The Glimpse History and Present Scenario of Library and Information Science Education in India

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Structure Abstract:

Purpose: This paper aims to discuss briefly the glimpse history and present scenario of LIS education in India as well as west Bengal.

Methods / **Design:** It's purely a theoretical study. Information has been collected from different sources like reputed books, journals, reports, websites etc.

Findings: It has been realized that library and LIS education needs revamping. Compliance of recommendations of National Knowledge Commission may be the remedy to rid off the trap.

Originality / **Value:** The paper exhaustively presented LIS education in India as well as West Bengal with its shortcomings in a compact manner.

Implications: If the suggestions of the study be followed, the library will hold a special position in the development of our society.

Keywords: LIS education, India, BLIS, MLIS, LIS-Curriculum, University.

Introduction

Library is a social institution and it grows and develops as per social needs. LIS education is the heart of the any discipline and LIS profession is a novel profession. We live in an age, the age of information explosions with the help of information and communication technology (ICT) revolutions. Due to the information explosions, the library and information centre have to play an important role in the information society. Only well trained LIS professional can handle this situation effectively and efficiently. LIS is a content centered discipline with information as a subject. Keeping in view of these changes taking place in the society, library science have to sustain themselves with the help of modern technologies of information transmission and communication. The field now encompasses information and knowledge creation, communication identification selection accusation organization and description, storage and retrieval, preservation analysis, interpretation, evaluation, synthesis, dissemination and management. The style of functioning and management of library and also the users' expectation have drastically under gone amorphous changes. Undoubtedly there is a pressure on the teaching community to visualize these changes and incorporate them in their curriculum. The transition is one of the most well come and it will lead to significant development in the field of LIS curriculum.

As a result the changes in the curriculum in LIS need to be carries out to keep pace with the advances in technology and communication phenomena. The LIS education is such that the library professional must withstand the continuing and ever changing information requirement and demands of the users and also come-up as successful professional. Therefore the library education in India has to be planed to keep pace with the changing needs of the Indian Society.

Review of the Related Literature

Pradhan, (2014) evaluated the status of formal library and information science (LIS) education provided in India. The study carried out to bring out the perspective and the challenges in LIS education by analyzing the LIS courses, its structure and contents, availability of faculty, research contribution, infrastructural facilities, etc. Pujar and **Bansode (2014)** conducted a study on MOOCs and LIS education: a massive opportunity or challenge. The paper explained the concept of MOOc, key players courses offered in LIS and how best this new medium can be used in improving the quality of LIS education by listing out possible areas of work and its impact on LIS education in developing countries. Kaur, & Kaur Walia (2010) provides a glimpse of the situation of LIS education being provided in India with a special focus on the regions of central India in their study Library and Information Science Education in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh. It is seen that these universities still have to provide an integrated two-year postgraduate course in LIS, which is being widely accepted all over the country because of its recognition by the UGC in its model curriculum. Kumar & Sharma (2010) studies on Library and Information Science Education in India: A Historical Perspective. The paper presents a historical perspective of Library and Information Science (LIS) education in India, and traces the growth and development of the subject. Panigrahi (2010) conducted a study on Library and Information Science Education in East and North-East India: Retrospect and Prospects. He identifies that in this region LIS education was started in West Bengal and spread over other neighboring states. The paper also identifies that undergraduate courses were started in many colleges, but most of these have been stopped due to many reasons whereas a few of these still exist. At present, there are different levels of courses, viz., CLIS, BLIS, MLIS, MLIS in DL, PGDLAN, M.Phil.,

Ph.D., D.Lit., etc. of various durations. Need of standardisation of these courses is essential. **Varalakshmi (2010)** highlighted an overview of LIS education in South India in his paper "Library and Information Science Education in South India: Perspective and Challenges". The paper describes the state-of-the-art of LIS education in 27 LIS Departments of South India, analyses the course content and suggests for innovativeness and standards to meet the present and future demands of knowledge society.

Objectives of the Study

- 1. To traces the emergence of LIS education in India before and after independence;
- 2. To find out the heterogeneous development of LIS education in India;
- 3. To view chronologically development of LIS education in India in different phases;
- 4. To suggest for a serious need of having standardization in LIS education system in India.

