Improve the quality of urban gardens with the approach of public use (Case study: Ghasr Dasht garden of Shiraz)

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Abstract

Today, the concept of cities regardless of green space in its different forms is inconceivable. Uncontrolled and unsustainable urban development that is exacerbated environmental pollutions reveals the need for attention to this issue. The importance of urban green space is to the extent that today the present of this user is considered as one of the indicators of societies' development. This study attempted to study and investigate the ways to maintain urban gardens with case study of Ghasr Dasht of Shiraz. In this regard, research data was collected and evaluated with emphasis on 4 dimensions of physical factors, physical and structure, activity, social interactions in space, ecology during questioning among hundred citizens that were the visitors of Ghast Dash garden of Shiraz (the most famous gardens of Shiraz). The results showed that among the indicators of improving environmental quality of Ghasr Dasht Garden, physical factors, physical and structural has the highest score and impact in maintaining Ghasr Dasht garden.

In other words, by the improvement of physical, physical and structure factors of the mentioned garden, indicators of activity and social interactions in space will be improving interactively. As a result, for achieving the purpose of research (maintaining urban garden with approach of public use), physical factors, physical and structural, activity and social interactions in space should be emphasized in planning and policy, respectively.

Keywords: City parks, Public approach, Ghasr Dasht garden of Shiraz.
1. Statement of the problem
Development of cities in all the world especially big cities in the Third World causes the exacerbation of negative effects including air pollution, noise, smell and psychological effects is the most common and well-known of them. Scholars have considered one of the main ways to deal with pollution and problems of urbanization are the improving urban human relationship with nature. The relationship that have been somewhat fragmented in urban life. Creation of sustainable relationship between human, city and nature is one of the ways to deal with urban pollutions that is an interpretation of the concept of sustainable development from the perspective of environmental-urban design in the cities, (Pasban Hazrat, 1999; 213). The importance of green space in utility of cities is undeniable.
Systematic thinking that today is created in the concept of sustainable development especially in large cities evaluates the role and application of green space, quality and quantity without any exaggeration in an ecological set (Abbas Abadi, 1999; 259). Considering the issue of urban green spaces appears more important when the urban use is directly related to urban sustainability, modern dimension of urban sustainability in today's heterogeneous cities and unsustainable is social stability that has mutual relationship with park's role in raising the participation rate of citizen (Mohammadi Dah Cheshme, 2002). However, with advance in science and technology, increasing population and extending urbanization causes the change of green spaces and urban parks to rough and tight surfaces, and this trend, particularly in developing countries and the third world has more serious manifestation (SHI, 2002);
This in turn underlies the loss of urban green spaces and around cities and use change of such lands. The importance of urban green spaces in the urban environment is to the extent that it is considered as one of the indicators of society's development (Bahman Poor and Moharam Nejad, 2009). Because urban parks have the role of social, economic and ecological with benefits as treatment of mental illness, optimal environment for raising children, social integration, maintaining comfort and so on, the environments are also considered a measure to improve quality of life space and society's development (Balram, 2005). A very important point in the spatial and locating distribution of public green space is the requirements of public user and park maintain. That's why Jane Jacob, the critic of contemporary urban believes that the park should be a place where life is flowing, where work, culture and commerce and residential activities exist in it (Bahman Poor and Moharam Nejad, 2009). The establishment of gardens in urban spaces on the one hand due to the impact that have on urban life quality and achieve sustainable development and on the other hand, due to the financial without returning investment and benefit that for municipalities have extensive value to investigate (Manlun, 2003). Therefore, this study tries to investigate and evaluate maintain of urban gardens of Shiraz in general and Ghasr Dasht of Shiraz specifically.

2. Review of Literature
On the subject of urban parks and green spaces, books, papers and several researches are written that each of them in terms of the purpose and specific comment has investigated this issue that in this study, some of them are:
- Chisora (2004) in his paper entitled The role of parks in the sustainable city, pointing out the importance of urban green spaces and the lack of international studies in this area, has tried to show the importance of cities nature for welfare of citizens and urban stability. The study
results acknowledge that the experience of nature in the urban environment is a source of positive emotions and useful services that satisfies important immaterial and spiritual human needs (Chiesura, 2004).

-Milvard and Siber (2011), in an article (the benefits of an urban forest park) state that the urban forest park provides various social, environmental, and economic services with the measurable value for cities. They have tried to state the benefits of the park for city as quantity to its importance is more intuitive (Millward and Sabir, 2011).

