
The Strategic Role of Human Resource Quality in Improving School Academic Performance

ABSTRACT: This study investigates the strategic role of human resource quality in enhancing schools' academic performance, focusing on SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis using a qualitative descriptive approach. Key findings highlight that the presence of certified and experienced teachers significantly contributes to improved teaching outcomes, while uneven workload distribution and limited technological integration present challenges. The research underscores the importance of government support for teacher professional development and infrastructure improvement to address these gaps. Moreover, fostering community engagement and leveraging local opportunities are pivotal in strengthening school competitiveness amidst external threats, such as competition from alternative educational institutions. The study concludes with actionable strategies to optimize human resources, emphasizing continuous training, technological adoption, and establishing collaborative networks, which collectively aim to elevate educational quality.

Keywords: Human Resource Quality, Academic Performance, Teacher Professional Development, Educational Management

INTRODUCTION

Human resources (HR) are a fundamental element in efforts to improve the quality of education at various levels (Tasavvur, 2020; Nurwidodo et al., 2023), including in junior high schools (Prestiana & Sugito, 2021). In education, the quality of human resources plays a strategic role in creating a learning ecosystem that supports optimal academic performance. However, many schools, including SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi, face challenges in maximizing the potential of their human resources, often due to limitations in capacity, competence, and motivation among educators and educational staff.

Previous research has shown that investment in human resources, such as through education and training, is crucial for improving the quality of human resources in education (Iqbal et al., 2023; Mawardi & Cahyadi, 2024; Murdiono & Sudiarditha, 2024). This enhances technical skills and fosters dedication and social responsibility among educators (Sumual et al., 2024). Programs that include health insurance and opportunities for continuous professional development contribute to educational institutions' optimal performance and competitiveness. Effective human resource management involves strategic recruitment, professional development, performance evaluation, and fair compensation, all essential for creating outstanding educators (Karoso et al., 2024; Alsakarneh et al., 2024). Human resource management practices, such as faculty development programs and mentoring initiatives, are crucial in higher education to ensure quality teaching and address recruitment challenges (Farizi & Patimah, 2023; Vrba, 2024). However, most of these studies are more focused on the context of schools in urban areas or developed countries, and there is limited research addressing the specific conditions of schools in semi-urban areas, such as SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi.

This study offers a new contribution by focusing on the local context in Indonesia, particularly at SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi. It analyzes the strategic role of human resources in improving academic performance and identifies

relevant and contextual strategies to be implemented in the region. With this approach, the study aims to fill the gap in previous research by offering a local perspective that can reference other schools with similar characteristics.

This research is conducted to answer several fundamental questions regarding the role of human resource quality in enhancing school academic performance. First, to what extent does the quality of existing human resources meet the demands of effective and efficient learning? Second, what strategies can be applied to improve human resource quality to support the achievement of higher educational goals? Third, what is the relationship between the improvement of human resource quality and the school's overall academic performance? This study aims to identify, analyze, and provide recommendations that can be applied in human resource management at SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi. This study seeks to explain the relevance of improving human resource quality to educational quality by highlighting the strategic role played by educators and educational staff in achieving better academic performance.

RELATED WORK

The literature review serves as the academic foundation of this study, presenting a comprehensive survey and synthesis of various scholarly works, theories, and empirical studies relevant to the research topic. This section's narrative is constructed as a mosaic of scientific thought, consisting of various perspectives, theories, and empirical evidence related to the main research questions.

1. Human Resource Quality in the Context of Education

Various studies have shown that the quality of human resources plays a strategic role in the success of educational institutions. For example, a survey by Darling-Hammond revealed that teacher competence is directly related to student learning outcomes (Darling-Hammond, 2020). Research has shown that continuous professional development programs significantly improve teachers' classroom management skills. These programs enhance teachers' ability to control student behavior and create a conducive learning environment, directly impacting student performance and achievement (Dacholfany et al., 2024).