Methodology

The study is conducted on LIS education in India and special emphasis is given in LIS education in West Bengal. It's purely a theoretical study. Information has been collected from different sources like reputed books, journals, reports, websites etc. Phase wise discussions have taken place. Finally author reached to a conclusions and suggestions.

Analysis and Discussions

LIS education in India

The beginning of the 20th century marked the beginning of LIS education in India. Many libraries were established in the later part of the 19th century and early part of 20th century in pre independence India. Library holds a special position in the development of a society in evident from the fact that British Rules took keen Interest and were responsible for the origin of Library Science education in the country. Experts from aboard were invited to provide a strong base and an international touch to it. History provides a picture for growth and development and need to know the present status of LIS and areas need for improvement. But LIS education in India gets a momentum speeds by virtue of Prof. S. R. Ranganathan, who is regarded as "Father of Library Science in India" for his immense contribution in every sphere in this subject and profession. The movement of LIS education obviously started by Prof. S. R. Ranganathan resulted in the establishment of several other LIS schools in the country. LIS

education in India is fortune to have its torch bearer none other than the father of Library Science, the great Prof. S. R. Ranghanathan He contributed everywhere, whether initiating department, courses, out lining contents or planning and research base for the discipline. For this reason this paper discussing briefly the LIS education in India chronologically with a some focus on our state by three distinct phases i.e. Pre-S. R. Ranganathan period, S. R. Ranganathan period and Post S. R. Ranganathan period.

Phase - I: Pre-S.R.Ranganathan period (1901-1924)

Dr. S. R. Ranganathan came in LIS profession as Librarian of Madras University in 1924. LIS education in India began even before S. R. Ranganathan came to this profession. Some of the eminent librarians, personalities and Library Associations took the reasonability to spread LIS education in India. Many schools colleges and universities and learned institutions and libraries were established in the late 19th century and first half of 20th century in pre-independence in India. In Pre S. R. Ranganathan era, LIS education mainly characterized by in service training.

In fact John Macfarlane, the first librarian in Imperial Library (Now National Library, Calcutta) started with an in service training programme for its staff in 1901. It is regarded as the first cases of LIS education in India reported in literature. Latter John Macfarlane extended this programme to the working library personal in whole pre-independence but this in-service training programme closed in the year 1906.

The first library school in the country was started in 1911 by an American Librarian, W.A. Borden to Boroda to develop the public library system of that princely state. Since then library education became a part of it. The class comprised of 10 best workers of the library. They underwent one year theory and subsequently another one year practical training programme. Borden also started a short term summer training programme (five months duration) for town and village librarians, both from within and outside of the state.

In 1915 Punjab University, Lahore (earlier part of undivided India) first started the university level LIS education. It can be marked as a historical importance in the field of LIS education in India. Asa Don Deckinson the university librarian, Punjub University started the course with the duration of three months. He also wrote the first book" Punjub Library Primer" in library science, for better understanding of this course. LIS education was first started in USA. Incidentally this was the second such school in LIS education around the world and

first in Asia. This course was continued till 1947 with some modifications and durations from time to time. Then the course duration was extended to six months and graduation was the minimum qualification for admission. This was a development towards the maturation of LIS as a discipline in India.

The LIS professional realizing the need for education acted through Library Association. The first such attempt was a school set up by Andhra-Desho Library Association (ADLA) in 1920 and this association organized various lectures like history literature, culture etc. on Andra Pradesh as well as on library science topics.

In West Bengal

S. R. Ranganathan joined Madras University as librarian in 1924 and before his joining as a librarian only one in-service training was conducted by John Macfarlane, the librarian of Imperial Library (Now National Library) in the year 1901.

Phase - II: Pre-S. R. Ranganathan period (1925-1972)

Systematical beginning of LIS education in India started while S. R. Ranganathan was working as librarian in Madras University in 1924. In .Though in pre S. R. Ranganathan era, LIS education was mainly characterized by in-service training. Even S. R. Ranganathan followed the same practice when he first started training his collogues in Madras University Library in late 1920s. But he soon realized a full-fledged LIS education was utmost necessary and hence he organized a summer school of three months duration under the aegis of Madras Library Association in 1929 which was later taken by Madras University in 1931. This was a certificate course comprising of both theoretical and practical classes and continued up to 1937. In 1938 this course was replaced by a one year full time PG course, leading to a Diploma course in librarianship. Throughout his service in Madras University (1924-44) he taught library science course and Madras University was the first University in India to offer one year PG diploma in library science. Of course India became the first country to introduce full time PG course in university level and the credit for which goes only to S. R. Ranganathan.