- Matlabi and Kolivand (2013) in their research titled (explaining importance and role of urban parks in a local scale in sustainable urban development Case Study: Shafagh Park), explained the role and the importance of urban parks in sustainable urban development and concluded that local parks as urban green space and a combination of natural and synthetic tissue have an effective role in advancing the goals of sustainable urban development.

- Ghorbani and Teimuri (2009) in a study have tried to investigate the psychosocial impacts of urban parks to improve the quality of life of Tabriz citizens through investigating attraction factors of parks in coverage to repulsive factors of their location.

- Ali Ashraf Karimi et al (2014) in an article entitled (locating park with the approach of sustainable development in leisure times Case study: Ivan citizens); shows that locating park with the approach of urban sustainable development is effective in leisure times. Create a harmony set (park and its sub spaces) with the approach of sustainable development has a role in attracting citizens to the park, and by using the approach of sustainable urban development can be established an interaction between the environment and human.

- Marjan Zandi (2015) in his article titled (the role of urban garden in forming behavioral places (Tehran) explained the role of garden in forming urban public spaces and category of structural patterns based on the role of garden in the set.

The results of the conducted studies show no study has been conducted to maintain urban gardens with approach of public use, although there are related cases to maintain and improve the precious spaces.

3. The role of urban green spaces in urban planning

Urban green space is a part of urban open space that its natural areas or often artificial is under the cover of trees, shrubs, bushes, flowers, grass and other plants that under the supervision and management of human and taking into account the criteria, rules and relevant expertise are constructed and maintained to improve living conditions and welfare of citizens and non-rural population centers (Ismaili, 2002: 12). Undoubtedly green space and urban parks should be considered among the most important factors of sustainability of natural and human life in urbanization (the same, 11), which, if properly programmed, in healthy of body and soul will have desired impacts (Shiri, 2006: 32).

Urban parks as one of the most important city's public -service spaces have a lot of role in improving social, cultural, economic, environmental conditions of urban areas. The spaces to grow and condensation of urban areas are considered in different countries and various strategies have been developed and used for locating and their proper distribution in urban environments (Ghorbani, 2007: 54). Scientists have discovered that green space can help to the relaxation and rejuvenation and reducing violence of people. Aside from the social and psychological benefits, urban nature can provide economic benefits whether for urban
managers and for citizens. For example, cleaning the air that the trees are doing, can lead to lower costs, reduce pollution and its rate.

In addition, the values of aesthetic, historical, and recreational of urban parks increase the attractiveness of the city, tourism value and thus income (Cheisura, 2004, 129). Man in any case daily needs to a few hours calm. This need is felt more by the population density in residential area and living in apartments; and thus the point of view of urban green spaces that people are least able to spend hours in a day for relaxing and getting away from the commotion, shows a real necessity of urban life.

4. the approach of public use, satisfaction and human being

Public spaces should be able to satisfy properly human spirit needs and provide a desired level of quality for residents. Vared Thompson is considered two central role for public space in cities; 1- specific and function role, that the public space provides a pleasant environment for residents and tourists in the city 2- ideal role, which aims to put rich and poor, old and young in a common experience for democratization of the society (Thompson, 2001: 41). Public spaces include three distinct groups of human activities, essential, voluntary and social activities characterized in the quality of the city are very important.

In urban areas without quality can only be found necessary activities, in other words, people do works that are forced to do it. In contrast, in urban areas with quality not only essential activities, but also many social and recreational activities are done with the public interest. However, these activities occur when conditions are right, it means that the city provides places with good quality and encouraging so the people stay longer than is really necessary in this space, because considered presence in such a situation a favorable and satisfactory (Madanipour, 2005: 45).

Utility of space, including protection (against traffic and crash, safety against violence and protection against adverse weather conditions), comfort (possibilities for walking, standing and pause, facilities for sitting, watching, dialogue, activity and entertainment and desired visual quality), satisfaction and acceptance by users (human scale, use of appropriate weather conditions such as light, shade, breezes, good quality perspective and experience of satisfaction and place attachment). Users of urban public spaces in addition to stop and spend time in outdoors are doing various activities. High variety of activities represents flexibility of place and ability to respond to the needs of different groups of people. The more willingness of consumers to stay and spent more time in the public space, the more vitality, social life and interaction of people in that space.

