



THE CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN HOUSEHOLD DECISION-MAKING (CASE STUDY OF WOMEN SELLING SPENT HENS IN PAGAR ALAM CITY, SOUTH SUMATRA PROVINCE)

Lusi Oktapiani; M. Zulkarnain Yuliarso; Nyayu Neti Arianti*

Department of Agricultural Socio-Economics, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Bengkulu, Bengkulu, Indonesia

* Corresponding author: nnarianti@unib.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to analyze the role of women selling spent hens in household decision-making in Pagar Alam City, South Sumatra Province. This study shows the role of women who work to earn a living in household decision-making in the areas of production, household expenses, the formation of family rules, and social activities. This is important for understanding how gender equality is implemented in households. The population of this study was women selling spent hens who also had the status of wives in the household. The research population comprised 39 individuals selected by census as respondents. The data for this case study were collected through in-depth interviews with respondents. The obtained data were analyzed descriptively and quantitatively. Women selling spent hens in Pagar Alam City, South Sumatra Province, play a significant role in household decision-making. These women contribute an average of 47% of household income, a contribution nearly equal to their husbands' contribution to household income. Therefore, they also play a role in household decision-making. Decision-making by the wife herself dominates in three fields: household production (64 %), household expenditure (49 %), and forming household rules (25 %). Decision-making by the husband and wife together, by the husband and wife, but the husband is dominant, and by the husband himself is less.

INTRODUCTION

Women bear a double burden in the household, with responsibilities in both the public and domestic spheres. Strong patriarchal cultural norms

generally lead men to make more decisions within the household. However, women's economic roles foster awareness and dialogue between husbands and wives to promote more equitable roles (Soraya et al., 2025). Women, as social beings, desire to work with various intentions or goals, namely to meet economic needs, self-actualization, and various other reasons. Thus, women have a dual role in the household: the role of the housewife and the role of helping the household economy (Putri & Anzari, 2021). One of the important efforts made in the economic development of a country is empowering women. The positive impact of women's empowerment can spur progress in other areas, such as increasing human capital and labor market results (Banerjee et al., 2023).

According to the principle of gender equality, men and women as husbands and wives in a household have the same opportunity to create sustainability and integrity in the household. Many women work to help their husbands earn a living, help the economy, and improve household welfare. The needs and demands of life are increasingly high and diverse, not all of which can be met by the husband's income as the head of the family. An increasing number of women work to help their husbands improve family welfare. If a family has more than one earner, namely a husband assisted by a wife who also works to earn additional income, household well-being increases directly. This can occur due to increased household income, equal gender roles, and improved family interaction (Angraini et al., 2024).

In addition, the needs and demands of life are proliferating, which encourages women to work outside the home. This is supported by global economic conditions, especially the basic needs of the family, the prices of which are increasing daily. The number of women earning a living is also increasing. This can result in an imbalance in the role of women in both fields at the same time, namely, the economy and the domestic.

The concept of women's dual role is a burden for women, especially those who work outside the home. Women who work outside the home contribute to changing the mindset and economic order of a region and play a major role in improving family welfare, especially in terms of the economy. Women's reproductive roles are viewed as static and permanent. The increasing number of women working in the public sector has reduced the number of women working in the domestic sphere. Consequently, women working outside the home rely on domestic helpers or other family members to fulfill their household roles. However, the ultimate and greatest responsibility rests with the women themselves, leaving them with a double burden (Khalik & Permata, 2024).

Women working in the public sector can increase household income and help improve the quality of life and health of the family (Zuhri et al., 2020). According to Harlianingtyas et al. (2022), the wife's income significantly influences women's participation in household economic activities. The higher the income of women working outside the home, the greater their participation in household economic welfare. Based on the research findings of Baba et al. (2015) in Nigeria, empowering women to play a crucial role in household decision-making processes. Women's decision-making roles also extend to the broader community, even enabling them to exercise their capacity to improve food supplies, increase incomes, and reduce malnutrition

Animal protein needs can be fulfilled by consuming broiler chicken meat. Although the main purpose of raising laying hens is to produce eggs, chicken meat can also be consumed as a source of animal-based protein. Laying hens are generally consumed after their productive period as egg producers. Laying hens that are already productive are known as spent layers or hens. The quality of spent hens is lower than that of broiler chickens because of their specific smell and tough texture. This is because spent hens are slaughtered at a relatively old age, so the quality of their meat of spent hens is considered lower (Purnamasari et al., 2012).

