

The Influence of Life Experiences and Beauty Privilege on Self-Confidence Through Self-Efficacy Among Muslim Students

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Abstract: This study aims to examine how the life experiences and self-efficacy of Muslim students affect their sense of self-confidence. The study adopts a quantitative approach, involving 251 Muslim students from various universities in Indonesia as respondents. An online survey was conducted to collect data, focusing on life experiences, beauty privilege, self-efficacy, and self-confidence). Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) techniques were used to analyze the relationships between variables. The results revealed that beauty privilege and life experiences significantly enhance self-confidence, with self-efficacy serving as a mediating factor. For Muslim students, life experiences have a greater impact on self-efficacy and self-confidence compared to beauty privilege. This study suggests enhancing self-efficacy to help Muslim students improve their self-confidence, considering their diverse life experiences and perceptions of attractiveness.

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Introduction

In Indonesia, the issue of self-confidence among university students is complex and multidimensional. A lack of self-confidence is common among students, negatively affecting their mental health, social interactions, and academic performance. Students' confidence is often undermined by various factors, including intense competition for jobs, high academic pressures, an uncertain future, and strong societal expectations (Hamdi et al., 2020). The varying levels of student confidence are also influenced by regional disparities in education quality and economic inequality. Students feel inadequate when comparing themselves to their peers, a situation exacerbated by the rise of social comparison, which has become more prevalent due to social media.

Addressing these confidence issues is further hindered by the lack of psychological support services and self-development programs on many campuses. As a result, students experience anxiety, depression, or even choose to give up on their studies. This situation underscores the need for comprehensive and methodical strategies involving the government, society, and families, alongside educational institutions, to boost students' self-confidence in Indonesia. A person's confidence is largely shaped by their life experiences, as achievements and lessons learned contribute to one's belief in their own abilities (Kotera et al., 2022). Life experiences are the culmination of all the encounters and events that have shaped an individual's personality, beliefs, and behavior. Life experiences include both positive and negative events that impact one's psychological growth.

A critical psychological factor in determining a person's quality of life is their level of self-confidence. People with high self-confidence tend to succeed in various areas of life, including social, professional, and academic domains. Both positive and negative life



experiences can influence self-confidence. Self-efficacy is a psychological state in which individuals believe in their ability to achieve goals, which directly affects their motivation and behavior when facing challenges (Qin et al., 2024). The presence of self-efficacy predicts higher levels of physical and emotional well-being and can boost self-confidence (Chen et al., 2024). Peer feedback has a positive effect on student learning outcomes, particularly feedback from peers or descriptive feedback. Interestingly, the amount of tangible social support found to influence the extent to which self-efficacy mediates the relationship between affect and depression severity (Sadler et al., 2024).

Furthermore, in a society that increasingly values physical attractiveness, the concept of beauty privilege influences how confident individuals feel about themselves. The term "beauty privilege" describes the advantages people receive simply because of their perceived physical attractiveness or adherence to socially accepted beauty standards. According to Pratami et al., (2023), self-confidence is an attitude in which individuals believe in their abilities, allowing them to act without anxiety, pursue their desires freely yet diligently, take responsibility for their actions, interact courteously with others, recognize their strengths and weaknesses, and be motivated to achieve. Therefore, self-confidence is a critical resource for students to adapt to their environment and continue to grow, particularly in a campus setting (Haryati et al., 2021). According to Novita & Sumiarsih (2021), individuals need selfconfidence to fulfill their needs. Early life behavior and experiences are essential in shaping a person's life. Early life experiences can have long-lasting impacts on individuals. These experiences tend to provide moral or emotional support rather than practical help in activities. People with self-confidence gain experience and skills, enabling them to become independent and lead healthy lives. Characteristics of self-confidence include not feeling pressured to conform to accepted, having the courage to face rejection, maintaining emotional stability and self-control, retaining a positive outlook, and setting realistic goal (Selwen et al., 2021). The difference between emotions evoked by stimuli and real-life emotions is most noticeable with negative emotions and less so with happy and surprised emotions.