Matlak also believes that the basic function of the city is hidden in mass and abundance of activities and public areas of the city because it provides a background for representing social
life and different social groups. He believes that the presence of collective life in the city is formed of a series of interactions, relationships face to face with each other and with the environment and memory experience in relation to that space. Vital that causes city like a organisms be in multilateral dialogue with humans (Matlak, 1997; 21). Gol considered two contradictory approaches in urban planning. In some cities, based on the fact that life is more and more private, walking and public life is declining. In other cities, public life is supported by introducing good areas of walking to be completed the private living space with the public realm, a realm that has an appropriate function and offers a wide range of attractive public activities (Gol, 2010); From the perspective of an objective and physical, urban space is a context that social relations and civil life flows in it.

5. Methods
The current study is applied research and its approach with respect to the investigated components is descriptive-analytical. Collecting data has been survey-based and documentary generally. Data had been collected during questioning of 100 citizens of the area that were the visitors of Ghasr Dasht Garden of Shiraz (the most famous gardens of Shiraz). In this study, to estimate the factors of attraction and repulsion of citizens in urban parks, the tool of Seeking-Escaping questionnaire is used that explains the reasons for trends or lack of trends in public green spaces. To determine the sample size in this study, the necessary extents are used to achieve the objectives of the study that among these norms can refer to these cases. Since the research is descriptive -survey, in order to determine the validity, the view of 10 professors was used and indicators were modified according to the professors' view. Also to determine the reliability of research, planed items of Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used and for this study, 30 questionnaires were completed and pre-tested. The construct validity of the questionnaire was tested using factor analysis. In the factor analysis method using the KMO and Bartlett's test, the level of construct validity of the questionnaire was tested and in accordance with table 1, KMO rate is equal to 0.876, which indicates adequacy of samples and also the amount of Bartlett's test with a confidence level of 0.05 is equal to 3.278 that indicates the differentiating factor based on loadings factors is correct and there is no overlap between the factors.

Table 1 – The amount of factor analysis variables in the test of research questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>KMO</th>
<th>Bartlett's test</th>
<th>Degree of freedom</th>
<th>Significant level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amount</td>
<td>0.876</td>
<td>3.278</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: research findings, 2015

Reliability coefficient of questionnaire was obtained using Cronbach's alpha test. According to this test, the coefficient more than 0.7 was calculated, which shows the reliability of the research tool (questionnaires) is desirable. According to the obtained calculations for the dimensions of physical factors, physical equal to 0.78%, activity 0.76%, social interaction in
the space 0.72% and ecology 0.75% was obtained, respectively. The total obtained alpha coefficient for the entire questionnaire is 0.74 percent. In this study, the following conceptual model in order to maintain urban gardens with the approach of public spaces based on the theories and previous studies are selected and investigated.

![Conceptual framework of research](image)

**Figure 1- Conceptual framework of research**

6. **Introducing research context**

Shiraz in southwestern of Iran is the most ancient cities of Iran in terms of various known historic – recreational attractions (Mohammadi et al., 2009; 47) and with the benefit of weather conditions quite "fit and with the ability to benefit from mobility on a global scale during the formation of various festivals and congress, attracting scholars, artists and art lovers can show its high potential in the development of Shiraz industry, considering that tourists are different people with different purposes. Shiraz as the capital of Fars province is a major hub of Tourism (Master plan of tourist attractions of Shiraz, 2002; 61). Shiraz in the national arena is considered one of the five major cities of cultural and historical and has worth status in the National Plan for Tourism Development.

Shiraz from ancient times until now has been the inherit of Iranian culture and civilization and the birthplace of many great people of religion, science, art, philosophy and mysticism and in recent decades, significantly has developed and has become one of Iran's major and beautiful
cities. In the meantime, Shiraz is famous for poetry and flowery garden. Garden has a special place in Iranian culture and Shiraz is traditionally known for having beautiful gardens. Most of the gardens of the city are placed in the North West and in Ghasr Dasht, Kashen, Chamran and Maali Abad. Some of the gardens of Shiraz are very important historically and are considered as important tourist centers (Sarmadi 2012; 11). In the meantime, Ghasr Dasht Garden of Shiraz or Ghasroldasht has had a special place, as the ancient people of Shiraz have called this district "Sharbat Khane of Shiraz” because it has abundant fruit trees that why it is called as this name and is placed in an area of over ten hectares in the range of the city. Good weather and refined gardens of Shiraz has caused the reputation of the district also resonates not only in cities of Iran but also in other Persian Gulf countries and investors of many of these countries acted to buy garden and villa in Ghasr Dasht area. Given the importance of area, this research is trying to maintain the mentioned urban gardens with approach to public use. So the problem is that the public use of citizens can be effective in maintaining the urban gardens and urban gardens what characteristics should be have to be exposed to the public and flow the public life and vitality in them? It seems that quality of urban gardens space and facilities can be caused to attend citizens and public life and on the other hand social interaction and vitality and mental comfort of being in the garden can be effective in maintain it.