Pagar Alam City is one of the areas in South Sumatra Province where there are many sellers of spent hens. Spent hens are generally consumed by the community, especially during celebrations. The business of selling spent hens is a source of household income and is generally run by women to help increase household income. The contributions of wives and husbands to families with low economic levels complement each other. Wives also work to earn a living to meet their needs and increase household income, not only husbands who work (Aswiyati, 2016). Women who sell spent hens contribute to the household economy. Women who sell spent hens must divide their time between work and taking care of household responsibilities. Wives are required to help the household economy, but must still take care of the household and pay attention to their children's education.

Women who sell spent hens in Pagar Alam City have a fairly high contribution to the household income. These women spend 8 hours/day, 6 days a week, selling spent hens. The income from selling spent hens is substantial. The average income of female household members who sell spent hens is presented in Table 1 (Oktapiani et al., 2024).

Table 1. Household Member Contribution to Woman Selling Spent Hens Household Income

| No | Household Member | Income (IDR/Month) | Percentage (%) |
|----|------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1. | Husband | 22,256,410 | 50 |
| 2. | Wife | 21,011,650 | 47 |
| 3. | Children | 1,253,846 | 3 |
| | Total | 44,521,906 | 100 |

The highest income contribution is given by the husband (50%), because that is how it should be. The husband acts as the head of the household and is obliged to earn a living for the family. Most of the husbands of women selling spent hens work as entrepreneurs who have quite high incomes, but also those who work as farmers, traders, self-employed, State Civil Apparatus, and drivers. However, the contribution of the husband was classified as moderate.

Women selling spent hens contribute 47% of household income, which is almost equal to the contribution of the husband. The partial or full contribution of a wife to the family has a positive effect on women's participation in the household decision-making process. Women have significant authority in decision-making autonomy (Chowdhury, 2023). Based on this description, this study was conducted

to analyze the contribution of women selling spent hens in Pagar Alam City in household decision-making.

RESEARCH METHOD

The location of the study was intentionally determined to be Pagar Alam City, South Sumatra Province. The location was chosen based on the fact that the business of selling spent hens in Pagar Alam City, South Sumatra Province, is generally carried out by women. Women selling spent hens purchase them from sales agents in Pagar Alam City, Indonesia. These sales agents purchase the birds from breeders in Padang City, West Sumatra Province. In Pagar Alam City, it is a tradition to donate spent hens to neighbors, relatives, or those holding celebrations. The spent hens are sold in Pagar Alam City, still alive, in markets and on the roadside. Most sellers are women. A total of 39 women selling spent hens were recruited from three spent hen sales agents in Pagar Alam City. This study was conducted in October 2022.

The research population comprised 39 women selling spent hens in Pagar Alam City. A population is said to be small if it has fewer than 100 members. Therefore, all members of the population are taken by census for research purposes (Ermatology et al., 2014). This method is used if the population is less than 100. The sample was taken by census, where all members of the population became samples or respondents providing information. Nawawi (2019) also stated that for research with a small population, all members of the population are used as data sources. Therefore, this research is called population research or research with a total sample size.

According to Contillo (2021), decision-making in a household is a crucial part of marriage and family life. A person trusts their partner's advice. Therefore, husband and wife, as a couple, must always think carefully and discuss decisions to ensure a smooth married life.

Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews with respondents, namely women who sell spent hens and also had the status of wives in their households. The research data were analyzed descriptively and quantitatively in the form of a case study of women selling spent hens in Pagar Alam City. The decision-making process in the household, according to who made the decision, was divided into five categories, as shown in Table 2 (Sudarta, 2017).

