
2008	129	3 rd PmLE – 2016 = 46 examinees
2007	127	
2006	157	
2005	126	
2004	193	
2003	178	
2002	173	
2001	72	
2000	169	
Total	1915	98 (5.12%) examinees

Performance Rating of the University Examinees in the PmLE?

2014 1st Psychometrician Licensure Examination

Table 2 projects that there are 19 examinees from the University’s Psych-grad on the 1st PmLE 2014 out of the 3,282 examinees from 195 schools. Its performance rating was rated 63.16% way above the PRC overall performance rate of 39.31% passers. The schools with 50% and above passing rate together with the number of examinees, showed that UST with the highest percentage of 93.33% (the only TPS this year) and the 10th spot with 54.76% and within the top 10 the University

ranked 7. In terms of examinees, 199 was the highest and the lowest was 15 in this year (2014) top 10.

2015 2nd Psychometrician Licensure Examination

The July 2015 PmLE was participated by 33 Psych-grad among the 4,422 overall examinees from 230 schools nationwide. The performance rate was 60.61% above the PRC 46.15% overall performance of passers. Employing the same methodology of coming up with the Top rank, PNU was in the 10th place and belong to Top 10. The 2015 PmLE resulted with UST again as the TPS with the highest number of examinees and percentage of passers. The University being on the 10th and had determined as the lowest number of examinees with 33 and the least performance rating of 60.61 to comprise compose the Top 10.

2016 3rd Psychometrician Licensure Examination

In August 2016, (3rd PmLE,) 46 graduates of the University were among the 7,312 total examinees from 272 schools. There was a notable increase in the number of schools, examinees, and overall total performance percentage of passers. This year the national performance percentage of passers was 50.46%. PNU performance fell below an alarming 45.65%, even if the ranking is extended to Top 30. To note, at the moment there are 3 TPS (UP-Diliman, UST, and PLM respectively) indicating that more schools are conscious to be in the TPS.

As gleaned from Table 2, the University performance in terms of number of examinees, has increased from 19 to 46, although this result can be considered minimal with the total number of graduate as discussed in the profile. It can also be predicted to increase in the coming years, which may eventually lead to more than 50 examinees and fall under the criteria of *TPS*. The trend also follows the increase of examinees and schools making it highly competitive. This was

evident in the 2016 3rd PmLE and had produced three *TPS*. This result connotes that more schools are preparing their students to be highly competitive. With regards to the passing rate, it establishes a marked decrease from 63.16% to the 45.65% of the national passing rate. The University and the national passing rate require a remediation as to improve these ratings. The more concern should be contemplated on this idea because it may set the precedence of declining performance rate on the PmLE.

Table 2. PmLE Performance of PNU

	1 st PmLE (October, 2014)	2 nd PmLE (July, 2015)	3 rd PmLE (August, 2016)
University Examinees	19	33	46
Total number of examinees	3,282	4,422	7,312
Total number of schools	195	230	272
University Passing rate	63.16%	60.61%	45.65%
National Passing rate	39.31%	46.15%	50.46%
University Rank	Top 10 (Rank 7)	Top 10 (Rank 10)	Below the Top 30

2014-2016 Psychometrician Licensure Examinations

The Top Schools from 2014-2016 PmLE were derived by getting the average of performance rating of each schools with 50% and above rate for the past three years of the PmLE. The University is still included in the Top schools despite that it was not among the Top Schools of 2016 PmLE. This was because the first two years were rather high enough to pull it in the 18th position. Hence, the University as an NCTE is among the Top 20 Schools when it comes to the discipline of Psychology. Although, this is nothing to be contended with.

The years went by and at the rate that is going on, there is an increase of examinees, schools, and *Top Performing Schools*. The more concerned that this issue should be addressing because it can be hypothesized that the more number of examinees, the more mortality.

Impact of the Psychometrician Licensure Examination to the Behavioral Science Curriculum

The Philippine Psychology Act of 2009 (Article V – Licensure Examinations) mandated in Sections 11-15 stipulates the requirements, qualifications, and subjects for the PmLE. The subjects covered the following courses: 1) Theories of Personality; 2) Abnormal Psychology; 3) Industrial Psychology; and 4) Psychological Assessment.