7. Research Results
According to information obtained from the questionnaire results, 8 percent of the studied sample have expressed the quality of Ghasr Dasht garden too low, 15% low, 43% moderate, 32% many and 2% too many. T test results also show that the situation of Ghasr Dasht garden with average of 2.77 and t static 4.819 is in moderate level and with regard to the numerical desirability of test (3), it can be said that t static of all aspects of the study is acceptable for public use. In the meantime, the status of ecology indicator with t static 5.436 is weaker than other indicators and the indicator of physical factors, physical and structure with t static 10.246 is also better than other indicators. Then indicators of activity with t static 7.859, social interactions in space with t static 7.232 are in next ranks.

Table 2: Analysis of the situation in Ghasr Dasht garden with T-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Degree of freedom</th>
<th>Level of confidence</th>
<th>Mean difference</th>
<th>Level of confidence 95%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The lowest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>physical factors, physical and structure</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>0.504</td>
<td>10.246</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>-0.16115</td>
<td>0.2119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>0.440</td>
<td>7.859</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>-0.17732</td>
<td>0.2217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social interactions in space</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>0.481</td>
<td>7.232</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>-0.23496</td>
<td>0.2834</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In this study, to evaluate the statues difference of Ghasr Dashti garden aspects, analysis of variance (ANOVA) test assuming equal variances and Scheffe post hoc test are used. In this context, the results of Levene test for equality of variances show the significant level of $\alpha = 0.05$, the equality of variances for all indicators is accepted and null hypothesis based on non-equality of variances will be rejected. Also the results of analysis of variance (ANOVA) show that F value in all indicators in significant level $p > 0.05$ is not significant. Thus, it can be said that the public use aspects of Ghasroldasht garden space can be seen with a significant difference. Meanwhile, the index of social interactions in space with F value 47.157 has the most difference. After that, indicators of ecology with F value 29.598, physical factors, physical and structure, activity with static 13.56 are in next ranks.

### Table 3: variance analysis of different aspects of public use of Ghasroldasht garden space

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Levene test the equity of variance</th>
<th>Total squares</th>
<th>Degree of freedom</th>
<th>Mean of squares</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>The significant level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical factors, physical and structure</td>
<td>4.297</td>
<td>0.214</td>
<td>7.799</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.899</td>
<td>18.387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>1.761</td>
<td>0.173</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>13.506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social interactions in space</td>
<td>1.184</td>
<td>0.307</td>
<td>5.106</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.553</td>
<td>47.157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecology</td>
<td>1.988</td>
<td>0.138</td>
<td>13.051</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.525</td>
<td>29.598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1.915</td>
<td>0.149</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>55.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In next stage, in order to identify the basic variables or factors to determine the appropriate pattern of variables, factor analysis was used. This method is based on the relationships between variables and scales that in fact are assessment tools. Factor analysis shows the intensity of relationship and correlation of dependent and independent variable. On the other hand, the contribution of each factor or indicator is also specified in determining the quality of public spaces. As a result, the more loading factor represents a greater contribution of factor in influencing variable.

According to the results in Table 3, among the indicators, physical factors, physical and structural indicator with the specific value of 5.887 and variance value of 37.5% has had the highest contribution in explaining the purpose of research. Also, the indicator of ecology with the specific value of 1.788 could only explain 11.6% of the quality of Ghasroldasht garden.
addition, the indicator of activity with load factor 0.982 has had the highest relationship and correlation with the pattern of public use of the space. Then, indicators of ecology with load factor of 0.974, physical factors, physical and structure with 0.972 and social interactions in space with 0.942 are in next ranks.

The important point in factor analysis is the identification of the contribution of each factor in explaining the indicators using varimax or the stage of rotation. In the conditions that changes are not distributed evenly between the factors, using particular amount by applying the rotation stage, variables will be reinvestigated. Because many variables or factors affecting of maintaining Ghasroldashti garden show correlation with several factors at the same time, as a result using varimax, all the variables are analyzed to achieve the best combination of linear as rotation. In this situation, the main factors are identified and all indicators are analyzed again to the main factors ratio in the rotation matrix. According to the results of rotation matrix, indicators of physical factors, physical and structure (5.537), activities (3.014), and social interactions in space (2.245) are as the main factor in explaining urban gardens maintaining. And indicator of ecology could not achieve the appropriate weight factor for explaining the variable of garden maintaining.