However, research on the impact of beauty privilege on self-confidence remains relevant, especially for specific groups such as Muslim students. According to Sitompul et al., (2024), students cannot avoid issues related to beauty privilege on campus. Muslim students have different life experiences due to their strong sense of religious and cultural identity. Their perceptions of others and themselves may be influenced by family expectations, religious values, and social norms. The goal of this study is to investigate how Muslim students' self-confidence influenced by their life experiences and beauty privilege. Specifically, the relationship between life experiences, beauty privilege, and self-confidence will be examined, with self-efficacy as a mediating variable. Given that self-efficacy can vary in different situations and target populations, it is essential to design and provide interventions that take these variations into account (Cho & Hwang, 2024). This study is expected to contribute knowledge about the variables influencing Muslim students' confidence levels and have an impact on creating more effective psychological interventions. Some people may become frustrated and lose confidence in their ability to handle daily tasks due to these constraints (Eodanable et al., 2024). Real-life emotions serve to reflect and capture the full spectrum of natural, unbiased emotional variations, as seen in daily experiences (Han & Adolphs, 2024b).

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Research Method

This study employs a quantitative method known as Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The respondents are active students from various public and private universities (PTN and PTS) across Indonesia. The purposive sampling method was used to select samples from active female Muslim students from the 2020–2023 cohorts. The study involved 251 respondents from various higher education institutions across Indonesia. One of the criteria for selecting respondents was their status as students enrolled in diverse majors, representing a broad range of female Muslim students in Indonesia. The factors in this study were measured using a questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale. The data was then analysed using PLS-SEM to assess the structural model, the validity and reliability of the model, and the correlations between latent variables. Researchers can thoroughly examine intricate interactions between variables, including direct, indirect, and total impacts, using this method. Additionally, it allows them to evaluate any possible moderating or mediating roles in their study model.

The method is designed to provide deeper insights into the changes occurring in the context of female Muslim students studying in higher education institutions in Indonesia. This research uses a stratified random sampling method from 11 State Universities (PTN) and 11 Private Universities (PTS) are in Indonesia. To ensure that the research data is representative, the population is divided into strata of State and Private Universities, and then randomly selected from each stratum to ensure balance and validity of the research results.

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) shows that beauty privilege and life experiences have a significant impact on the self-confidence of Muslim student's self-efficacy serves as a mediating variable. This method can analyze causal relationships between latent variables while accounting for measurement errors, resulting in more accurate estimates. PLS-SEM has two main components the measurement model and the structural model, which allow for hypothesis testing.

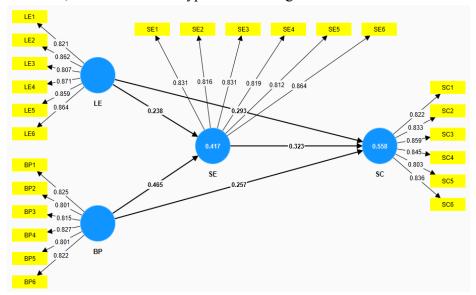


Figure 1. (PLS-SEM (Partial least squares structural equation modeling)

With a path coefficient of 0.239, the findings indicate that Life Experiences (LE) significantly enhance Self-Efficacy (SE). This suggests that an individual's level of self-efficacy increases along with their level of life experience. With a path coefficient of 0.465, Beauty Privilege (BP) also has a significant positive impact on Self-Efficacy (SE). This

indicates that individuals with appearance advantages typically have higher levels of self-efficacy. With a path coefficient of 0.323, Self-Efficacy (SE) serves as a mediating variable and significantly influences Self-Confidence (SC). This shows that an individual's self-confidence increases in accordance with their level of self-efficacy.

Beauty Privilege (BP) has a direct effect on Self-Confidence (SC) with a path coefficient of 0.257, in addition to its indirect effects through Self-Efficacy. This illustrates how good appearance can enhance an individual's self-confidence. With a substantial explanatory power, this model can explain 41.7% of the variance in Self-Efficacy (SE) and 55.8% of the variance in Self-Confidence (SC). Several indicators were used to measure each construct (LE, BP, SE, and SC), and high factor loadings (ranging from 0.801 to 0.864) indicate strong measurement validity. The research findings demonstrate that self-efficacy plays a major mediating role in the interactions between life experiences and beauty privilege, as well as self-confidence. These results emphasize the significant role of self-efficacy in the process of developing self-confidence, along with the significance of life experiences and self-perception.