Accordingly, while the first batch of BS-MA Psychology and Counseling had been implemented, the 2014 1st PmLE was also in place. There were some issues the university had to settle during this time such as some subjects that necessitated clarifications and needed to be adjusted and justified with regards to its nomenclature and course description furnished by the PRC, which was different from the University's curriculum. For instance, Psychological Assessment instead of the school's Psychological Testing, Industrial Psychology for Organizational Psychology. For those graduates of 1999-2005 curriculum, the problem was in Abnormal Psychology, which was not offered then because it was incorporated in Clinical Psychology. There are some instances that the transcript must be authenticated by the Commission of Higher Education regarding the Student Order.

Furthermore, this was made difficult since other subjects are incorporated to the four subjects required by PRC, such as Theories of Personality which includes Filipino Psychology, Developmental Psychology and Theories of Learning. Abnormal Psychology contains Exceptional

Disorders and International Classification of Diseases (ICD) which is under Physiological Psychology. Psychological Assessment is incorporated with Statistics, Research and Test Development. The Organizational Psychology syllabus was not enough to comprise the whole context of Industrial Psychology. It indicates that the aforementioned discussion be upgraded to intensify the contents of the subjects mandated by PRC in order to achieve a high performance rating.

The RA 10029 (Philippine Psychology Act of 2009) act alongside with the RA 9258 (Guidance and Counseling Act of 2004) had been envisioned by the Behavioral Sciences Program of the University nine years ago. The five years BS-MA in Psychology and Counseling straight program curriculum was conceptualized and implemented (on its fourth year) not only in response to these professional acts, but rather, an innovation to be forwarding to global competition and be aligned with the ASEAN Integration.

There are a number and types of international programs that have skyrocketed in the last five years of globalization and Internationalization of Higher Education (Knight, 2011). The dual degree program, also known as joint or double degree have clearly demonstrated a role in current landscape of higher education as a natural extension of exchange and mobility programs (Cairns, 2017; Knight, 2011). Synonymously, based on Young (2017), it is also known as a combined degree program in which it can be an integrated masters. This is also timely with the issue encountered regarding the PmLE.

The outcome of the three PmLE prompts the program to contemplate more on the content of the courses specified by PRC, must be comprehensively manifested in the syllabus. With the current revisions of syllabus as patterned to the Outcomes-Based Teacher Education Curriculum (OBTEC), thereon will be a good starting point. The BS-MA straight

curriculum program on its masteral level can serve as a review, since the needed subjects for the examination are offered in a higher level: Personality Psychology to Advanced Theories of Personality, Advanced Psychology to Advanced Psychopathology, Counseling Theories, Tools, and Techniques to Advanced Psychological Counseling and Psychotherapy. Alongside with the program, It must also upskill the faculty in teaching Psychology with respect to their strategies and techniques, which is present in the OBTEC syllabus. The roster of faculty must at least finish their graduate study program and with due license in the discipline.

One of the basic requirements to be a licensed psychologist and a guidance counselor is to attain a masteral degree respectively. With the BS-MA in Psychology and Counseling straight program curriculum, both disciplines are capsulized into one and the students be able to take the two licensure examinations for Psychology and Guidance and Counseling. Moreover, the graduates may have the option not to take the licensure examination in Psychometrics since they can already qualify for the Psychologists Licensure Examination as projected in the intended current curriculum

The NCTE has no examinees for the PsyLE because of the prescribed degree by the PRC. The BS-MA in Psychology and Counseling curriculum in placed includes the required courses by PRC: Advanced Theories of Personality, Advanced Psychological Assessment, Advanced Abnormal Psychology, and Advanced Counseling Theories and Techniques. Graduates of BS-MA Psychology and Counseling can now take the Psychologist Licensure Examination and be the first ever examinees of PNU. The courses offered also serve as a response to the needed review class. It will be considered intense; instead of one session of review, with one term or 54 hours in a particular subject. With this in mind, professors will be aware and be focused to conduct the class in achieving a

high percentage of passers in Psychometrics, Psychology, and Guidance and Counseling.

The straight program can boost more students and board passers, if it aims to become one of the TPS. The current BS-MA program can be part of the 32 schools, which is rather few as recorded in the recent licensure that offers MA and PhD degrees. The curriculum henceforth can entice and fast-track more enrollees, students, graduates and professionals.