2. *The Relationship Between Human Resource Quality and Academic Performance*

Research by Hanushek and Rivkin highlighted that the quality of teaching staff is the most significant factor influencing student academic performance (Hanushek & Rivkin, 2012). Meanwhile, a study showed that administrative support is crucial in ensuring the quality of the teaching and learning experience, particularly in ODDE settings. It provides the necessary resources and services that facilitate effective teaching and learning processes (Teixeira, 2023). Administrative support plays a mediating role in the relationship between transformational leadership and teacher job satisfaction. It fosters a supportive environment that enhances teacher satisfaction and promotes better educational outcomes (Sebullen & Jimenez, 2024). However, these studies have primarily focused on academic institutions in urban areas, with limited attention given to semi-urban regions like Muaro Jambi.

3. *Human Resource Development Strategies in Schools*

Several studies have explored strategies for improving human resource quality in the education sector. For example, a survey by Guskey emphasized the importance of contextually designed and sustainable professional development programs (Guskey, 2002). Mentoring provides a platform for less experienced teachers to gain insights and overcome challenges in their field, ensuring a high-quality learning and teaching environment (Md. Kamruzzaman, 2023). However, limited research has focused on human resource development strategies in secondary schools in semi-urban areas, presenting an opportunity for further investigation.

4. *Identification of Research Gaps*

Based on the literature review, several gaps can be identified. First, limited research links human resource quality to school academic performance in semi-urban areas. Second, contextually strategic approaches to improving human resource quality are minimal in previous research. Third, no comprehensive framework includes all human resource elements—educators, educational staff, and management—in improving academic quality.

METHOD

This study explored the strategic role of human resource quality in improving school academic performance through a systematic and structured approach. This section outlines in detail the methods and procedures used in the research, including data collection, research design, and data analysis employed to achieve the research objectives.

1. Data Collection

Data collection was carried out in stages to ensure the validity and reliability of the research results. The main methods used were in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis. Interviews were conducted with the headmaster, teachers, and school staff, selected based on specific criteria such as work experience and their role in improving academic performance. Observation was conducted to directly observe the working processes at the school, while document analysis involved reviewing performance reports, school work plans, and other related documents. All data were collected carefully following the designed protocols to ensure the results are replicable and accountable.

2. Research Design

This study uses a qualitative research design with a descriptive approach. This design was chosen to explore the phenomena related to human resource quality in the school environment. A qualitative approach allows the researcher to comprehensively understand the respondents' context, experiences, and perceptions. Data were analyzed thematically to identify key patterns, relationships, and the influence between human resource quality and academic performance. This approach helps explain the phenomena authentically, aligning with the research objectives.

3. Data Analysis

Data analysis was carried out in stages, from interview transcription and data coding to a conclusion. Thematic analysis was used to identify key themes emerging from the qualitative data. The researcher utilized qualitative data analysis software to organize and group the data based on themes. Data validation was conducted through source triangulation, comparing interviews, observations, and document results. This step aimed to ensure the consistency and accuracy of the data used in the research.

4. Ethical Considerations

Throughout the research process, the researcher adhered to ethical principles, including obtaining consent from the respondents and ensuring the confidentiality of their data. The researcher also provided clear information regarding the purpose and benefits of the study to all participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Human Resource Quality

The following is a SWOT analysis summarizing the quality of human resources at SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi in the context of education:

Table 1. SWOT Analysis of School Human Resource Quality

Aspect	Description
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Strengths	SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi has substantial human resources, as reflected in the teaching and support staff's qualifications and specialization. With 40 certified teachers specializing in various subjects, the school effectively fulfills students' educational needs. The school leadership, integrated with teaching duties, such as Muhajirin, S.Pd.M.Pd.I, who serves as both the headmaster and teacher, demonstrates efficient management.
Weaknesses	Several weaknesses, such as the uneven distribution of teaching loads, can lead to burnout and reduce teaching effectiveness. Teachers holding multiple roles at once can also reduce focus on teaching. The lack of utilization of modern technology and educational resources is also a challenge, as well as the assignment of teachers to ineffective administrative tasks.
Opportunities	There are opportunities for HR improvement with financial support from the local government, which can be used for teacher professional development and infrastructure improvement. The safe and comfortable environment and community support allow for more effective learning. Participation in forums like MGMP, MKKS, and KOMBEL enriches teachers' experience and competencies. The strategic location near essential infrastructure offers partnership and sponsorship opportunities.
Threats	Competition with other schools in the same area may impact new student enrollment and the school's reputation. Alternative educational institutions like Pesantren and MTs could divert prospective students. Inadequate social conditions, such as a lack of sports and parking facilities and underutilization of technology, may hinder students' readiness for the digital era.