But the formal library certificate course on a regular basis was introduced in Eastern and North-Eastern region in pre-independence India under the auspices of Bengal Library Association (BLA) which was establish on 28th December 1925. The name was then All

Bengal Library Association and renamed as Bengal Library Association on 14th September 1933. The main aim was introduction of librarianship training programme for producing trained man power towards smooth running of the library in this part of India. BLA in collaboration with Hooghly District Library Association started the library science training camp for working library staffs at Bashberia in June 1934. This was a two week duration course attended by 12 participants.

In July 1935, another attempt to start a diploma course in librarianship in the Imperial Library, Kolkata under the supervision of Kholifa Asadulla Khan, Librarian Imperial Library. This course was conducted for 20 graduates working in government library all over the India.

Dr. M. N. Thomas the librarian of Andhra Pradesh University started diploma course in library science in 1935.

In 1937 BLA started first certificate course in Library Science on regular basis.

In 1945 Calcutta University (CU) also started one year diploma course in library science under the auspices of Kumara Manindra Deb Rai which was upgrade and renamed as B.Lib.sc course in 1969.

In 1962 Ramkrishna Mission started another certificate course under the auspices of Government of West Bengal.

In 1964 Jadavpur University (JU) offered B. Lib.sc course in eastern and North Eastern India

Burdwan University (BU) started PG diploma in library science in 1965.

S. R. Ranganathan moved from Madras University to Banaras Hindu University (BHU) and a diploma course in library science was started in BHU in 1941 which was regarded as the second university to start such diploma course. In 1965 BHU also started MLIS course (2nd University in India). But these courses were discounted 1968-69.

Bombay University started PG diploma in librarian ship in 1943 by the keen interest of the librarian Dr. P.M. Joshi.

In 1945 Calcutta University also started one year diploma course in library science under the auspices of Kumara Manindra Deb Rai which was upgrade and renamed as B.Lib.sc course in 1969.

In 1947 S. R. Ranganathan moves to Delhi University and started two- year integrated PG (diploma-cum-B.Lib.sc) course which was later reconstructed as one year PG diploma and one year M.Lib.sc course. The diploma in library science started in 1948 which was converted to B.Lib.sc in later stage i.e., 1949. This is the first B.Lib.sc course in India. MLIS course was introduced in 1951. He also introduced Ph.D. programme in Delhi University. Delhi University was the first to introduce B.Lib.sc, M.Lib.sc course and Ph.D. programme and hence this University is regarded as the path- finder of systematical development of LIS education in India at the university level the first Ph.D. in library science awarded to D. B. Krishna Row from Delhi University. His guide was S.R.Ranganathan.

In 1956 Nagpur University and MIS University (Baroda) started LIS course and in 1957 Vikram University Ujjain also introduce LIS education in university level.

Library science courses were also started in another five universities by end of 1960s, these were Hyderabad Osmania, Punjub, Puna and Rajasthan University.

By the time of India got independence, only six universities offered diploma course in library science and in 1956 it rose to ten. It is also reported that there were about 12 library schools in 1960s. After that many universities established library school in India.

In 1972 when S. R. Ranganathan died, there were 36 universities offering LIS education at the university level. S. R. Ranganathan

The decade of 1960s saw some very important events taking place effecting LIS education in India. DRTC established under the auspices of Indian Statistical Institute in 1962 at Bangalore for imparting a specialized training programme in documentation. Another parallel institution INSDOC (now NISCAIR) established under the auspices of CSIR in Delhi in 1957. It started a course in Associateship in documentation in 1964.

Another important event that the Government of India set up two consecutive committee for promoting and all around development of LIS education in India mainly UGC library committee (UGC-LC) in1957 and UGC review committee (UGC-RC) in 1961. S. R. Ranganathan views and ideals regarding systemization of LIS education reflected form these two committees' recommendations.

