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Diversity Attitudes in Primary School Students: Examination of the Diversity Attitude Index

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Abstract: Indonesia has diverse cultures, languages, and beliefs that have become the social capital of community life. So far, the assessment of student attitudes has been carried out subjectively based on the belief that each student has the ability to respect others well; however, the facts on the ground show that there are still many conflicts in Indonesia. Research on respect for diversity in Indonesia has been conducted, but has not revealed the actual results of the extent to which elementary school students are able to practice positive attitudes toward diversity. Therefore, this study aims to (1) develop an index of diversity attitudes among elementary school students and (2) describe the realization of the components of the formation of diversity attitudes among elementary school students. This study had a descriptive and quantitative design. Data collection was conducted using a diversity attitude scale. Diversity attitude indicators refer to attitude competency theory. The participants in this study were fourth-grade elementary-school students. Participants were selected based on location and inclusion criteria. To examine this more deeply, interviews and observation techniques were used by the students and teachers. The diversity attitude index of students in the rural school was 70.46, urban school was 73.14, Christian private school was 71.85, and Muslim private school was 69.26.



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From the results of the scale analysis of the diversity attitude index, there were differences in each indicator. There is a weakness in their ability to appreciate and practice differences. A high index achievement lies in the ability to organize diversity information. Each of these efforts was supported by a heterogeneous community environment, comprehensive learning, and good knowledge confirmation from teachers. The integration of learning with regional cultural insights and reflection on diverse attitude experiences can lead to a positive attitude toward viewing differences.

Keywords: attitude, character, diversity, elementary school, students, tolerance

小学生的多元化态度：多元化态度指数的检验

摘要：印度尼西亚拥有多元的文化、语言和信仰，这些成为社区生活的社会资本。到目前为止，对学生态度的评估都是主观进行的，基于每个学生都有能力尊重他人的信念，但实际情况表明，印度尼西亚仍然存在许多冲突。印度尼西亚已经开展了尊重多样性的研究，但尚未揭示小学生在多大程度上能够对多样性采取积极态度的实际结果。因此，本研究旨在（1）制定小学生多样性态度指数，（2）描述小学生多样性态度形成要素的实现方式。本研究的设计是描述性和定量性的。本研究的数据收集使用了多样性态度量表工具。多样性态度指标参考态度能力理论。本研究的参与者是四年级小学生。参与者的选择使用了地点和纳入标准。为了更深入地研究这一点，对学生和教师采用了访谈和观察技术。农村学校学生的多样性态度指数为70.46，城市学校为73.14，基督教私立学校为71.85，穆斯林私立学校为69.26。从多样性态度指数的量表分析结果来看，各指标存在差异。欣赏和实践差异的能力较弱。高指标成就在于组织多样性信息的能力。这些努力都离不开异质性的社区环境、全面的学习和教师良好的知识确认。学习与地域文化洞察的结合以及对多样性态度经验的反思，可以形成看待差异的积极态度。

关键词：态度、性格、多样性、小学、学生、宽容

1. Introduction

Indonesia is highly diverse. The attitude of diversity is essential to build a harmonious and sustainable society in addition to diversity and in the midst of increasingly complex global dynamics. Attitude is a person's general feeling in the form of positive or negative feelings toward an attitude object. The components that make up a person's attitude are cognition, affection, and conation [1], [2]. Indonesia has invaluable wealth with diverse ethnicities, religions, cultures, and languages. However, this diversity also creates problems, such as the possibility of conflict and misunderstanding between groups [3]-[5]. From a diversity perspective, everyone has equal value, regardless of their background, and recognizes the differences. In such situations, education and communication are the main ways to raise awareness of the importance of tolerance and respect for one another [6]-[8].

An important concept that describes diversity in society, which includes ethnicity, religion, race, culture, and socioeconomic background, is known as diversity. Owing to the tremendous cultural and ethnic diversity in Indonesia, diversity is essential for maintaining unity and harmony. The way people think, especially among the younger generation, such as students, will shape the country's future. Many factors, such as the family

environment, school, peers, and the media they use, affect the way a person thinks. Therefore, it is essential to strengthen attitudes toward diversity.