Graduates of the BS-MA Psychology and Counseling will be at a better edge to be ahead of the more job opportunities as licensed professionals comparatively to other schools at a short period of time and fill up the demands of more human resources respectively in the said discipline nationwide at its earliest possible time where industry demands more than a first degree professionals (Young, 2017). The BS-MA Psychology and Counseling straight program is an innovative effort to support students to pursue their career in becoming licensed professionals and be highly capable in the educational system.

The trimester scheme in the graduate level can shorten the years in finishing the MA degree and be able to take the 2 licensures in the soonest possible time. It should be noted with the emergence of the K-12 program, an additional of 2 years is added prolonging the number of years of studying; hence, hampering and lengthening the need of human capital necessitated in the field. The trimester scheme of the BS-MA can compensate for the K-12 number of extended years. It will be able to produce more graduates in years time, as compared to the eight (8) years on the average to finish both the bachelor and master degrees. These aforementioned programs can complete both combined bachelor's/master's degrees in five years, whereas completing each degree separately usually takes a total of six to seven years (Husson & Kennedy, 2013). Lastly, Lawrence (2012) said: "*Going straight to a master's is cheaper*".

Conclusion

The aim of the study presented the standing of the Psych-graduates of the university in the PmLE. This is very significant in order to reflect the quality of the program, if it is in par with the other schools. The results of the PmLE likewise have its implication to the Behavioral Science curriculum; especially, the BS-MA Psychology and Counseling straight program curriculum.

The PNU Psychology majors who took the PmLE after 3 years ranked 18th of the Top 20 Schools in the discipline, which is a good reflection of the schools. Although, concerned must be addressed on the downward fluctuation as the years go by. This was evident in the 3rd PmLE 2016 which had a below 50% passed. The latest board examination also elicited a high number of PNU examinees close to qualify for the TPS. This may indicate a poor performance rating with the increase of the examinees, which is detrimental to the school branding.

The profile of the university's examinees in the PmLE for the past three as compared to the total number of graduates since 2000 up to 2016 is very minimal or only few had participated in the examination. Although, it has indicated that there is an increase of examinees as the years went by. It had also projected as the number of examinees increased, there was also a decreased in the performance rating. It is expected that there will be more partakers in the succeeding PmLE and PsyLE, especially if the home school will be part of preparing them to take the examinations. The presence of the BS-MA Psychology and Counseling straight program curriculum by the university is a big support for the students. The BS-MA straight program curriculum upon its making had been adjusted and modified in accordance to the PRC prescribed requirements to address the issues that beset the students. The said curriculum have adapted the OBTEC in improving and

revising the syllabus to obtain mastery of the subject matter for the taking of the board examination. The faculty will be made aware to review and prepare the students for the taking of PmLE. Aside from qualifying to take the Guidance and Counseling and Psychometrician Licensure Examinations, the first graduates of the BS-MA Psychology and Counseling will be the first ever batch representing the university to take the Psychologist Licensure Examination. Moreover, as previously discussed in the conclusion, the straight curriculum program can compensate to the additional 2 years of senior high. There will be more graduate in 5 years instead of eight years to have both bachelor and masteral degree, and the edge of more job opportunities of being licensed professionals

Recommendations

The BS-MA in Psychology and Counseling straight curriculum program, being in placed already, must closely monitor its students in conditioning them to pass the licensure examinations .The syllabus in the said disciplines must be intensified and be comprehensive in content. The faculty to teach must not only be licensed but rather highly knowledgeable of the subject matters.

The school must be supportive in intensifying the program of the Behavioral Sciences with researches. Further studies regarding the licensure examination of the Behavioral Sciences must be made in order how to attain topnotchers and 100% of passers.

This study can somehow be of enlightenment to some schools, especially those with similar case are with PNU. The BS – MA straight curriculum program, OBTEC, and the trimester scheme can be thought about if this will be appropriate for them. At the same time the study can serve as baseline in their curriculum and later gauge its impact for the school.

The need of a review class by the school aside from the straight program is adamant for the alumni of the said discipline, if it is to pursue to be in the *Top Performing Schools*. The committee for the review class must be determined for the preparation of the review materials, schedules and resource person. The review class can bring awareness and dissemination to support and prepare the alumni for the licensure examination.

In a world where there is a global competition for work, the European Commission for European universities recommend a so-called 3-5-8 model – three years for a bachelor's, five with master's, eight for a PhD (Lawrence, 2012).

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