In UGC-LC recommends the following:

- a) LIS education is a PG professional course
- b) The Aim of LIS education should be prepared students to meet new situation with new library techniques and practices
- c) Two types of degree i.e. B.Libsc and M.Libsc should be imparted
- d) University library department should be put completely in charge of full time teaching staff
- e) University library should be used by LIS students for observation and apprenticeship work as a supplement to the practical works.
- f) Immediate increase of LIS at university level, standard of LIS education decreases o

On the basic of UGC-LC report the Government set-up UGC-RC in 1961 which was given report on 1965.

The Recommendations are:

- a) UGC should arrange a survey on the need for professional librarian of different categories
- b) University should take effective steps to ensure that only those students are admitted who are intellectually mature and who can really benefit from the type of professional training which is offered by the department
- c) It is desirable that the total number of hours devoted to the various courses in library science is equally divided between formal lesson and tutorial work on the one hand and actual practice and observation work on the other
- d) The quality of work of a teacher in library science should be judge how he able to grab the subject which he taught and how he prepared for proper training in the method of teaching
- e) University conducting B.Lib.sc course should have minimum of 3 full time faculty members (1 reader and 2 lecturers). And the university who conducting B.Lib.sc and M.Lib.sc course should minimum of 7 full time faculty members (1 professor, 2 readers and 4 Lecturers)
- f) The student's teacher ratio should be 1:10 at B.Lib.sc level and 1:5 in M.Lib.sc level.
- g) Department should have 2 lecturer rooms, 1 practical / laboratory room, 1 reading room, 1 seminar room, 1 office room, 1 works shop room for demonstration and use

of library equipment and 1 staff room with cubicle for individual teacher (at least 3). That is at least 7 room beside cubicle / rooms for individual teacher

- h) There should be a close cooperation between the library and department of library science in university
- i) UGC should carry our and assessment of the quality of the trend personal turn out by the universities from the view point of both the employees and employer.
- j) Separate Faculty for library education and not librarian or part-time faculty to be included in LIS education.
- k) BLIS and MLIS to be delineated with separate objectives.
- 1) 1:10 and 1:5 for B.lib.sc and M.lib.sc respectively for teacher student's ratio.
- m) Minimum qualification for eligibility for admission etc.

In West Bengal

In 1925 Bengal Library Association establish and in June 1934 a library training programme started BLA in collaboration with Hooghly District Association for working library staff at Bashberia. In July 1935 another attempt to start a diploma course in librarianship in the Imperial Library, Kolkata under the supervision of Kholifa Asadulla Khan, Librarian Imperial Library. This course was conducted for 20 graduates working in government library all over the India.

Phase – 3: Present Scenario of Post S. R. Ranganathan Era (1973 & onwards)

The structure of LIS course that emerged in S. R. Ranganathan period consisted of mainly 3 levels i.e. Certificate, Bachelor Degree and Master Degree. All the 3 level are still need based curriculum in modern times. Certificate holders are expected to do semi profession jobs where as professional and supervisory jobs are done by the bachelor and master degree holder respectively. In the post S. R. Ranganathan period there have been introduced another 2 level i.e. Diploma Course and M.Phil. Programme besides Ph.D. programme. M.Phil. course was mainly for introducing to the students with research methodology.

The growth and development of LIS education in India had got momentum speed in the decade of 1970. S. R. Ranganathan suggested that LIS education should be demand based and should prepare the students well so that they could meet the challenges for the future and

focused was more on quality than quantity. He expressed his dissatisfaction "Having a department of LIS has now almost become a matter of prestige for some universities each of them wishes to establish M.Lib.sc course". So proliferation of courses without regard to ability of competent teacher, student's teacher ratio, infrastructural facilities etc directly affect the standard of LIS education in general. The situation has farter worsened after SRR's death in the year 1972.

There only 36 universities / institutions imparted LIS education in 1972 but in a recent study, about 184 universities / institutions are now all together imparting LIS education in India. Among them approx 131 universities / institutions are conducting BLIS, 136 universities / institutions are conducting MLIS, 39 out of 136 universities / institutions conducting 2 -years integrated MLIS course, 21 universities / institutions are conducting M.Phil. degree, 93 universities / institutions offering Ph.D. programme and 31 universities / institutions are conducting LIS education in distance mode.