Attitudes toward diversity also strengthen the sense of nationalism. Every group unites when it is valued and respected. With the spirit of diversity, people can work together to achieve common goals, address social problems, and improve their quality of life [9]-[11]. Currently, globalization, demonstrating an attitude of diversity, is an important way to become more competitive. Countries that manage diversity well are better able to adapt to changes and challenges worldwide [12]. Therefore, building attitudes toward diversity is a task that educational institutions must take care of [13]. We can create an inclusive, peaceful, and prosperous environment through shared commitments [14], [15].

Indonesia's cultural and social diversity is highly valued, but also poses challenges. Intolerance, discrimination, and intergroup conflicts have increased in recent decades [16]. These factors include differences in cultural, religious, and ethnic identities, which are often accompanied by non-positive stereotypes [17]-[19]. Misunderstandings of tolerance and diversity often lead to intolerant attitudes. Social media also worsens matters by spreading fake news and hate speech that attacks different groups. This leads to social tension,

which can undermine societal harmony and stability.

While the government and civil society strive to strengthen their tolerance and respect for differences, major challenges remain. Creating a harmonious climate requires cooperation among different parts of society. Indonesian students have a positive attitude toward diversity. They consider diversity as the wealth of a nation that must be preserved and appreciate differences. For example, students are often taught to work with friends from different backgrounds in a school environment. In school, students learn about different cultures, religions, and traditions through group activities, discussions, and social interactions.

The social environment of a community plays a role in shaping students' attitudes toward diversity. Stereotypes and prejudices acquired from the social environment or media are problems faced today. Although many students tolerate the differences, some may have certain prejudices against other groups based on misinformation. This can be caused by the family environment or social media, which often present unfair information.

Education in schools plays an important role in changing the way students view their attitudes toward diversity. Education that teaches tolerance, togetherness, and respect for differences can help to foster greater trust in diversity. Teachers set an example by showing how to respect the differences in daily interactions. Students can practice diverse attitudes through character education programs and extracurricular activities that focus on cooperation and intercultural conversations.

This study aimed to map an index of the diversity attitudes of elementary school students. Therefore, the research object was selected based on its location and inclusion criteria. With this mapping, teachers can analyze the priority scale and create learning designs in accordance with students' abilities. Mapping students' diversity attitudes can also help teachers trace how attitude-forming components are realized and what influences them.

2. Methodology

This study used a quantitative descriptive research design to identify the diversity attitude index of elementary-school students. The research was conducted in the following stages: preliminary studies, developing problem formulations, preparing instruments, collecting data, analyzing data, and making conclusions.

2.1. Instrument

The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire. The researchers compiled a questionnaire based on Bloom, Anderson & Masia [20]. Attitude

indicators included acceptance (A1), responding (A2), appreciating (A3), organizing (A4), and practicing (A5). Each indicator consisted of 7 questions.

The questionnaire consists of 35 questions.

2.2. Sample and Data Collection

Purposive sampling techniques with relevant criteria were used to identify the participants. The inclusion criteria in this study consisted of location and characteristics. The participants of this study were 263 students.

Characteristic criteria include student age 9-10 years (4 grade) where students have rapid social-emotional development toward their environment. In addition, students attending school with heterogeneous and homogeneous differences play a role in their diverse attitudes (Table 1).

Table 1. Location criteria (compiled by the authors)

No	location	Criteria
1	Trengguli 1 Elementary School, Jenawi Subdistrict, Karanganyar Regency, Indonesia	Public elementary schools are located in rural areas
2	Cemara Dua Elementary School, Surakarta City	Public elementary schools are located in urban areas
3	Widya Wacana Elementary School of Pasar Legi Surakarta City	Private elementary school, located in an urban area, Christian background
4	Diponegoro Islamic elementary School of Surakarta City	A private elementary school located in an urban area with an Islamic background.

2.3. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using item analysis and Likert scale analysis. Item analysis was used to verify the questions in the questionnaire. The researcher used flow model analysis to interpret the index results.