Results and Discussion

The primary source of adult learning is life experiences, which require a process of introspection and interpretation of events to generate insights and new understandings (Merriam & Baumgartner, 2020). According to Dewey and Kolb, as cited in the research by Yardley et al., (2012), life experiences are defined as an active interaction that leads to learning and personal development between individuals and their environments, encompassing the encounters, circumstances, and exchanges that individuals experience throughout their lives. According to research by Moon (2013), life experiences serve as a foundation for critical reflection, allowing individuals to question their assumptions, values, and beliefs while creating new perspectives. Life experiences are occurrences or a series of events that shape an individual's viewpoint, abilities, and knowledge, thereby fostering their gradual personal development (Jayawickreme et al., 2021). State that life experiences encompass all interactions, events, and encounters that an individual undergoes throughout their life, which shape their attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs. The collection of life experiences and their interpretations that influence a person's perception of the outside world and themselves referred to as life experiences (Mangelsdorf et al., 2019). A person's life experiences are the result of a complex accumulation of positive and negative events, interactions, and learnings encountered throughout their journey. These experiences significantly impact their understanding, attitudes, values, and behaviors, serving as a primary source of information for their identity development, decision-making abilities, and competence. Additionally, life experiences provide a foundation for understanding and responding to new situations that arise within the constantly changing social, cultural, and environmental contexts.

The social and financial advantages enjoyed by those deemed more physically attractive are known as beauty privileges. In dictator games, more attractive individuals typically receive higher donations. The desire to attain more attractive features referred to as beauty privilege, which can influence how others treat them (Stinebrickner et al., 2019). In the context of student life, "beauty privilege" refers to the social, intellectual, and professional advantages enjoyed by students who meet the prevailing standards of physical attractiveness on campus and in society. Student Beauty Privilege pertains to the benefits experienced by individuals considered physically attractive regarding their social and

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intellectual standing. Confidence, interpersonal skills, and societal standards of attractiveness are some factors influencing "Beauty Privilege." While this is not always the case, students who enjoy Beauty Privilege have easier access to academic support, more opportunities in campus activities, and are perceived as more capable.

The contribution of self-confidence to the growth of students as leaders. According to this research, students' willingness and capacity to assume leadership responsibilities are significantly influenced by their level of self-confidence. Self-confidence is the belief that one can successfully conduct tasks or manage situations. Self-confidence is not just a byproduct of academic success; it can also act as a catalyst for learning and enhance students' confidence to improve learning outcomes (Nückles et al., 2020). Self-confidence involves a positive self-perception and belief in one's capacity to overcome obstacles and achieve goals. The courage to express thoughts in class, the willingness to take on leadership roles in group activities, the ability to speak in public, and resilience in the face of setbacks or criticism are all indicators of self-confidence. Additionally, they are more willing to take calculated risks when learning, such as trying new teaching strategies or competing in academic competitions. However, it is essential to remember that excessive self-confidence can undermine academic performance and interpersonal relationships if not balanced with competent abilities.

Self-efficacy predicts academic success and serves as a focus for interventions aimed at enhancing student performance (Wang & Sun, 2020). The self-efficacy of students refers to their belief in their capacity to achieve success in specific tasks or academic challenges. Persistence in overcoming academic obstacles, the ability to control anxiety before exams, the courage to take difficult courses, and the desire to meet ambitious academic goals are all indicators of self-efficacy. Student self-efficacy is influenced by several factors, such as previous successes, learning from the achievements of others, supportive and encouraging feedback from peers or professors, and their physical and mental health. Students with high self-efficacy typically perform better academically, are more resilient when facing challenges, and are better able to allocate their time and resources efficiently.

a) Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability

Table 2. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability

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Construct	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)	
Beauty Privilege	0.900	0.905	0.922	0.664	
Life Experience	0.922	0.924	0.939	0.719	
Self- Confidence	0.912	0.913	0.931	0.694	
Self-Efficacy	0.909	0.912	0.930	0.688	

The table above presents the results of four constructs beauty privilege, life experience, self-confidence, and self-efficacy. Internal consistency is assessed using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (rho c), with values above 0.7 indicating good reliability. Values above 0.9 indicate very good reliability. Additionally, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is displayed, with values above 0.5 indicating strong convergent validity. Another alternative reliability metric presented is the composite reliability (rho a). These results support the notion of construct reliability as they align with Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (rho c). This table demonstrates strong internal consistency and validity for each component overall.



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b) R Square Value

Table 3. R Square Value

Construct	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted		
Self Confidence	0.558	0.553		
Self-Efficacy	0.417	0.412		

The R-Square and Adjusted R-Square values for the two constructs, self-efficacy and self-confidence, are shown in this table. The R-Square indicates the percentage of fluctuation in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables in the model. With an R-Square of 0.558, the fluctuation in self-confidence can be explained by the model's predictors up to 55.8%. With an R-Square of 0.417, self-efficacy can explain 41.7% of its variation. A more conservative estimate is produced by adjusting the R-Square value according to the number of predictors in the model, a process known as adjusted R-Square. This adjusted R-Square value is slightly smaller than the standard R-Square. This table demonstrates a strong predictive power of the model overall, particularly for self-confidence.

c) Discriminant Validity Heterotrait-monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Matrix

Table 4. Discriminant Validity Heterotrait-monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Matrix

Construct	Beauty Privilege	Life Experience	Self-Confidence	Self-Efficacy
Beauty Privilege				
Life Experience	0.709			
Self-Confidence	0.702	0.688		
Self-Efficacy	0.675	0.586	0.699	

The four interconnected psychological constructs of Beauty Privilege, Life Experience, Self-Efficacy, and Self-Confidence are presented in detail within the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Discriminant Validity Matrix. In the context of social psychology and personal growth, this analysis highlights important nuances in our understanding of the interactions and distinctions between perceptions of beauty, life experiences, self-efficacy, and self-confidence. There is a substantial relationship between Beauty Privilege and Life Experience (0.709). This aligns with the social truth that individuals perceived as physically attractive are often treated better, which can enhance their quality of life in relationships. This correlation illustrates how a person's life path and access to various experiences and opportunities can be influenced by cultural beauty standards. The potential impact of physical attractiveness on self-efficacy is underscored by the identical strength of the relationship between Beauty Privilege and Self-Confidence (0.702). This may reflect how social beauty standards are internalized and how these standards influence an individual's self-perception. This strong relationship also raises the possibility that the privileges associated with beauty and higher selfconfidence reinforce each other, or that those who are more confident tend to perceive as more attractive.

While beauty privilege may be related to an individual's belief in their own abilities, the connection to self-efficacy is not as strong, as indicated by the slightly lower correlation between beauty privilege and self-efficacy (0.675). This suggests that other elements, such as previous achievements or social support, have a greater impact on self-efficacy. The correlation between life experience and self-efficacy (0.586) and self-confidence (0.688) highlights the role of life experiences in psychological growth. The higher correlation with self-efficacy than with self-confidence implies that life

experiences more directly affect overall self-evaluation rather than perceptions of specific skills.

