

**Research**

# Perceptions of the Indigenes on the Causes of Poverty in Bauchi State

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Poverty is prone to developing countries and its manifestations were diverse across different regions, parameters and indicators. Hence, despite the numerous programmes implemented by the government, over 110 million Nigerians suffer from the scourge of poverty. Consequently, Bauchi state in particular recorded 89.5 percent of multidimensional indicators across education, health and living standard. Therefore, this study applied qualitative research approach and collected the data from twenty informants in order to explore the causes of this phenomenon. The results indicated that socio-economic factors, attitudes and behaviors of individuals, political and policy failure; corruption and mismanagement of resources, insecurity and ethno-religious crises in addition to climatic and demographic influences causes poverty in the study area. For instance, Poverty increases due to laziness and incapability to pursue business and farming practices. Accordingly, the study recommended for the diversification of the economy, entrepreneurs initiatives, farming and the review of educational policies. A synergy of policy coordination between the three levels of government in the country requires urgent attention. The re-visitation of the institutions that eradicate corruption, especially in states and the whole federation is necessary. The establishment of community police and vibrant inter-faith dialogue as well as environmental conversation.

**Keywords:** Poverty, causes, manifestations, indigenes, Bauchi state

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## INTRODUCTION

Poverty is a global phenomenon that is devastating especially in the developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. Apparently, anti-poverty reduction programmes were executed in Nigeria particularly the National Poverty Eradication programmes, National Directorate of Employment among others in order to reduce the escalation of paucity of resources, but the government declared that over 110 million Nigerians are poor, despite these anti-poverty programmes. Again, the multidimensional poverty indicators reports` stated that Bauchi state of Nigeria recorded 89.5 percent pointers of

poverty across health, education and living standard and traversing ten indicators (Alkire, Roche, Seth & Sumner, 2015). Furthermore, the selection of the study area was attributed to the report the Oxford Department of International Development which proclaimed that Bauchi State is the poorest among ten identified states in the country (OHD, 2014; Suleiman & Karim, 2015; Musa, Abdullah & Wahid, 2016). Equally, basic amenities were insufficient such as portable drinking water and decent housing. The disaster of the windstorm which occurred on 22rd May, 2018 in Bauchi, the state capital and its environs further complicated the stated problem. The disaster causes damages of different magnitude. For

instance, eight persons were confirmed death; 120 sustained various injuries while estimated 1505 houses destroyed and other public buildings, thus, subjected the people to hardships (Sanni, 2018). Thus, this justifies the need to explore the causes of this phenomenon and its manifestations respectively. Accordingly, the article is structure into the introduction, research questions and objectives. Other aspect includes the research methodology, literature review, the findings and results; discussion, recommendations in addition to a conclusion.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the causes of poverty in Bauchi state?
2. What are the factors that led to the manifestations of poverty in the study area?

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To explore the causes of poverty in Bauchi state
2. To identify the factors that led to the manifestations of poverty in the study area.

## METHODOLOGY

This research utilizes qualitative research approach and collected data from twenty-two indigenes on the causes and identification of the factors that led to the manifestation of poverty in Bauchi state via face-to-face interview. Hence, Adler and Adler (2012) argues that qualitative research encompasses the study of few personalities and individuals in order to explore their subjective views and understanding on the phenomenon under study. Thus, this study applied semi-structured interview and hence, data was collected from the stakeholders in the ministry of cooperatives and poverty alleviation as well as other identified underprivileged people. Consequently, computer assisted software; the Nvivo version 11 and conversation methods of data analysis was applied in which the views of the informants were analyzed according to the reality constructed on the causes of poverty in the study area.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

This part of the article reviewed relevant literature, therefore, the term poverty is generic and multidimensional as well entails the insufficiency of basic needs. Thus, the World Bank (1999) defines poverty as hunger, scarcity of shelter, inability for children to go school, unawareness, unsecured future, poor portable drinking water, despair, poor expression, derisory of freedom, representation and powerlessness (Foli &

Béland, 2014). Accordingly, the trend of poverty comprises of denial to medical services, uncertainty, illiteracy and low income among others. Hussaini (2014) stated that poverty is the inability to attain economic, political, social and psychosomatic well-being. Again, the political manifestation of poverty entails powerlessness, exclusion from being part of decision makers, denial of natural rights as well as bar from political participation. Equally, social dimension of poverty refers to low self-esteem, feelings of mediocrity, segregation, denunciation and debility (Jerome, 2011).