Table 2. Categories of Decision-making in Households

| No | Category |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | Wife herself |
| 2. | Husband and wife together, but the wife is dominant |
| 3. | Husband and wife equal |
| 4. | Husband and wife together, but the husband is dominant |
| 5. | Husband himself |

Household decision-making includes four fields: household production, household expenditure, household rules, and social activities. This is based on

the opinion of Sajogyo (1990) cited by Kusmayadi (2017), where the role of women in decision-making in the household covers four fields: 1) production or formation of family income, 2) expenditure to fulfill family needs, 3) decisions relating to the formation of a family, including the rules within it, and 4) social activities in the community. The details as follows:

1. Decision-making in the field of production includes determining whether women work outside the home (as sellers of spent hens), managing/using income, and determining working hours.
2. Decision-making in household expenditures, including matters related to expenditure from each household member, expenditure for daily consumption, housing (purchase/rent and repair), education costs, health, clothing, household furniture, and purchasing vehicles and electronic devices.
3. Decision-making in the formation of household rules, including making regulations in the household, determining the place of residence, socialization of children, type and place of education, and division of household tasks.

Decision-making in social activities, including participation in community activities, religious activities, activities at work, and activities carried out outside the home, for example, social gatherings, condolences, weddings, and thanksgiving.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Characteristics

Table 3 presents characteristics of Spent Hens Selling women. From this table, the average age of women selling spent hens in Padar Alam City is 52, which is within the productive age range. Most (43.6%) were in the 47-57 age group, and the majority had a high school education (51.3%). These women have a variety of sales experience, ranging from 5 to 37 years, with an average of 21. More than half (53.8%) have 5-15 years of experience, which is relatively recent compared to other experience intervals.

Table 3. Characteristics of Women Selling Spent Hens in Pagar Alam City

| No | Characteristic | Amount (People) | Percentage (%) |
|----|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. | Age (Years) | | |
| | a) 36-46 | 12 | 33.3 |
| | b) 47-57 | 17 | 43.6 |
| | c) 58-68 | 10 | 25.6 |
| 2. | Education | | |
| | a) Elementary School | 7 | 17.9 |
| | b) Junior High School | 11 | 28.2 |
| | c) Senior High School | 20 | 51.3 |
| | d) University (Bachelor) | 1 | 2.6 |
| 3. | Experience (Years) | | |
| | a) 5-15 | 21 | 53.8 |
| | b) 16-26 | 10 | 25.6 |
| | c) 27-37 | 8 | 20.5 |

Kim et al. (2017) stated that women's good profiles support their role in household decision-making. Women with favorable resource characteristics, including income, education, and employment, tend to play an increased role in household decision-making. Education has gradually made women capable of playing a more active role. Education increases the role of women in making decisions in the household.

The Contribution of the Wife in the Household Decision-making

The role of wives in household decision-making in this study is seen in each field where decisions are made in the household. The research of Santos (2021) on Victorian farmers' wives, showed that the majority of women (59%) participated in almost all decision-making. Husbands made their wives partners in decision-making, allowing them to take the lead in most decisions.

The following is an explanation of the research results regarding the contribution of women selling spent hens in Pagar Alam City to various areas of decision-making in the household:

The Contribution of the Wife in the Household Production Decision-making

Decision-making in the field of household production is a process of interaction between husbands and wives in determining decisions related to earning and managing household income. The results of the study on the role of wives in household decision-making in the field of production are shown in Figure 1.

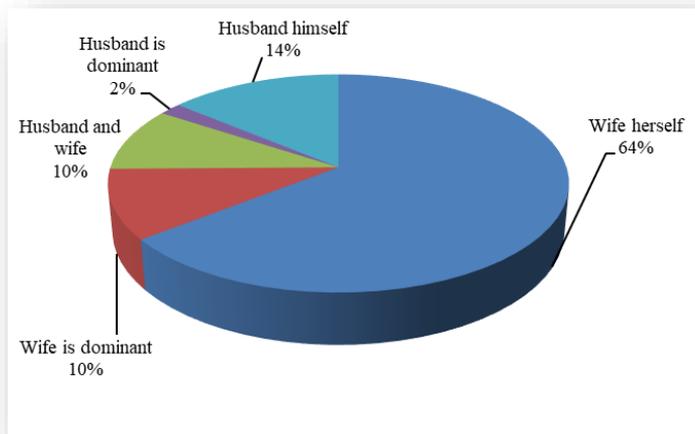


Figure 1.
Decision-making in Household Production

Decision-making in the production field of women selling spent hens is in the category of wife alone, with a percentage of 64%. The decision for the wife to work as a seller of spent hens and the amount of capital used by the wife to sell spent hens are determined by the wife herself. This is because the work as a seller of discarded laying hens is done by the wife herself, not assisted by her husband, so the decision is entirely determined only by the wife.