The strong conceptual relationship between self-efficacy and self-confidence in positive psychology is supported by the correlation between these two concepts (0.699). However, the correlation is not higher, suggesting that they evaluate different aspects of positive self-assessment. This analysis has broad implications. From a methodological perspective, although each HTMT value is below the threshold of 0.85, values approaching this threshold indicate the need for careful interpretation and potential further enhancement in the measurement instruments. The construct of Beauty Privilege, which consistently shows strong relationships with other constructs, is particularly relevant in this context.

d) Factor Loading (LA) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Table 5. Factor Loading (LA) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Construct	Items	FL	AVE
Beauty Privilege	BP1	0.825	0.664
	BP2	0.801	
	BP3	0.815	
	BP4	0.827	
	BP5	0.801	
	BP6	0.822	
	LE1	0.821	
	LE2	0.862	
Life Evnerience	LE3	0.807	0.719
Life Experience	LE4	0.871	0.719
	LE5	0.859	
	LE6	0.864	
	SC1	0.822	
	SC2	0.833	0.694
	SC3	0.859	
Self-Confidence	SC4	0.845	
	SC5	0.803	
	SC6	0.836	
	SE1	0.831	0.688
	SE2	0.816	
Self-Efficacy	SE3	0.831	
Sen-Emcacy	SE4	0.819	
	SE5	0.812	
	SE6	0.864	

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for each construct presented in this table, along with the factor loadings for each item within each construct. The factor loading indicates the degree to which each item aligns with its construct. With the lowest value at 0.801 and the highest at 0.871, all items in this table meet the general criterion that values should be above 0.7. The AVE calculates the percentage of variance attributed to measurement error versus the percentage of variance explained by a construct. Good convergent validity indicated by an AVE value greater than 0.5. Except for Life Experience, which has the highest value of 0.719, all constructs have AVE values above 0.6. This indicates that each construct accounts for more than 60% of the variance in its component items, reinforcing the convergent validity of the model.

This study reveals the dynamics among life experiences, beauty privilege, selfefficacy, and self-confidence. The results of the analysis show that an individual's selfconfidence is shaped by life experiences and beauty privilege, with self-efficacy playing an important mediating role in this process. Life experiences positively impact selfefficacy, supporting the idea that an individual's belief in their own abilities is largely formed by the experiences they have accumulated. Each event helps individuals develop a more positive view of themselves, regardless of the difficulties they have faced. This suggests that providing everyone with the opportunity to confront different circumstances and overcome obstacles can be a useful strategy in enhancing their self-efficacy. Everyone has strengths, without a doubt; however, individuals are unaware of these strengths, leading to anxiety in comparison to others and a lack of awareness of their own potential (Mollah, 2019). Adolescents with high self-confidence will find it easier to interact with peers, articulate their opinions without hesitation, and respect others' views. In contrast, adolescents with low self-confidence will struggle with communication, expressing their opinions, and feel unable to compete with their peers (Rais, 2022). According to Salleh et al., (2021), a high level of self-efficacy fosters confidence in representation and consistent performance standards, paving the way for consideration of an individual's capacity to control their behavior. Islamic counseling and guidance procedures should be employed to enhance resilience in society. Religion can foster resilience by viewing difficulties as a blessing from God that encourages personal growth (Bukhori et al., 2022).

However, the significant impact of beauty privilege on self-efficacy raises interesting questions regarding the importance of physical attractiveness in our culture. It is crucial for us to acknowledge the social truth that advantages in appearance have a significant influence on an individual's self-perception. This raises questions about how we can reduce appearance-based biases in various life domains and foster a more inclusive atmosphere. The importance of this idea in positive psychology supported by the mediating function of self-efficacy in the relationship between life experiences and beauty privilege with self-confidence. In addition to serving as a link between experiences, self-perception, and self-confidence, self-efficacy can also be a target for intervention. Programs for self-development that emphasize enhancing self-efficacy may be more successful in improving overall self-confidence. "People with self-confidence do not need others as a standard, as they can set their own standards and are always able to develop their motivation" (Azwar, 2019). Self-confidence arises from the awareness that if one decides to do something, they must also act accordingly. Self-confidence plays a crucial role in motivation as it increases the likelihood that an individual will drive to act and stick to their goals. When someone has self-confidence, they can feel secure in their decisions, making it easier for them to push themselves to work hard and face challenges with hope. Students' self-confidence will develop alongside their better understanding of who they are and what their talents and weaknesses are (Rahmadani et al., 2021). Students in the learning process greatly need this self-confidence, especially when speaking in front of large groups.