Literature has categorised poverty into five groups ranging from its longevity and manifestation. For instance, Musa, Abdullah and Ratnaria, (2016) illustrated that severe or absolute poverty occurs in the absence of essential needs such as food, health, safe drinking water, shelter, education, sanitation and information.

Furthermore, relative type of poverty explains the position of household or individuals as compare to the standard of living in a country. Thus, income, disposable and low income encapsulated the dimensions of relative poverty. The structural/ chronic poverty occurs over a long period of time and permanent in manifestation as results of factors such as poor productivity, inadequate skills to gain employment, inadequate vocational expertise, socio-political and cultural influences.

Another category include speculative transitional poverty which is temporary and occurs within short period of time in form caused by calamity, the natural and man-made disasters; typically, the war, drought and other environmental degradation. Harsh policies that resulted to lost of jobs and values of income among others. Additionally, geographical location and regions prone to insufficient welfare services, social denial, low per head income and social denial show cases forms of poverty (Lame & Yusoff, 2015).

To show the denials and deprivations the poor people suffer from Akpomuve (2014) indicated political, social, economic physical/ personal and cultural denials. The political deprivations which is complicated in form of domination and exploitation. Hence, these form of poverty leads to people to occupy lower positions and restricted in political participation. Similarly, deprivations in the aspect of nutrition, health, literacy, self confidence and education were the physical and personal denials.

Consequently, the economic denials includes inadequate properties, money, assets, income and other factors of production as well as deficiency of access to basic needs. The social and cultural denials related to human dignity values, attitudes, knowledge, beliefs, information and orientation. Akpomuvie (2010) corroborated that these denials predisposes the poor to apparent economic and political disadvantage.

However, in an attempt to reduce the global poverty scourge, since September, 2000; heads of 189 members states of United Nations organizations declared the Millennium Development Goals MDGS; in an effort to

confront the threat of poverty and other socioeconomic difficulties by the year 2015. Hence, these consist of eight objectives and global problems. Thus, these include eradication extreme poverty, hunger, promote gender equality and empowerment, global partnership for development, universal primary education, environmental sustainability, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health and combat HIV/AIDS; malaria and other diseases (Adedokun & Oloade, 2014).

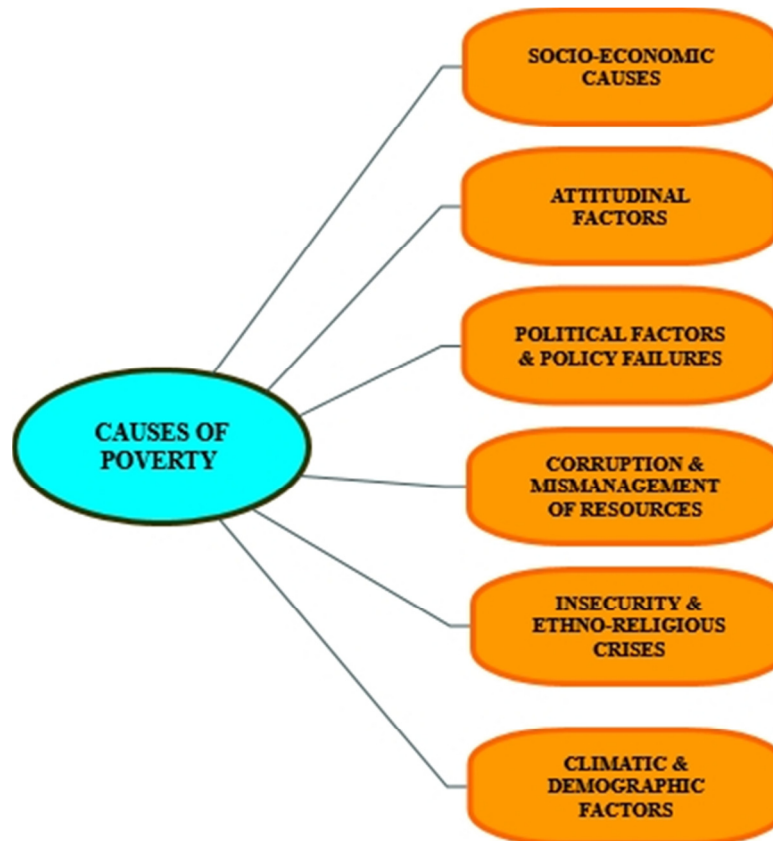
Contradictory, these goals ended of inept and unending. Hence, the challenges of poverty remained a serious global phenomenon raving most developing countries. For instance, the World Bank data stated that the global poverty figure is approximately 42 percent and 2.6 billion people undergoing different hardships. Therefore, these threats affected humanity particularly in the aspect of inadequate food supply, medical services, education and housing as well as other essential needs. These predicaments are apparent in Niger, Bangladesh, Yemen and Nigeria (Ugoani, 2017; Anger, 2010; Elvidge, Sutton, Ghosh, Tuttle, Baugh, Bhaduri & Bright 2009). Based on this Poverty remained socioeconomic phenomenon affecting the development of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Again, Musa, Abdullah and Wahid, (2018) explore the causes of Multidimensional Poverty Indicators in Bauchi