This analysis helps identify areas that need strengthening and potential for further development to ensure that SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi maintains and improves its educational quality in facing current and future academic challenges.

a. Strengths

SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi showcases a significant strength in human resources (HR) with its qualified teaching staff, as reflected in the structure and qualifications of its teaching and support staff. With a total of 40 teachers, nearly all of them hold teaching certifications, reflecting high professional qualifications standards. The teacher structure includes specialization in various subjects, ranging from Bahasa Indonesia, Mathematics, and Natural Sciences (IPA) to character education and civics (PKN), with adequate teaching hours allocated to ensure the fulfillment of students' educational needs. The school leadership is represented by Muhajirin, S.Pd.M.Pd.I, who teaches Bahasa Indonesia and serves as the headmaster, demonstrating the integration of leadership roles in teaching duties.

Several teachers, such as Wiwik Maimun, S.Pd, and Zulpami, S.Pd, serving as Vice Principal for Curriculum and Student Affairs, also carry out additional roles and responsibilities. This indicates a structured approach to managing curriculum and student activities, helping ensure effective learning and student development. This structure suggests that SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi focuses not only on teaching but also on efficient school management and administration.

Specifically, highly qualified teachers in this school, such as Drs, support this school's teaching. Rumadi and Vanny Vierry Sinaga, M.Pd, who specialize in teaching Mathematics. This reflects the school's focus on strengthening students' academic abilities in key subjects that contribute to intellectual development. Furthermore, teachers like Endang Wahyuni, S.Ag and Heri, SH, who teach Religion and Civics, show that SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi also focuses on character development and national values.

Not only focused on academic aspects, SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi also has teachers who support the development of students' information and communication technology (ICT) skills and creativity, such as Agus Trianto, S.Kom and Gita Novrianti, S.Kom, who teach ICT. The attention to developing competencies in information technology is crucial, given its importance in the modern world. The overall composition of teaching and staff at SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi shows a strong commitment to providing a holistic education that focuses on academic achievement and the development of students' competencies and character.

b. Weaknesses

Despite SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi's substantial HR strengths and teaching structure, some weaknesses may require further improvement. These weaknesses could affect the school's operational efficiency and the quality of education provided to students.

First, regarding the uneven distribution of teaching loads, some teachers have very high teaching hours, while others have relatively lower hours. For instance, Heri, SH, who teaches Civics, has 27 teaching hours per week, which is much higher than other teachers with fewer hours. This heavy workload could impact the quality of teaching due to fatigue and insufficient time for adequate lesson preparation.

Second, while some teachers are assigned multiple roles, such as teaching Bahasa Indonesia and serving as the head of the library, this approach may divide their focus and reduce teaching effectiveness in each field. This suggests that SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi may have a shortage of specialized teachers in certain areas, which leads to teachers taking on more than one role.

Third, the available data shows that teachers are assigned administrative or other supporting tasks, such as security and maintenance, which may not fully utilize their pedagogical competencies. While such tasks may be necessary for daily operations, the school may need to consider more specific staffing for these roles, allowing teachers to focus on academic and professional development.

Fourth, the use of technology and educational resources is inadequately mentioned, indicating a lack of integration of technology into the teaching and learning process. In today's digital age, mastering and integrating technology into education is key to preparing students for future challenges. The school must improve infrastructure and provide technology training for teachers and students.