Women who work and earn cash are more likely to play a role in decision-making than women who do not have jobs. This means that women who earn their own income and contribute to the household income tend to contribute more to the decision-making process in the household. High economic contributions encourage women's dominance in household decision-making.

Women who have assets or capital are more empowered, and their role is considered in the household. Women with more agricultural land than their husbands have a higher level of participation in household decision-making. This shows that land ownership is related to women's empowerment in households (Sariyev et al., 2020). Alem et al. (2023) highlighted the importance of considering the division of labor, differences in preferences, and the influence of partners within households. Poor women make decisions consistent with their preferences if they have income from their own livelihoods.

Decision-making on the use of the wife's income from the sale of spent hens and decision-making on the management of the husband's income is determined by the wife herself because the wife is the treasurer in a household and is better suited to managing finances because women are better at saving, economizing, and knowing how to divide the existing income according to needs. Another reason is that there is an agreement between the wife and husband that the wife manages and holds the husband's income. The husband's income is given to the wife, and the woman regulates expenses according to household needs, starting from daily consumption needs, long-term needs, and bills, without the husband's interference. Decision-making for the wife's working hours and the husband's working hours are determined by each other.

However, the results of this study differ slightly from those of Sharma & Kota (2019). Their research results showed that women tend to lack confidence in making investment and financial decisions due to their low level of financial knowledge. In this case, women tend to avoid risks and adopt a conservative attitude, relying on the guidance of others. Therefore, in such circumstances, for women, husbands play a crucial role in making investment decisions.

The Contribution of Wife in Household Expenditure Decision-making

The role of wife selling of spent hens in household decision-making regarding household expenditure is presented in Figure 2. The household expenditure includes the personal expenditure of each household member, expenditure for daily consumption, purchase/rent of a house, repair/renovation of a house, school fees for children, health costs for household members, expenditure for purchasing clothes for household members, for furniture or household appliances, purchase of vehicles, and purchase of electronic devices.

The wife plays a significant role in decision-making for household spending matters, where the highest percentage is in the wife's category, at 49%. However, the wife and husband already have their respective portions in household decision-making regarding household spending. However, research results of Kirkwood et al. (2024) showed that household financial decisions tend to be made by women and their husbands. Men make the final decisions regarding seeking healthcare, whereas women play a dominant role in selecting and feeding infants and younger children. Women also feel compelled to make decisions with their husbands about leaving their homes.

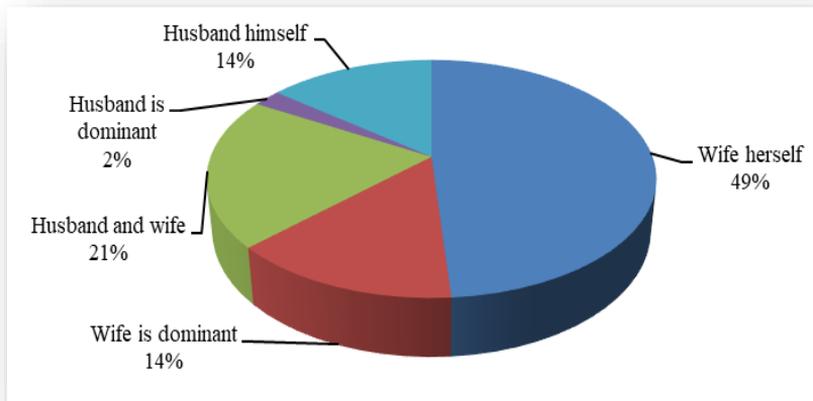


Figure 2.
Decision-making in Household Expenditures

Decision-making that is determined only by the wife includes personal expenses for each household member because the wife knows more about these needs, daily consumption expenses, children's school fees, household member clothing purchases, and furniture or household appliances purchases. Women understand more about appearance, are better at bargaining when shopping for clothes, and know more about what furniture or appliances are needed and which are not yet needed to be purchased.