state and its mitigation strategies using qualitative research approach and collected data via interview. The results indicated that unemployment, inadequate infrastructure, illiteracy, mismanagement of resources and depleted entrepreneurship innovations contributed to the causes of poverty in the study area. Hence, education, health care and the living standard as well as the ten measurement of the indicators were. The study suggested for provision of equipment in the hospitals, housing scheme and schools. The utilization of human and capital resources amongs others. From the foregoing, review and validation from the literature, it is clear that the phenomenon of poverty is diverse in Bauchi state.

## RESULTS

The causes of poverty according to the perceptions of the indigenes in Bauchi state of Nigeria includes socio-economic factors, attitudes and behaviors of individuals, political and policy failure, corruption and mismanagement of resources, insecurity and ethno-religious crises in addition to climatic and demographic factors were perceived to have contributed to the causes of poverty and the results were presented using conversion analysis.



**The Socio-Economic Causes of Poverty:** The informants indicated that socio-economic factors such as unemployment, reliance on the salaries by civil servants, inadequate subsidy, loans and other welfare packages were the reasons for acute shortage of financial resources at the disposal of the people specifically in Bauchi state of Nigeria. Ajakaiye and Adeyeye, (2001) uphold these perceptions that a combination of several reasons causes poverty such as economic growth, unemployment, low wages, lack of human resources development, environmental factors, family sizes and decline in the standard of living among the people. Furthermore, poverty and unemployment were recently observed to be among the major developmental challenges bedeviling the federation of Nigeria. Statistics reveals that 40 to 60 percent of youth and people ages 18 and 45 are unemployed (Olotu, Salami & Akeremale, 2015).

For Instance, informant sixteen stated that:

Poverty specifically in Bauchi state occurs due to reliance on salaries and underemployment from the government. Unlike in those days; the government employ graduates and other certificate holders but these days the trend had change drastically, many youths are unemployed. Again, the problem of insufficiency of the salaries to meet our basic needs and therefore, with the meagre salaries, it very difficult to take care of our families effectively.

Affirming on unemployment and school dropout:

I am of the view that unemployment, especially among the youth causes poverty in the state. For instance, most of the youth who were school dropout could not access jobs and even those who had degrees were lingering into unemployment. These scenario increases the paucity of resources among the people (Informant XVII).

Corroborating on unemployment informant nineteen stated that:

The causes of poverty in Bauchi state, particularly is associated with the phenomenon of unemployment. Politicians had failed in providing job opportunities to the youth and other less privilege people. Idleness and lack employment among the graduates and other school certificate holders is a common scenario in the state had led to poor possession of resources.

Other factors related to socioeconomic causes of poverty

were articulated such as “Inadequate government intervention on socio-economic aspects of lives of the people such as employment opportunities, subsidy, loans and other welfare packages. The programmes capable of improving the living standard and education as well as poverty alleviation are insufficient” (Informant XX1). These factors were explored as some of the socio-economic arguments for the causes of poverty in the study area.