Table 4: The contribution of the factors in explaining the aspects of public use of Ghasroldasht garden space

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Initial extractive factors</th>
<th>Total square of extractive loads</th>
<th>extractive factors with rotation</th>
<th>Load factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Specific value</td>
<td>Percentage of variance</td>
<td>Cumulative variance</td>
<td>Specific value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>physical factors, physical and structure</td>
<td>5.88 7</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>5.88 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>activity</td>
<td>2.88 1</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>2.88 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social interactions in space</td>
<td>2.23 2</td>
<td>16.13</td>
<td>73.13</td>
<td>2.23 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecology</td>
<td>1.78 8</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>****</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, according to statistics of table 4, physical factors, physical and structure has the most impact and score in maintaining the garden of Ghasroldasht. This indicator in a linear combination with a balanced distribution as a major factor in explaining the mentioned garden maintaining has the greatest relationship and correlation with the index of activity (0.717) and

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social interactions in space (0.674). In other words, by improving the status of physical factors, and physical and structure in the mentioned garden, indicators of activity and social interactions in space also will be improved interactively. As a result, to achieve the purpose of research (maintaining urban garden with approach of public use) should emphasize physical, physical and structure and activity and social interactions in space in planning and policy.

**Table 5: the matrix of factor loadings Ghasroldasht garden maintaining**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Rotated factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>physical factors, physical and structure</td>
<td>physical factors, physical and structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>activity</td>
<td>activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>social interactions in space</td>
<td>social interactions in space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>physical factors, physical and</td>
<td>0.783</td>
<td>-0.311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>structure</td>
<td>-0.485</td>
<td>0.890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>activity</td>
<td>0.436</td>
<td>-0.294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social interactions in space</td>
<td>0.530</td>
<td>0.717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecology</td>
<td>0.311</td>
<td>0.367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.228</td>
<td>0.119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.367</td>
<td>0.119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. Conclusions and offering suggestions

The studied approach in this study and its application in the form of an urban garden like Ghasroldash to a large extent can be generalized to other similar examples. With regard to environmental condition of the mentioned garden can be said that this garden in urban and extra-urban scale can be used as a main focus of public use and then as the center of social and behavioral interactions with its recreational aspects defined in Shiraz. Thus, attention to the issues associated with scopes and patterns of behavioral- environmental and adapting it in every aspect with the indicators of quality of public spaces seems necessary. The aim of this study is that the strategies for promoting Ghasroldasht garden on one hand and behavioral patterns of various users of the garden on the other hand, its strengths and critical aspects be known to base on it improve the inappropriate environmental situation of garden through organizing the studied indicators. Also in planning its promotion should consider the needs and behavioral patterns of the users from the space. With such a vision can create a lively and social atmosphere with the desired behaviors. In this study, to improve environmental quality of Ghasroldasht garden and impact of its indicators and components, conducted evaluation showed that among the indicators of improving environmental quality of Ghasroldasht garden, physical factors, physical and structure has the most score and impact in maintaining Ghasroldasht garden. This indicator in a linear combination with a balanced distribution, as a major factor in explaining the mentioned garden maintaining has the greatest relationship and correlation with the indicator of activity and social interactions in space. In other words, by improving physical factors, physical and structure in the mentioned garden, indicators of activity and social interactions in space will be improved interactively. As a result, to achieve the purpose of research (maintaining urban garden with approach of public use) should emphasize physical, physical and structure and activity and social
interactions in space in planning and policy. So in this research, in line with the ideal of mentioned garden to use all the groups present in it, and in line with achieving to relative stability in the garden with the presence of social and cultural activities and turning it into a dynamic and active environment with deep insight into its values and also providing needs of its users, the following recommendations offer:

1. Create social and activity nodes in areas that are traffic due to the communication of users with each other, in order to lead users from garden to doing desired activities.
2. Appropriate flooring of paths to increase safety level in opening space of garden
3- Attention to contextualize and ecological characteristics of green space on the edge of the garden, with an emphasis on climate, weather etc...
4. Strengthen visibility at night
5. Strengthen behavioral domains by creating diversify in existing activities in space
6. Changing streets to sidewalk for people and design entries to the garden from the street that as a result increase the visual qualities in the garden and strengthen the sense of inviting in users who want to enter into garden;
7. Considering social activity space, sports and recreation for all ages
8. Waste management through proper placement of trash at specific intervals
9. Designing main entrance of the garden
10. Constructing equipment of pavilions on parts that have potential of sitting
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