3. Results

3.1. Diversity Attitude Index of Elementary School Students

The results of this study are divided into two parts: First, the index of primary school students' attitudes toward diversity in different environments. Second, it explores the realization of the components of diversity attitude formation. The diversity attitude index is based on the attitude competency theory [20]. There were five attitude competencies: accepting, responding, appreciating, organizing, and practicing. The results of the students' attitude index are displayed in Tables 2-5.

3.2. Trengguli 1 Elementary School

Trengguli 1 Elementary School is an elementary school located in a rural area with mountainous characteristics at an altitude of 750-1.500 masl. on the slopes of Mount Lawu, this area is at risk of landslides. The Cetho Temple Site is a place of worship for Hindus. In addition, there is a Suku temple site. This area has abundant natural resources, including tea gardens, plantations such as cloves, and agriculture. The participants were 21 fourth-grade students. The diversity attitude index of students at Trengguli 1 Elementary School is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Students' attitude index (compiled by the authors)

Skill Level	Index %	Category	Index Level
Accepting	71.63	Medium	70.46
Responding	63.84	Medium	(Medium)
Appreciating	69.22	Medium	
Organizing	79.93	High	
Practicing	67.69	Medium	

3.3. Cemara Dua Elementary School of Surakarta

This elementary school is located in the urban area of Surakarta City, Central Java. Cemara Dua Elementary School is located in the Banjarsari sub-district. The school is close to public facilities, such as train stations, hospitals, tritonal bus terminals, the Syehk Zayeed mosque tourist area, and the Kepatihan Church. The participants were 92 fourth-grade students. The diversity attitude index score of Camara Dua Elementary School is as follows:

Table 3. Students' attitude index (compiled by the authors)

Skill Level	Index %	Category	Index Level
Accepting	72.28	Medium	73.14
Responding	73.40	Medium	(Medium)
Appreciating	69.25	Medium	
Organizing	78.38	High	
Practicing	72.36	Medium	

3.4. Widya Wacana Christian Elementary School, Surakarta

This elementary school is located in the urban area of Surakarta City, Central Java. Widya Wacana Christian Elementary School is located in the Banjarsari sub-district. The school's style is based on Christian religious beliefs. The school is close to public facilities, such as train stations, hospitals, Pasar Legi traditional markets, and churches. The participants were 62 fourth-grade students. The students' diversity attitude index scores for the schools are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Students' attitude index (compiled by the authors)

skill Level	Index %	Category	Index Level
Accepting	73.39	Medium	71.85
Responding	69.61	Medium	(Sedang)
Appreciating	64.75	Medium	
Organizing	79.26	High	
Practicing	72.24	Medium	

3.5. Diponegoro Islamic Elementary School of Surakarta

This elementary school is located in the urban area of Surakarta City, Central Java. The school's religious background was Islamic.

Table 5. Students' attitude index (compiled by the authors)

Skill Level	Index %	Category	Index Level
Accepting	76.91	Medium	69.26
Responding	73.20	Medium	(Medium)
Appreciating	66.69	Medium	
Organizing	66.27	Medium	
Practicing	63.23	Medium	

The school is close to public facilities such as train stations, hospitals, the Beteng and PGS traditional markets, and the tourist area of the Surakarta palace. The participants were 88 fourth-grade students. The diversity attitude index scores of students are listed in Table 5.

4. Discussion

4.1. Quality of Learning

Each school has its own characteristics that can affect its learning quality. In this study, researchers identified the characteristics of rural and urban areas based on observations and interviews. Elementary schools in rural areas travel longer distances. Rural areas include plantations, rice fields, and forests. The distance between one village and another was quite long. In addition, there are potential natural disasters that can hinder access, such as landslides, during the rainy season. Access to public services, such as health and government, is also far away.

Schools in rural areas have limited facilities and infrastructures. Schools in rural areas rely on the school facilities provided by the government. As stated by the fourth-grade teacher "... *The facilities in our school are purely from the government. Our school is not like a big school that has many rooms. We have to divide one space for several functions. There is one room for the health unit, extracurricular activities and the library. This is not ideal and not feasible.*" This affects the quality of service for students, which is less than optimal. However, the use of IT-based learning media has been limited. An unstable Internet network hinders access to wider information.