### **Attitudinal Causes of Poverty**

Literature indicated that poverty is also influence by the habits, anti-social behavior, vulnerability and exclusion. Other causes include lack of education, laziness, inadequate vocational and entrepreneurial skills (Eneh & Chionuma, 2016 & Addae-Korankye, 2014).

The informants indicated that illiteracy, neglect of farming, laziness and exploitation by the businessmen causes poverty in Bauchi state.

Illiteracy, the inability of many people to acquire the needed certificate makes it very difficult for those set of people to be employment in either public or private sectors. These had contributed to the poverty level in the state. Hence most of the illiterate are less productive (Informant XVI).

The neglect of farming, the informants narrated that agricultural activities in general provides income and employment but currently, some people had abandon it, for example:

I am of the view that neglect of agricultural activities had contributed to the current increase on poverty in our society. For instance, previously, farming, poultry and cattle rearing contributed significantly to our source of income as well as provided massive employment to the people (Informant XII).

In a different assessment laziness is discovered to cause poverty, as follows:

Poverty became pronounced in our society due to laziness and incapability to pursue business and other forms of farming. Most people especially the youth are indolence to engage into activities that could enable them to earn some amount of money to carry on with the lives. For example, we have weekly market days that one could engage or cultivation of pieces of land to grow crops to earn a living (Informant XVIII).

Another reason for the destitution among the people was articulated by informant eleven:

Followership failures and exploitation from the businessmen. Recently, I realized that we the people did not show the required support to government policies but encourage the leaders to disburse cash insist of establishing strategies that will emancipate the whole society. Again, the business class are exploitative by increasing the prices of goods and services in the market. Perhaps, food items are expensive and utility bills had also increased. Therefore, our income does not commensurate our expenditure (Informant XIX).

Informants five and twenty indicated that laziness, sluggishness and nonchalant attitude to crafts such as tailoring, weaving, decorative and business skills in the areas of provision stores, weekly markets and seasonal occupations causes poverty.

Sluggishness in pursuing means of livelihood among the people. I am of the view that our people especially those stay in the villages were highly engaged during the raining season but put little efforts in the dry season while those in cities neglect manual work and resolve to white collar jobs (Informant V).

Laziness, nonchalant attitude to crafts and inadequate initiatives to small scale businesses. People are sluggish about pursuing their means of livelihood especially on agriculture and manual labour. I discovered that our attitudes to crafts such as tailoring, carpentry and other skills are poor hence many people are idle. We neglected small scale business and regular patronage to our weekly markets in the state (Informant XX).

### Political Factors and Policy Failures

The government of the federal republic of Nigeria had implemented different poverty alleviation programmes, specifically, the Directorate for Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructures (DFRRI) and National Poverty Eradication Programmes but political factors such as failure of these programmes to address structural transformation, sustainable growth and employment generation led to an increase of poverty in the country. Accordingly, the ineffectiveness of poverty reduction programmes and underutilization of resources. Other factors include inadequate infrastructural factors such as good roads, electricity and portable drinking were some of the indices related to poverty level in Nigeria (Dauda, 2017; Khan & Cheri, 2016).

The informants also maintained that, poverty is caused by:

Inadequate infrastructure, medical facilities, electricity, schools, water and road are poorly provided. Let me say, learning facilities in schools such as classrooms, laboratory and latrine are insufficient. The people don't have access to the required medical services. The roads to network for transportation of goods and services are equally dilapidated as well as water supply systems in the state (Informant XVI).

In another submission low subsidy packages from government on farm implements, businesses and communities resulted to shortage of resources, thus:

“Poor subsidy packages: the government does not provide adequate support to the farmers, small scale business, communities and organizations. The makes it difficult for the people to produce goods and services that will cater for their immediate needs” (Informant XVII).

Informants seventeen attributed the leadership failures from the three tiers of government as the causes of poverty in the study area, for instance:

Poor leadership in the state and local governments: As a results of poor leadership qualities, most of the policies establish to reduce poverty were weak and ineffective. Hence, most of the elected officials have inadequate skills to the address our economic predicaments such as improvement of agriculture, subsidy and social security measures (Informant XVII).