Addressing these weaknesses could involve resource allocation adjustments, teacher professional development training, and improvements in educational facilities and technology. This would help enhance the overall quality of education at SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi.

c. Opportunities

The opportunities provided by external factors play a significant role in the urgency of improving human resources (HR) quality to enhance the standard of education at SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi. The local government's attention to adequate education financing paves the way for this school to invest further in teacher professional development and infrastructure improvements supporting more effective learning processes. Providing new learning resources and improving learning facilities will directly impact teachers' competence in managing and delivering lessons, which is central to improving educational quality.

Community support in maintaining security and order creates a conducive learning environment. A safe and comfortable environment enhances learning effectiveness and improves the quality of life for both teachers and students, which in turn affects their motivation and performance at school. A supportive community plays a vital role in building networks for the school, where teachers and staff feel more integrated and valued in their work.

Participation in forums such as MGMP, MKKS, and KOMBEL is crucial for enhancing teacher professionalism. Through activities in these forums, teachers at SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi can exchange knowledge and best teaching practices with teachers from other schools, improving their competencies and teaching skills. In-

ter-school cooperation through these forums enables continuous collaboration, enriching the learning experience for both teachers and students.

Finally, the strategic location near critical infrastructure such as airports and Pertamina offers opportunities for strategic partnerships that can gain financial and other resources. These partnerships can be used to develop more innovative and engaging academic and extracurricular programs, directly improving the quality of education provided by SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi. Effective management of these resources and external opportunities will raise educational standards and strengthen the school's reputation as a high-quality educational institution in the eyes of the broader community.

d. Threats

In facing the development and growth challenges at SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi, several external threats require special attention to ensure continuous improvement in educational quality. A significant threat comes from competition with other schools, such as SMP N 4 and SMP N 20 Kota Jambi, which offer attractive programs and facilities that may affect student enrollment and the school's reputation in the local community. The existence of Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) and Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTS), which provide religious-based education options, could also potentially divert prospective students seeking deeper religious education integration.

Additionally, the school's social environment, such as the lack of sports and parking facilities, challenges SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi to meet the expected standards of comfort and security for prospective students and parents. This could reduce the school's attractiveness as a top choice for education. Furthermore, the underutilization of information technology is a barrier to preparing students for the digital era, reducing the effectiveness of the learning process and the school's ability to provide an education that meets future needs.

The quality of human resources (HR) at SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi, including managing teachers' skills and competencies, plays a crucial role in responding to these threats. Improving teachers' competencies in integrating educational technology, strengthening the curriculum, and developing adequate facilities is key to ensuring that SMP Negeri 9 can enhance the quality of education and remain competitive. Therefore, an effective strategy needs to be formulated to strengthen academic and extracurricular offerings and improve infrastructure and technology integration, with the primary goal of increasing the school's competitiveness and appealing to prospective students and their parents.

2. Factors Affecting the Quality of Human Resources at the School

Based on the interviews and observations conducted at SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi, several important factors affecting the quality of human resources (HR) at this school have been identified. First, teacher qualifications and training are key factors. Most teachers at this school have high qualifications, but continuous training is still needed, especially in the application of educational technology and modern teaching methodologies. Enhancing these skills is considered critical to addressing current challenges in education.

Second, teacher motivation and well-being also significantly influence HR quality. Interviews revealed that although teachers feel supported by the school administration, concerns about unclear incentives and career advancement could affect their long-term motivation. Clarity regarding career pathways and improved well-being could help boost motivation and retention.

Third, educational resources and facilities were also identified as essential factors. Observations show that while SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi has adequate facilities such as classrooms and science laboratories, there is a lack of facilities for subjects like Chemistry and Physics, which limits students' ability to conduct practical work and experiments. This indirectly impacts the quality of teaching and the learning experience.

Fourth, support from parents and the community is crucial in improving HR quality at the school. Interviews revealed that the school is fortunate to have an actively engaged community in school activities. However, more

significant potential can be harnessed, especially regarding financial resources and broader social support for extracurricular programs and teacher professional development.