The certificate courses are mainly conducting by associations and institutions as well as some open universities. The entry level is post secondary-HS and duration is in between 3-6 months. Trade course in LIS taught by some ITI in regular mode. The entry level is post-HS and duration of this course is 6 months. LIS as an elective / vocational subject taught along with other subject by CBSC affiliated school in regular mode. The entry level post secondary and no separate certificate is issued for LIS. Viswabharati University taught LIS as professional subject. In Orissa, LIS taught as an optional subject for some time in HS level.

Some collages offered LIS as an optional / Honours subject in regular mode taught in general stream courses. The proponent of this idea is ignoring the fact that LIS is a professional subject.

Some Poly-technique schools offered diploma in LIS. The entry level is post HS and duration of the courses is in between 6-10 months.

The BLIS degree offered by various universities and duration of the course is one years. Some of them offered annual examination system while other conducting the examination in 2 semester system. The intake capacity is differed from university to university. The courses are also conducting by Open University in distance mode. The entry level is post bachelor degree in any stream in general but it will vary from university to university. There is no limitation to intake in BLIS courses by open universities .As per recommendation of Curriculum Development Committee (CDC) in 2001, about 40 universities are conducting 2 year integrated MLIS course discontinuing 1 year BLIS and 1 year MLIS course.

But there are wide variations in case of master degree these are summarized as follows:

- 1. 1 year MLIS (non semester i.e., annual examination)
- 2. 1 year MLIS (2 semester)
- 3. 2 year MLIS (non semester i.e., annual examination after 2 years)
- 4. 2 year MLIS (4 semester)
- 5. 2 year integrated MLIS (4 semester)
- 6. 5 years integrated MLIS (10 Semester)
- 7. 2 year MLIS in digital library management (4 semester)
- 8. 2 year master of science in LIS (4 semester)
- 9. 2 year M.Sc. in LIS (4 semester)

All the LIS courses are imparted either regular and distance mode the entry level is post BLIS in general. But the entry level of 2 year integrated and 5 year integrated MLIS course are post bachelor degree and post HS respectively. 2 year MLIS integrated course is replacing 1 year BLIS and 1 year MLIS course. In recent years more or less about 40 universities are conducting such courses. Most of the MLIS degrees are conducting semester system however some universities are offering this examination annually or examination after 2 years. The intake capacity varies from university to university. Jadavpur University has introduced 2-year MLIS in digital library management in the evening section. 5 year post-HS integrated MLIS course offered by 3 universities i.e., Guru Gashidas

University, Bilaspur; Annamalai University, Annamalai Nagar and University of Calcutta, Kolkata along with conventional BLIS and MLIS course. But the role of library professional is to aid and assist the academicians, scholars, researchers etc, they must have relevant and compatible knowledge of basic subject at least at the level of Honours/Master degree, if not more to be able to serve their user effectively and cannot develop proficiency in the relevant subject.

DRTC, Indian Statistical Institute offered 2 year master of science in LIS in regular mode. The entry level is post bachelor degree in discipline and examination conducted in 4 semester system. Madras University offered 2 year M.sc in LIS. . The entry level is post bachelor degree in discipline and examination conducted in 4 semester system.

There are 3 other university i.e. Mysore University, Kerala University and Hyderabad University have started 1 year post BLIS / MLIS diploma courses in library automation and networking in regular mode which is a specialized training programme in LIS.

When UGC allowed M.Phil. courses for recruiting LIS teacher exempting NET examination, many universities hurriedly started M.Phil. courses but some of them had to discontinuing when UGC revised its order as NET pass is the essential qualification for recruitment of teacher. About 21 universities (including Open University) offer M.Phil. programme now. The duration of the courses 12-18 months and some university started as self-finance course and some of them started as a distance mode.

Ph.D. is offered by about 93 universities and its entry level is post MLIS / M.Phil. it is a research base programme in LIS education.

West Bengal in Post S. R. Ranganathan Era

In the year 1970-79, 5 Institutions started PG level certificate course in library science i.e. Viswa Bharati University (1974) institution of Librarian (1974), Bhandav Samity (1975), Lok Shikhya Parishad, Narendrapur (1976), Janata Collage Kalimpong (1977). In the mean time Calcutta University and Burdwan University had started M.Lib.sc course in the year 1974 and 1979 respectively.