The informants connected the shortage and decay of infrastructure such as roads, schools and medical facilities as the factors that contributed to the manifestation of multidimensional poverty indices in the state. They infer that:

Inadequate infrastructural facilities in our society such as good roads, schools and learning facilities. The hospitals and health centres lack adequate personnel. The deprived nature of facilities affected the learning of our children in schools. Classes are congested and led to failure in external examinations in our state. Medical personnel are inadequate, and our people have poor access to required medical attention (Informant IX).

Insufficient medical facilities and health practitioners: Despite the recent increase in medical facilities in the state, the need for more professionals to manage the hospitals, clinics and health centres are still derisory. We needed more medical doctors, nurses, and laboratory

scientist and midwives in the state to attend to cases of ill health among the people (Informant XXI).

### **Corruption and Mismanagement of Resources**

Previous studies show that corruption and mismanagement of resources were identified as some of the factors responsible for scarcity of capital resources in the federal republic of Nigeria. Corrupt politicians inflate contracts and squander the resources in the country, poor implementation of developmental projects and excluded the poor from having access to the resources. Others consist poor transparency and accountability of public wealth (Frank, 2017; Khan, & Cheri 2016 & Aderonmu, 2010).

In the same vein, the informants submitted that looting of public treasury and mismanagement were some of the factors that push people to the scourge of poverty, thus:

Corruption in form of looting public treasury and mismanagement of resources by public officials. Recently, many properties were confiscated especially from the former members of the various state agencies, boards and organizations. Natural resources were inadequately managed in the state and so these exposes us to poor utilization of agricultural resources, rivers and plantation (Informant XVIII).

Abuse of office by elected officials and public servants: Many officials abuse the offices through self-enrichment and personalizing public properties. The state resources became properties of the few who could travel, build and establish landed properties at the detriment of the masses in the state (Informant XV).

### **Insecurity and Ethno-Religious Crises**

Literature indicated that the insurgents (Boko Haram) had contributed to the increase of poverty level. The series of bomb last in northern Nigeria for instance regional police headquarters in Kano on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012 and at least 250 people died. The group also attack Bauchi metropolis on 22, January, the bombing of two churches. The Tafawa Balewa`s attempted robbery on a bank, the exposes the security challenges in the area and created fear, anxiety in addition to suspicion which resulted to denying people from their daily activities. The group carried out similar attacks in Abuja, Damaturu, Maiduguri, Gombe and Madalla in Niger state among other insecurity threat that rendered many people homeless and loss of properties worth millions

(Alegbeleye, 2014; Aleyomi, 2012 & Eme, Okpaga & Ugwu, 2012). Again, the attack in Bauchi prison on the 7, December 2010 in which 700 inmates, over 100 members of the sect, a soldier, policemen and some residents equally serve as a serious threat to the people in the state (Nyam & Ayuba, 2016; Khan & Cheri, 2016 & Agbiboa, 2014).

Attesting the above proclamations, the informants, indicated that:

The current increase in poverty in Bauchi state had connections with the insurgency (Boko Haram) and other ethno-religious crises that had happen in the state and its neighbouring state for instance people became scared about their daily business due bomb last, attacks on roads and other public places. The crises in Plateau state has also led to fear and suspicion among the businessmen and the poor people alike (Informant XX).

### **Climatic and Demographic Factors**

Studies attested that climatic conditions such as environmental degradation, droughts, flood, desertification, and land destruction and population growth lead to increase in poverty level in Nigeria (Frank, 2017 & Aderonmu, 2010). Validating the above notion, the informants submitted that poverty in Bauchi state and federal republic of Nigeria were associated with:

“Population increase, recently due to issues such as rural urban migration, internally displaced persons and large numbers of family sizes in our society contributed to scarcity of basic amenities such as water, houses and electricity” (Informant XX).

In another view, informant twenty-one observed that global warming affected the food security of people in the study are for instance: “Global warming affects agricultural production and lead to poor farm harvest as well translated into food shortages” (Informant XXII). The issue of population increase was also upheld by informant twenty-one, thus: “Population growth, because of population increase, the resource became inadequate to cater for the higher needs of the people and farm lands less productive due human pressure.”