In conclusion, several interconnected factors influence the improvement of HR quality at SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi. A comprehensive strategy is needed, including enhancing facilities, teacher training, and strengthening community support and incentive systems to achieve higher educational standards and provide quality learning experiences for students.

3. *The Impact of HR Quality on the School's Education Quality*

The results of interviews and observations at SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi provide in-depth insights into the impact of human resource (HR) quality on the education quality at the school. From discussions with teachers, staff and direct observations, it is clear that the quality of teaching provided by educators significantly impacts student learning outcomes. Teachers with high qualifications who continuously engage in professional training are better able to implement innovative and effective teaching methods, which directly enhance student engagement and understanding.

Moreover, motivated teachers with access to adequate teaching resources tend to create a more supportive and challenging learning environment, essential for students' cognitive and social development. Observations show that in classrooms where teachers utilize advanced technology and didactic resources, students demonstrate higher activity levels and understanding of the material. This engagement boosts academic performance and motivates students to become more involved in the learning process.

However, deficiencies in certain aspects of infrastructure, such as laboratories for specific subjects, limit teachers' ability to deliver content effectively, particularly in subjects that require practical work and experiments. This highlights the importance of sustained investment in facilities and resources to support teachers and staff.

Interactions with parents showed that they acknowledge and appreciate the higher quality of education resulting from competent educators. They feel that better teachers directly contribute to improving the school's performance and better-preparing students for further education. The enhancement of HR quality at SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi has been a key catalyst in improving education quality, demonstrating a direct correlation between investment in teaching staff and educational outcomes.

4. *Strategic Steps to Improve the School's HR Quality*

Based on the SWOT analysis formulated in Table 1, the following strategic steps can be taken by SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi to optimize strengths and opportunities, as well as address weaknesses and threats:

Table 2. Strategy Mapping for School HR Improvement

<div style="text-align: center;">Intern factors</div> <div style="text-align: center;">Extern factors</div>	STRENGTH Strategy SO (Using Strengths to Leverage Opportunities)	Strategy WO (Overcoming Weaknesses by Leveraging Opportunities)
OPPORTUNITIES	1. Continuous Professional Development: Utilize local government funding to implement more intensive teacher training, particularly in the use of educational technology.	1. Technology Training: Use adequate educational funding from the local government to improve teachers' information technology skills and enhance technology integration in teaching.

	<p>2. Collaboration and Partnerships: Leverage the strategic location near key infrastructure to form partnerships with companies and institutions that can support academic and extracurricular programs.</p>	<p>2. Teaching Load Adjustment: Implement a fairer and more balanced teaching load allocation system using input from educational forums such as MGMP and MKKS to develop effective learning models.</p>
	<p>3. Improvement of Teaching Quality: Use existing teacher expertise and certifications to develop and implement innovative and interactive learning modules supported by community resources and school collaboration.</p>	<p>3. Infrastructure Development: Invest in improving supporting facilities such as laboratories and libraries, utilizing financial support and resources from strategic partnerships and sponsors.</p>
<p>THREAT</p>	<p>Strategy ST (Using Strengths to Face Threats)</p>	<p>Strategy WT (Minimizing Weaknesses and Avoiding Threats)</p>
	<p>1. Strengthening School Image: Use the school's academic reputation and strong leadership to strengthen its image amid competition, emphasizing superior education quality and outcomes.</p>	<p>1. HR Management Strategy: Develop special programs to balance teaching loads and reduce non-teaching tasks so teachers can focus on professional development and teaching quality.</p>
	<p>2. Curriculum Adaptation: Implement a flexible and adaptive curriculum that integrates academic strengths and character building to address alternative education like Pesantren and Madrasa.</p>	<p>2. Facility Improvement: Prioritize developing and maintaining infrastructure, such as laboratories and sports facilities, to increase the school's attractiveness and address the lack of adequate facilities.</p>
	<p>3. Innovation in Learning: Continue developing and implementing advanced technology teaching methods, ensuring that students are equipped with relevant skills for the digital era.</p>	<p>3. Enhancement of Educational Technology: Increase access to and training in information technology for teachers and students to address challenges in underutilized technology and prepare students for future challenges.</p>

At SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi, developing a SWOT strategy is crucial to leverage internal strengths and external opportunities while addressing weaknesses and threats. With substantial strengths in human resources, consisting of certified teachers and specialists in various subjects, the school can take advantage of opportunities such as financial support from the local government and partnerships with local collaborators to enhance teaching quality. Technology training for teachers can be expanded by utilizing these funds to enrich the use of technology in classrooms, helping to address the current shortcomings in technology integration.

SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi has 44 educational staff, including certified teachers with various academic levels and ranks. Some have earned Master's degrees and have considerable work experience, such as Muha-jirin, S.Pd, M.Pd.I, the principal with a rank of IV/B, and Vanny Vierry Sinaga, M.Pd, an Expert Teacher with a rank of IV/C. The positions in the school vary from Expert Teachers to other administrative roles, with ranks ranging from Group III/B to IV/C, reflecting their experience and professionalism. To improve human resources, the school aims to implement continuous professional development, workload balancing, academic qualification enhancement through further education, and strengthening information technology competencies to support learning efficiency and innovation. This strategy is expected to enhance the educational quality and competitiveness of SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi.

Furthermore, by improving the management of teaching load allocation, the school can ensure teachers' well-being while enhancing teaching effectiveness. There is a positive correlation between teacher well-being and teaching effectiveness. Teachers who experience better well-being are more likely to provide effective teaching, which improves student learning outcomes. (Ghosh et al., 2024) Investment in infrastructure, particularly improving facilities such as laboratories and sports areas, will strengthen the school's appeal and provide better resources for students and teachers. Active participation in forums such as MGMP, MKKS, and KOMBEL also offers valuable opportunities for teachers to exchange knowledge and best practices, further strengthening their expertise.

On the other hand, the school needs to strengthen its image to maintain its position amidst the intense competition with other schools in the area, promoting its academic excellence and unique programs. Implementing an effective marketing strategy, such as digital marketing and personalized content, can significantly increase the school's visibility and attract potential students. Leveraging artificial intelligence and neuromarketing tools can further enhance institutional perception and align marketing efforts with the school's goals. (Silva et al., 2024) Adapting the curriculum to include more practical and interactive aspects and increasing the use of technology in learning is key to maintaining the relevance of the education provided. This strategy will not only help retain the current student body but also attract new students seeking innovative education that meets the demands of the times. Therefore, by implementing a strategy that combines strengths and opportunities while addressing weaknesses and threats, SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi can ensure that they not only maintain but improve their educational standards, making it a top choice for education in the area.

The SWOT strategy applied at SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi contributes academically by demonstrating how school management can be optimized to achieve better educational outcomes through data-driven analysis. This approach also provides a model for strategy implementation that can be replicated by other schools, especially in effectively utilizing local resources and external opportunities. With a focus on improving teacher quality, integrating technology, and strengthening infrastructure, this article offers relevant insights for enhancing a school's competitiveness in modern education. Additionally, this study highlights the importance of collaboration among teachers through educational forums like MGMP, which contribute to professional competence development and teaching innovation.

I. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study indicates that the quality of human resources (HR) at SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi plays a strategic role in improving the school's academic performance. Based on the SWOT analysis, the key strengths lie in the number of certified teachers with expertise in various fields and the effective leadership of the principal, who also serves as an educator. However, some weaknesses, such as the uneven distribution of teaching loads and limited use of educational technology, need to be addressed to improve teaching effectiveness. A significant opportunity lies in the support from the local government, which enables the development of teacher professionalism and improvements in school infrastructure. However, external challenges such as competition with other schools and lacking supporting facilities can affect the school's appeal and reputation. Therefore, enhancing teacher qualifications through continuous training and integrating technology in teaching and learning processes, along with strengthening administrative support and teacher welfare, are crucial to improving the quality of education at SMP Negeri 9 Muaro Jambi. This research contributes to understanding HR management's importance in creating a more quality educational environment. Further research should be conducted to explore practical ways to improve HR quality in other schools.

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