In the year 1980-89 BLA started 3 additional section of certificate course in the year 1980. In 1985 Rabindra Bharati University and Vidyasagar University started B.Lib.sc course Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) started B.Lib.sc course in 1989 through distance mode. Two certificates - courses introduced by Janata College, Banipur and Calcutta Central Library in 1985 and 1988 respectively. Annamalai University established a counseling centre for M.Lib.sc course in Calcutta in this decade. In 1984 Jadavpur University started B.Lib.sc and in 1987, a part time evening B.Lib.sc course also started. Vidyasagar University started M.Lib.sc course in 1989. The certificate course of Janata College Banipur closed in the year1989.

In 1990-99, the certificate course offered by Lok Sikhya Parisad, Viswa Bharati University, Institution of Librarian, Bhandav Samity, Lok Shikhya Parishad, Narendrapur, Janata Collage Kalimgpong had been discontinued. Annamalai Counseling centre also closed in this decade. But the exception was

North Bengal University (NBU) and Kalyani University. NBU started B.Lib.sc course in 1992 and Kalyani University started B.Lib.sc and M.Lib.sc course in 1992 and 1999 respectively.

In 2000-09 M.Lib.sc course was started by NBU and RBU in 2005 and 2007 respectively. In 2003 Netaji Subhas Open University (NSOU) offered B.Lib.sc and subsequently M.Lib.sc course. M.Phil. course was started by Calcutta University, Burdwan University and Kalyani University in 2003, 2007 and 2008 respectively. In 2005 Jadavpur University replaced part evening B.Lib.sc course to PG diploma in Digital Library Management which was changed to MLIS in Digital Library Management.

In 2010 CU started post H.S. 5- years integrated MLIS course but it has now discontinued from the session 2016-17. From the session 2014-15 CU and BU started two years integrated MLIS course replacing 1 year B.Lib.sc and 1 year M.Lib.sc course.

Suggestions

It is quite evident from the above that the country now facing a chaotic situation in the field of LIS education with serious implications. The main reasons behind the mush room mean of ill-equipped LIS schools and haphazard manner in which man power development in is going on one lack of and accrediting body LIS courses and absence of and LIS man power development policy. Unless a realistic national politics and a time bound programme for LIS education and man power development are adopted, the balance growth of LIS man power cannot be expected. Many LIS schools are awfully ill equipped from the point of view of financial reason, space, teaching staff and other facilities like library, computer laboratory and teaching aids.

Though LIS is a professional subject, it needs a lot of practical and hands on training. But today around 37 open university are running LIS courses without getting enough opportunity of practice and hands of training in different practical aspect of the subjects as well as there is very limited scope for students teacher contact which is mostly optional. More over there is

no limitation of intake capacity and entry level is required just graduate in any discipline in the most of the Open University. As a result, it will have adverse effect in LIS education and LIS profession as well.

Hence for the overall development of LIS education in the country some certain major have to be taken in to consideration. These are

- 1. For ensuing minimum standard of LIS education, a suitable mechanism for establishing accredited body in the line of IMA, ICCR.
- 2. To ensure availability of minimum infrastructure in every LIS department.
- 3. For the sake of quality, distance education courses are run in virtual class room environment with ample opportunity for student- teacher interaction.
- 4. LIS is a professional subject and hence it should not be treated in same manner as a general subject is treated.
- 5. Co-operation between the respective university authorities will be vital in this regards.
- 6. The authority should fill up all the existing vacant teaching post and provide additional man power and sufficient funds for up-gradation of physical infrastructure.
- 7. The intake capacity must be followed as per UGC RC recommendation i.e. students teacher ratio.
- 8. Minimum essential qualification for empty label of BLIS and MLIS should be well defined
- 9. All departments of LIS should set up computer centre and well equipped departmental libraries with appropriate teaching school.
- 10. The curriculum of LIS should be revised from time to time according to the needs of the society.

Conclusion

The National Knowledge Commission was set up by the Government of India on 13th June 2005. It has given more importance to the library information centre and advocates many recommendations over all development of LIS education in the country. Hence, this is a golden opportunity for LIS education to improve. It has been realized at the highest level that library and LIS education needs revamping. If we follow the above suggestion, then library

hold a special position in the development of our society. It is the high time, librarians, teachers, library department of universities etc should come together to overcome the all short comings and take LIS education to greater highs.

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