From the preceding results, the informants gave six main causes of poverty in Bauchi state of Nigeria such as socioeconomic factors, attitudinal factors, political and policy failure, corruption and mismanagement, insecurity and ethno-religious violence. The climatic challenges and geographical factors were all caption as the sub-sub themes under theme one respectively. The study also presented the strategies for poverty reduction as follows.

## DISCUSSION

In answering the stated research questions and to achieve the objectives of the study, a recap of the questions stated that; what are the causes of poverty and the factors that led to the manifestations of poverty in the study area. The informants during the conversation narrated that socioeconomic, attitudinal factors, political and policy failure, corruption and mismanagement, insecurity and ethno-religious violence. The climatic challenges and geographical factors were among the causes as well as demonstration of the poverty. Upholding, the results literature indicated that low agricultural productivity and literacy policy failure in India were identified as integral causes of poverty in the country (Padmaja, & Surendra, 2016). Again, a study in Pakistan further supported these results that institutional constraints influenced the manifestation respectively (Ahmed, Baloch & Kamal, 2015). Furthermore, low capacities through education, vocational and entrepreneurship skills causes poverty in Nigeria. Hence, policy inconsistency, poor governance, lack of accountability and transparency. The inadequate coordination between the federal, states and local governments; gross mismanagement and derail financial management in country contributed to the manifestations of poverty. Thus, corruption has caused a lot of consequences similar to insecurity (Egharevba, Eguavoen, Azuh, Iruonagbe & Chiazor, 2016). The informants substantiated that the current increase in poverty were influenced by the insecurity and other ethno-religious crises. Consequently, literature validated that crises also occurred in many developing countries such as Yemen, Iraq and Somalia (Wiebelt, Breisinger, Ecker, Al-Riffai, Robertson & Thiele, 2013 & Rice, 2006). For instance, there were bomb blast, attacks on roads and other public places. Insecurity in these countries was mostly caused by internal problems such as poverty, political marginalization, unemployment, inadequate infrastructure and bad governance. Again, the current global warming affects agricultural production and led to poor farm harvest as well translated into food shortages. Studies in Ethiopia indicated that environmental degradation, population pressures, drought, widespread poverty were some of the factors responsible for food shortage and starvation in the country (Nandy, Daoud & Gordon, 2016 & Smith, El Obeid & Jensen, 2000). Studies in Kebbi state of Nigeria and rural India indicated that laziness especially among the youth in the states led to idleness, unemployment and destitution (Nandal, 2005 & Musa, Abdullahi & Baba, 2017). Upholding these findings, attitudinal causes of poverty, Bradshaw (2009), attested that the individual deficiencies such as ignorance, laziness, uneducated and lack of abilities were observed to caused poverty. Therefore, the causes and manifestation of poverty as indicated by the informants were diverse across societies, countries and regions globally.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of this study and validations from the literature, it is consequently, suggested that the reduction of the causes and manifestation of poverty in Bauchi state and the federal republic of Nigeria at large shall make living more meaningful. Accordingly, the diversification of the economy from the part of policy makers and individuals shall quench the apparent consequences of poverty, particularly via entrepreneurship initiatives, farming, learning vocational skills among others. The expansion of educational institutions and renovation of the existing schools. The provision of adequate learning facilities shall ensure the smooth teaching and learning. A synergy of policy coordination between the three levels of government in the country requires urgent attention. The re-visitation of the institutions that eradicate corruption, especially in states and the whole federation is required. The establishment of trained community police and vibrant inter-faith dialogue and climatic as well as environmental conversation are recommended. Again, future studies should applied quantitative research approach.

## CONCLUSION

The main objective of this study is to explore the perception of the informants on the causes and manifestation of poverty in Bauchi state. Findings from the study indicated that socioeconomic and attitudinal; climatic-geographical factors; political and policy failure; corruption and mismanagement, insecurity and ethno-religious violence were the causes as well as the indicators of poverty in the study area. The informants narrated their perceptions on the different forms of poverty these facilitated the achievement of the stated objectives of the study. Practically, the study has explored the main causes of poverty as recommendations were encapsulated to the policy makers and other stakeholders. Methodologically, in-depth perceptions of the indigenes on the origins and grounds of poverty indices in the study area were discovered. However, the results shall neither be generalized nor cut across other states in the federal republic of Nigeria.

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