Teachers in rural areas have strong social skills. As the school principal said “... *Here, teachers have more of a social role. Teachers are considered to have a higher education so they are seen as being able to help solve problems. Teachers here are always present in various social activities such as attending community deaths, weddings, vacation celebrations, and even physical activities such as working together to build roads.*”. Rural teachers play an important role in their social lives. Teachers are seen as having wiser problem-solving skills than others.

Teachers in rural areas are often involved in important activities. Teachers in rural areas can integrate into community life. They are always involved in all social activities. To attend important events in the context of their professionalism, teachers must also travel long distances to the city.

Students in rural areas have their own characteristics. A grade IV student said, ‘*I usually walk to school with my friends. We live in the same village. On the way we usually talk about what we’re going to play after school, what we’re going to play at recess, or talk about our activities at home.*’ Elementary school students in rural areas seem to be more playful and mobile, as they spend more time outdoors. Interactions with peers in the home environment tend to be more intensive. Additionally, they preferred group learning. Students in rural schools have hands-on learning experiences that enrich their learning experiences, such as participation in gardening, rice planting, gotong royong, and other practical skills. In addition, students have high social sensitivity in interacting with their friends, both at school and at home.

Urban schools also have their own unique characteristics. Urban areas are smaller than rural areas. Schools in urban areas have easy access to public facilities because of their proximity. Transportation modes are easily accessible. Urban school facilities are also more adequate, owing to the availability of sufficient space for various activities. As stated by the teacher “... *our school has enough space for students to use such as computer lab, art room, props room, counseling room, religion room, library, and dance room.*” The Internet network in the city is also available so that it can be used for learning and teacher needs.

Urban teachers play a smaller social role than urban teachers. As the principal explained “; *Our school implements a five-day work program so teachers spend time at school in late afternoon. I rarely receive teacher permission for community activities. We expect teachers to provide optimal service and use their time as best as possible for professional development. For social activities, I think it is sufficient as long as it does not interfere with school activities.*” Access to capacity building, such as seminars, workshops, training, and official coaching, is easy to reach in close proximity.

Students in urban schools have a limited scope for social life. One student said, ‘*I go to school with my mom and get picked up after school. After school, I rest for a while and then take lessons. I have a tutor at home, participate in karate activities, take English lessons, and swim. if I play with friends, it’s at school. At home, I rarely meet friends because they all do their own activities.*” Students engage in activities at home and school. Students’ individual differences were strong, and learning achievement was a priority for each student. Students in urban areas have good academic achievement. The achievement of the champions in various competitions shows that the school has this ability. Urban environments with rapid access to technology and information have an impact on students, such as the lack of social relationships with peers, massive exposure to digital media, and eye disorders, such as myopia due to excessive gadget use.

4.2. Realization of the Components of Building Students’ Diversity Attitudes

The cognitive components of students were developed through learning activities. In learning activities, there is a process of interaction among teachers, students, and learning resources. Teachers deliver materials as a source of information to the students. In this case, the teacher conveys the material according to the learning outcomes. Learning was carried out at the beginning of the meeting, and the teacher was always positioned as a source of information. This means that the first student’s knowledge came from the teacher. Apart from the teacher, other sources of information include student books and personal experiences.

The teacher creates a policy in the classroom, where every morning learning activity begins with prayer. The condition of the class is diverse in beliefs, so the teacher gives the three students the opportunity to represent each belief. Students take turns leading prayers in front so that other students with the same beliefs imitate them. In addition, teachers always apply group learning activities so that each student tries to accept the different characteristics of their friends. In group discussions, the teacher gives instructions to write down the role of each group member so that there is interaction between group members.

School policy in managing cultural celebrations also helps students understand and accept the diversity of the Indonesian nation. Each class was required to showcase Indonesia’s diverse cultural potential. Cultural performances were conducted by learning the content of the Pancasila student profile. This activity is carried out at the end of the year by performing traditional dances, folk songs, traditional culinary bazaars, and traditional fashion shows.

The formation of diverse attitudes among elementary school students is an important step in educating the younger generation to live harmoniously in pluralistic societies. This process begins at the cognition stage, where students acquire knowledge and understanding of the diversity of cultures, ethnicities, religions, languages, and values surrounding them. The cognition stage is the initial foundation that shapes students' mindset toward diversity.