Decision-making regarding household expenses, such as buying or renting a house and repairing or renovating a house, is determined only by the husband. The husband plays a full role in decision-making in the area of household expenses that involve large amounts. A study conducted by Anderson et al. (2017) showed that some husbands delegate authority to their wives to make decisions within the household. Some decisions are made by wives themselves. The various forms of decision-making within households vary from household to household.

Other studies have described the wife's dominant role in decision-making regarding household health costs. Matters related to maintaining the health of family members, caring for and educating children, and household chores are mostly decided by the wife (van-Truong et al., 2020). Health costs that are not too large will be determined by the wife herself, but if they are quite large, the wife will discuss and ask for advice from her husband. Decision-making regarding expenses for purchasing vehicles and electronic devices is determined by both the husband and wife. If women participate less in making decisions regarding the purchase of household goods, then they tend not to have much of a role in the process of making other decisions. These other decisions include decisions about health care, the use of the husband's income, and visiting family (Yu et al., 2023).

Singh and Kumar (2020) also stated that women who own their businesses are more financially independent. Therefore, for women living in rural or suburban areas, entrepreneurship and small businesses can provide

opportunities for financial empowerment. They can control their finances, participate in their children's education, and increase family savings.

In addition, research results of Saleemi & Kofol (2020) showed that women who participate more in decision-making regarding their children's education tend to spend more on their daughters' education. This illustrates that women's gender awareness is also related to decision-making that reduces the impact of gender inequality in the household.

The Contribution of Wife in Household Rule-Forming Decision-making

Household decision-making in the area of household rules is to determine decisions that encourage the sustainability of the household and each member in the form of creating rules in the household, the residence of all household members, children's relationships/socialization, education, and the tasks for each member of the household. The role of women selling spent hens in decision-making regarding the formation of household rules is shown in Figure 3.

Decision-making in forming household rules is mostly decided by both husband and wife equally (24%), and by husband and wife together, but the wife is dominant (21%). Household decisions in terms of household rules, which are made by the wife herself, are only 25%. This shows that in forming household rules, husbands and wives work together in decision-making. Husbands and wives have the same rights and obligations in carrying out their roles in building relationships between household members (Hafid & Sumbulah, 2022). The division of roles and tasks is mutually agreed upon by the husband and wife. They are responsible for their respective roles and responsibilities. They are also committed to maintaining the agreement and responsibilities (Pical et al., 2020).

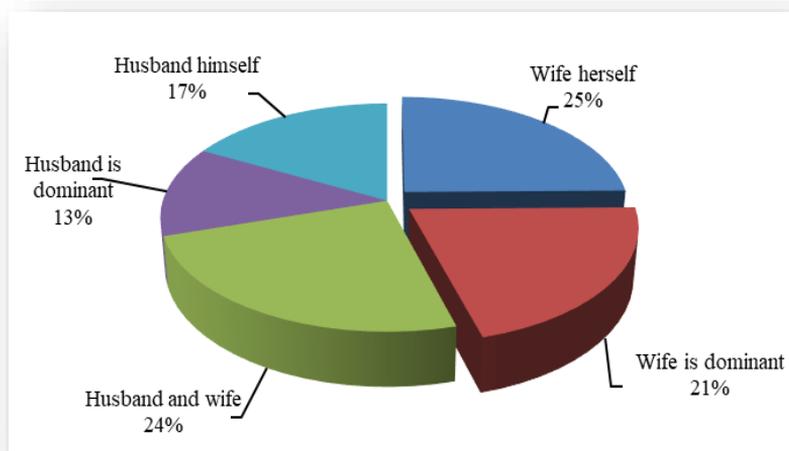


Figure 3.
Decision-making in Forming of Household Rules

The rules established by the husband and wife as parents are expected to be a family guide for the household. These rules should be followed, especially by

parents, so that the household runs in an orderly, harmonious, and peaceful manner. Husbands and wives as parents in the household play a very important role. They must be role models, educators, and givers of affection to children (Azis & Mukramin, 2020).