Interestingly, despite levels of self-efficacy, beauty privilege also directly influences self-confidence. This suggests a complex interaction between psychological factors and physical appearance. On the one hand, this affirms the fact that an individual's perception of themselves is still influenced by their appearance. Most of the variance in self-efficacy and self-confidence can be explained by this research model; however, there



is still room for further exploration. Other factors, such as academic success, social support, or interpersonal skills, also shape these two constructs. Self-confidence is necessary to prevent individuals from being easily influenced by negative factors, which can lead to poor decision-making and hinder positive self-actualization, especially among students (Rachman & Permatasari, 2019). Sentimentality, sensitivity, and interpersonal dependence are associated with high emotions, while resilience, courage, and interpersonal independence are linked to low emotions. Furthermore, since individuals with high emotionality tend to be more socially connected, it is reasonable to assume that they need assistance from others to control their own influences and are more likely to show positive influence on others.

These results suggest a comprehensive strategy for enhancing self-confidence for educators and counselors. In addition to emphasizing the enhancement of positive experiences, self-development programs should address issues related to appearance perceptions and, most importantly, strengthen self-efficacy. Students with high self-esteem and self-confidence find it easier to communicate during the teaching-learning process in the classroom. Students need to have communication skills. If students believe in their skills, they can develop their abilities. Students with extensive experience and involvement in groups tend to be quite confident (Chalidaziah et al., 2021). Current research concludes that the development of self-esteem is a complex process influenced by many interrelated elements. Although life experiences and perceptions of one's appearance are important, self-efficacy stands out as a crucial element that can serve as a focal point for interventions.

The results of this study can be generalized to other studies that implement similar interventions, particularly in providing support and motivation to improve their self-confidence. Given the type of intervention provided, namely psychological support and motivation, the findings of this study can be replicated or adapted to student populations with different demographic characteristics. This generalization can be made by considering contextual elements such as the educational environment, institutional culture, and individual student characteristics. Therefore, motivational and support-based interventions can be effectively implemented to enhance students' self-confidence in various relevant research contexts.

Conclusion

The results of this study reveal that the self-efficacy of Muslim students is influenced by their life experiences and beauty privilege, both directly and indirectly. Students can develop resilience, critical thinking skills, and a more mature mindset through extensive life experiences, all of which enhance their self-confidence. Meanwhile, the social advantages conferred by beauty privilege improve self-acceptance and positive self-perception, both of which increase an individual's self-confidence. However, it has demonstrated that self-efficacy plays an important mediating role in this process.

In addition to the influences of life experiences and beauty privilege, self-efficacy also plays a crucial role in facilitating the conversion of these two elements into stable self-confidence. Students with high self-efficacy are usually better prepared to handle difficulties and make better use of the social advantages of beauty privilege. They use beauty privilege as a motivating factor and maintain a high regard for their own skills, which in turn helps convert life experiences into achievements and successes.

Therefore, self-efficacy is not only a mediator but also a key factor that enables students to internalize the benefits of life experiences and beauty-related privileges to build a stronger foundation for their self-confidence. This research emphasizes the importance of self-development programs that enhance social skills, physical appearance, and self-efficacy. This knowledge paves the way for more comprehensive interventions that can empower Muslim students to reach their full potential, overcoming their past experiences and external appearances.

Recommendation

Several recommendations should be implemented based on the findings of research on how life experiences and beauty privilege influence self-confidence through self-efficacy among Muslim university students. First, higher education institutions should develop counseling programs that consider Islamic values and local cultural contexts to enhance students' self-efficacy. Second, there should be social media literacy programs and education on the impact of beauty privilege integrated into student orientation sessions to build resilience against social pressure. Third, peer mentoring can be beneficial in facilitating the sharing of personal experiences. Fourth, co-curricular curricula should include life skills workshops that focus on self-development and stress management. Fifth, further research using a longitudinal approach is recommended to investigate changes in self-confidence among Muslim students in Indonesia. Finally, collaboration between educational institutions, families, and the Muslim community should be strengthened to create an environment that supports the healthy and sustainable development of self-confidence.

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pp. 818-830

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