In the cognition stage, the attitude formation process begins with the introduction of the concept of diversity. Teachers play an important role in delivering material about diversity through various methods such as stories, pictures, videos, and group discussions [21], [22]. For example, teachers can tell stories of inspirational figures who uphold the values of tolerance and diversity successfully. Through these stories, students gained an initial understanding of the importance of respecting differences.

In the cognition stage, students learn through social interaction. An inclusive and conducive social environment facilitates students' interaction with peers from different backgrounds [23]-[25]. The physical characteristics and organization of school spaces can influence children's perceptions and behaviors. Schools with designs that allow for change and transformation can contribute to children's physical and cognitive development [26]-[27]. This process allows students to understand that each individual is unique and has their own strengths. By interacting, they learn to respect different opinions, cultures, and perspectives.

Understanding at the cognition stage is evaluated through discussion and reflection. Teachers can ask students open-ended questions such as *"Why should we respect friends with different religions or cultures?"* or *"What would you do if you saw a friend being teased for being different?"*. The students' answers reflected their level of understanding of the values of diversity.

Understanding gained at the cognition stage will be the basis for the formation of emotions and behavior that support harmonious living in a pluralistic society. With the correct approach, students can be guided to appreciate differences, uphold tolerance, and contribute to maintaining national unity.

The development of perceptual awareness and an understanding of the origins of knowledge are strong predictors of academic success. This process helps children distinguish between what they see and infer, which influences their perceptions of reality and learning. This approach supports a comprehensive understanding of the knowledge systems. Cognitive processes are important predictors of academic performance. Attentional control and working memory, along with changes in awareness of the origins of knowledge, have a significant impact on school performance [28]. Elementary school students typically

operate in the concrete operational stage in response to both internal and external stimuli [29]. Younger students (7-8 years old) rely more on visual thinking, whereas older students (9-10 years old) develop abstract thinking, thus requiring different educational approaches [30]. Elementary school students often understand visual narratives at a surface level compared to older students and adults [31]. This shows that their stage of cognitive development affects how they interpret and understand events, which affects their overall perception.

Teachers' and students' awareness of their cognitive processes, including planning and monitoring of their actions, can facilitate learning. High levels of metacognitive awareness among teachers can enhance students learning processes [32]-[34]. Cognitive functions develop through brain maturation, with sensory-motor integration forming the basis of attention, perception, and memory systems. This development affects how students acquire and organize their knowledge [35].

Affective processes and emotional aspects play significant roles in the formation of diverse attitudes. The affective not only serves as a bridge connecting experiences with attitudes, but also becomes an important element in building emptiness, tolerance, and respect for diversity [35]. Affective processes often involve emotional experiences such as pleasure, empathy, sympathy, and even discomfort [36]. When students are exposed to diverse situations, their affective reactions are key to shaping their perceptions of the values taught, including diversity attitudes.

Several factors influence the success of the affective process, including school environment, personal experiences, parental support, and the influence of media and technology. Inclusive school and respect for diversity create a conducive atmosphere for students to engage in positive affective experiences. Teachers who demonstrate an open and welcoming attitude toward differences also play an important role in this process. Personal experiences, such as interactions with peers from different backgrounds or facing discrimination, can influence how students respond effectively to learning. Parents who support diversity values at home can strengthen students' affective processes in school. Discussions about diversity at home help students validate what they learn at school. Media plays an important role in shaping students' attitudes toward diversity. Content that promotes inclusivity reinforces positive affective reactions to diversity.

Diversity attitudes are not formed instantly but through a learning process that involves experience, interaction, and internalization of diversity values. The conative process becomes the foundation that allows students to transform their initial understanding of diversity into actions that reflect respect for it. Teachers

play a central role in encouraging students' construction. Simple actions such as avoiding stereotypes and treating all students fairly can have a significant impact. The conative aspect becomes the form of diversity experience.

Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) is a learning model that emphasizes direct experience as the basis of learning. The model consists of four interconnected and iterative stages known as Kolb's learning cycle [37]-[38] (Figure 1).