The husband himself determines the rules regarding the residence of all household members because the husband, as the head of the household, should play a major role in determining the residence of all household members. Decision-making regarding children's social lives is determined by the wife herself because the children are more open to the mother. The mother knows the children's condition better, so she can determine which is the best decision and which is not good for the children. Decision-making regarding children's schooling is made together by the wife and husband. Likewise, for the division of tasks for each household member, the husband and wife will discuss first before making a decision and adjusting the type of task to the abilities of each household member. In most households (34.2%), the husband makes the decision regarding the children's school (Dahal & Adhikari, 2023).

The Contribution of Wife in Household Social Activities Decision-making

Household decision-making in the field of social activities includes cooperative activities, religious activities, gathering with extended family or relatives, and coming and holding events involving many people. Figure 4 shows household decision-making regarding social activities.

It can be seen in Figure 4 that decision-making in the social field has different results from other fields because the highest percentage is in the category of the husband himself, namely 33%. Puspitawati & Siswati (2018) also stated that household decision-making regarding social activities is generally carried out by the husband alone. The social activities involved include community service in the home environment.

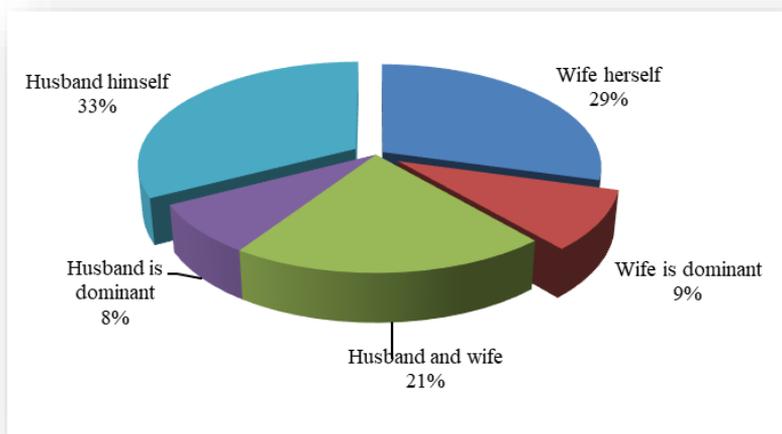


Figure 4.
Decision-making in Household Social Activities

Furthermore (29% of) women underwent the procedure themselves. Decision-making regarding holding events (celebrations, thanksgiving, and others) at home is determined by the husband himself because this requires a lot of preparation and quite a lot of money. Decision-making regarding participation in gatherings with the extended family is determined together, and the decisions taken are adjusted to the circumstances. If you want to gather with the husband's extended family, then the husband determines, and vice versa if you want to gather with the woman's extended family, then the wife will determine.

Participation in cooperation activities is determined by the husband or wife, depending on who will be involved in the activity. If the husband participates in the activity, it is determined by the husband himself, and vice versa. In the majority (53.3%) of households, decisions regarding attendance at religious and social events are made jointly by the husband and wife (Dahal & Adhikari, 2023). Bitew et al. (2024) studied women in Ethiopia and showed that family visits are one of the most important decisions in a household, along with healthcare and household expenses. Women are having the autonomy to make decisions individually or collectively in these areas.

CONCLUSION

Women selling spent hens in Pagar Alam City, South Sumatra Province, play a major role in household decision-making due to their high contribution to household income. Household decision-making by the wife herself dominates in three fields: household production (64%), household expenditures (49%), and forming household rules (25%). The contribution of women selling spent hens to the household economy impacts their dominant role in household decision-making, especially in the areas of production and household expenditure. Apart from contributing relatively high economic income to household income, and playing a large role in decision-making in the household economy, women must ensure that the moral values they have instilled in the family are applied as norms.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

[Author 1]: research topic determination, research conceptualization, research methodology development, data collection, data analysis, writing the initial draft of the manuscript; [Author 2]: guidance on research methods and analysis, guidance on developing the background and justification of the research findings; [Author 3]: guidance on research methods and analysis, guidance on developing the research findings, responding to reviewer comments, and revising the manuscript.

DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

This research is independent research, so the implementation and writing of the manuscript are not related to any party, either financially or personally.

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ETHIC STATEMENT

The informants and respondents in this study have agreed to provide research data and information. All data is anonymized, and confidentiality is maintained.

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