Kolb's learning cycle contains concrete experiences involving direct involvement in new experiences or challenging situations. These experiences should be contextualized and relevant to real-life situations [39]. Reflective observations were made after experiencing something. Students reflect on their experiences, observing, and analyzing what happened. This reflection is important for deeply understanding the experience [40]. Abstract Conceptualization allows students to develop theories and concepts based on their reflections. They try to understand the patterns or principles underlying their experience [41].

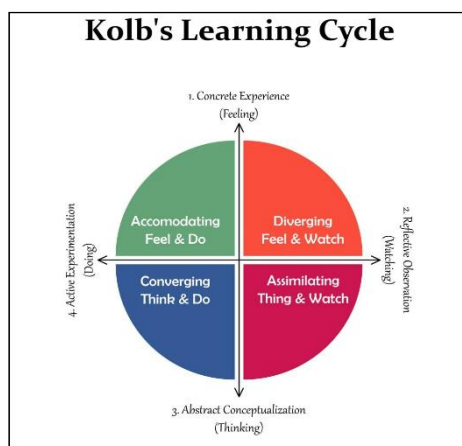


Figure 1. Kolb's learning cycle (Source: [38])

Active Experimentation as the final stage involves applying concepts or theories that have been developed to new situations. This allows students to test and validate their understanding through action.

5. Conclusion

5.1. Summary of the Results

The student diversity attitude index reflects the success of learning. An insignificantly good score indicates that there is still a need for a learning design that utilizes various learning resources to introduce and practice the values of diversity. Teachers play a strategic role in optimizing learning. In addition, building a conducive environment to foster students' attitudes towards respect for diversity is essential. The components of student diversity attitude formation consist of cognitive, affective, and conative components. Affective aspects are dominant over other

components; therefore, teachers should acculturate social-emotional learning with various types of resource learning.

This study makes a significant contribution to the scope of education in elementary schools. This study provides an empirical database of students' attitudes toward diversity. The index of students' attitudes toward diversity describes the level of receiving, responding, appreciating, organizing information, and practicing diversity values. These data are not only relevant in the local context but also show the general condition of how students view diversity. The identification of students' attitude index is important in evaluating the education unit curriculum and helps provide a reference for aspects that must be improved in learning. This study also has a significant impact on supporting efforts to prevent the growth of discriminatory attitudes in society. By identifying aspects that are not optimal, this research provides a foothold for teachers to design learning programs. This interdisciplinary research integrates theories and methodologies from various fields of education, psychology, and communication. This research opens up opportunities for collaboration between researchers and a deeper understanding of the attitudes of diversity among elementary school students.

5.2. Recommendations

Based on the analysis above, the recommendation that can be given to teachers is that the introduction of cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity is not sufficient in the cognitive domain. Real work must be shown in learning activities, such as cultural exhibition projects or direct visits to cultural heritage areas, museums, communities, or places of worship. Recommendations for future research are that the study should be conducted on a wider sample of participants of different ages.

5.3. Limitations

This study has limitations regarding the sample of participants who were only on the island of Java. In addition, the limited research time allows for information that has not been revealed. Therefore, future researchers need to determine the criteria for a broader research object in terms of geographical scope.

Declaration

Author Contribution

Conceptualization, W.D.P., S.A., and S.N. Methodology, A.S., and H.J.P. Validation, W.D.P., and S.N.; formal analysis, S.A.; investigation, A.S., and S.N.; resources, W.D.P., and E.F.; data curation, S.A.; writing original draft preparation, W.D.P., and Anam Sutopo.; writing review and editing, S.A., E.F., and H.J.P.; visualization, W.D.P.; supervision, S.A.; project administration, W.D.P., S.N., and A.S.; funding

acquisition, W.D.P. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Data Availability Statement

The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding author.

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Institutional Review Board Statement

Rigorous ethical guidelines were adhered to throughout the study to ensure participant privacy and data confidentiality in compliance with institutional and national research standards.

Informed Consent Statement

Participation in the study was voluntary and informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their involvement.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this manuscript. In addition, ethical issues, including plagiarism, informed consent, misconduct, data fabrication and/or falsification, double publication and/or submission, and redundancies, have been completely observed by the authors.

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