

A development of a personal Case Study of an inclusive intervention, contextualized in a critique of theories and concepts related to transformative learning and social justice

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Introduction

"Education is a human right with immense power to transform. On its foundation rest the cornerstones of freedom, democracy, and sustainable human development." (Kofi Annan, 2017).

Education is one of the basics of life, as it is a human right away from racism, discrimination, and bias; this is one of the main reasons why educational institutions have been interested in applying and developing theories and concepts related to social justice, transformative learning, and inclusive learning. This study will discuss various concepts and theories associated with educational access, equality, and diversity in education. In addition to an interpretation of different theories and principles in teaching and learning embodied in social justice, transformative learning, and inclusive learning. Moreover, this paper will illustrate a personal case study of an inclusive intervention through my professional practice as an art teacher and will argue to what extent applying the previous theories and concepts in this case study would be efficient.

Aims and Objectives

This paper aims to develop a case study of an inclusive intervention, contextualized in a critique of theories and concepts related to transformative learning and social justice. The objectives of this study are to; 1) gain an understanding of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

Provision, 2) explore the approaches to social justice in education, 3) comprehend what is transformative learning, 4) familiarize with inclusion in education and elucidate the differentiated learning, 5) and to develop a case study of the intervention I experienced by applying and making use of the previous theories and evaluating the impact of using these theories in the art class.

Methodology

At the stage of preparing for this research, I relied on Google Scholar mainly to search for reliable scientific sources. This table shows the sources for all the theories and scientific materials presented.

Scientific Material	Source
Defining SEN	(Hodkinson, 2015)
Four Areas of SEND in the Code of	(POLICY, 2020)
Practice	
Special needs & SEN	(Hodkinson, 2015)
Specific Learning Difficulties	(Prior, 1996); (Hall, 2008)
(SpLD)	
ADHD	(Prior, 1996); (Rief, 2012);
	(Thapar, Cooper, Eyre, and Langley,
	2013)
Social justice	(Adams, Bell, and Griffin, 2007)

Approaches of social justice	(Mulgan, 2014); (Pogge, and Pogge,
(utilitarian, Rawlsianism,	2007); (Mitra, 2006)
capabilities)	
Critical Race Theory	(Delgado, and Stefancic, 2017)
The Five Tenets of CRT	(Magdaleno, and Bell, 2021)
Transformative learning	Mezirow (1997); (Kitchenham, 2008)
Three processes of transformative	(Kitchenham, 2008)
learning	
Mezirow's 10 phases of	(Nohl, 2015)
transformative learning	
Inclusion Education	(Unicef.org, 2019)
Active learning	(HEA, 2020)
Differentiated Learning	(Tomlinson, 2001)
Solo taxonomy	(Biggs and Collis, 2014)
The zone of proximal development	(McLeod, 2012)
(ZPD)	

Methodology criteria

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
English language	Non-English language
Scholarly data	Primary data

Sources between 1995 - 2022	Sources before 1995
Content related to education	Content not related to education
Peer-reviewed academic journals	Non-peer-reviewed journals or trade
	journals
Use of rich description	No required data presented

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Provision

This part will demonstrate an introduction about Special Educational Needs and Disability then focus on ADHD as it will be the focus of the case study.

Defining SEN

When a child has a disability or difficulty in learning then this child has a SEN. This difficulty could be greater than most of the other children of the same age or the child might have a disability that prohibits him or her from using the offered facilities to other children of the same age at school. Children were categorized according to ten categories of disabilities which are blind, partially sighted, deaf. delicate. diabetic, educationally subnormal, epileptic, maladjusted, physically handicapped, and speech defect. Numerous children who have SEN may have a mental or physical weakness or damage that encompasses a long-term and considerable significant impact on their capacity to out daily activities. This carry normal

(AmeSea Database – ae – April- 2023- 614)

definition incorporates children with long-term medical conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. These Children do not necessarily have SEN but they need special educational provision, certain arrangements, alterations, helps and administrations required and they are also included by the SEND definition. (Hodkinson, 2015)

Four Areas of SEND in the Code of Practice

The SEND Code of Practice identifies four broad areas of special education needs, including a variety of conditions and difficulties:

1. <u>Communication and Interaction (C&I)</u>

Children and youth with speech, language, and communication needs (SLCN) face difficulty communicating with others. This may be since they have trouble expressing what they want, understanding non-verbal and verbal communication, or they don't get it or utilize communication's social rules. Children who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder, comprising Asperger's Syndrome and Autism, usually have certain troubles with social interaction. Moreover, they may encounter challenges with language, communication, social interaction, and creative ability, which can influence how they relate to others. The SLCN sufferance may be shown in restricted, obsessional, or repetitive activities.

2. <u>Cognition and Learning (C&L)</u>

Cognition and Learning Support for learning difficulties may be essential when young people or children are learning at a slower pace than their colleagues, indeed with suitable differentiation. Furthermore, learning difficulties include moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), where learners require bolster in the difficulties related to communication, mobility, and Curriculum, through to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), where pupils have complex and serious learning difficulties as well as a sensory impairment or physical disability. Specific learning difficulties (SpLD) influence one or more particular scopes of learning. This covers a wide range of conditions such as dyspraxia, dyslexia, and dyscalculia.

3. Social, Emotional, and Mental Health difficulties (SEMHD)

Children could face social and emotional difficulties which appear in several ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, in addition to displaying challenging, troublesome, or exasperating conduct. These practices may reflect fundamental mental health difficulties such as selfharming, physical symptoms or eating disorders, substance misuse, depression, or anxiety, which are therapeutically unexplained. Other children could suffer from different disorders such as attachment disorder, attention deficit disorder, or attention deficit hyperactive disorder. Schools prepare clear procedures to bolster students and oversee the impact of any disruptive conduct so that it does not antagonistically influence other students.

4. <u>Physical and/or Sensory Needs (P&SN)</u>

Children who have sensory and/or Physical needs necessitate extraordinary instructive arrangements since they have an incapacity that anticipates or prevents them from making utilize of the provided educational facilities. These difficulties might be related to age and could change over time. Numerous young people or children with multi-sensory impairment (MSI), vision impairment (VI), or hearing impairment (HI) will need equipment that aids them to access their learning and/or specialist assistance. Furthermore, Students with an MSI suffer from a combination of vision and hearing difficulties, which makes the process of learning and curriculum acquisition more difficult and complex for these children (POLICY, 2020).

Special needs & SEN

When a child belongs to a social group with a background or circumstances which are way different from most of his or her peers at school then this child has a special need. This could happen to any child during his or her educational journey at any time. As an illustration, if a child suffers from a history of physical abuse, is a member of a cultural, or religious group, or facing physical or emotional challenges different from most of the school population then this child may have a special need. The main contrast between the previous concept and the concept of SEN is that a special need does not essentially show itself as a boundary to learning. A child with special needs usually does not require access to SEN provision. In other words, SEND is for children who have specific disabilities, whether or not they have special educational needs. It is common for children with disabilities to have extra educational needs, but not all disabled children fit into the SEN category (Hodkinson, A., 2015).

Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)

'Specific Learning Difference' (SpLD) is a term that alludes to a difference or a difficulty that individuals face with particular aspects of learning. The foremost common SpLDs are dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyscalculia, and dysgraphia. There is no doubt that the term SpLD is of interest only to countries that give priority to education (Prior, 1996). All Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs) exist on a continuum from mild to moderate through to severe. There are common patterns of behavior and ability, but there will be a range of different patterns of effects for each individual. SpLD is independent of intellectual ability, socio-economic or linguistic background. The presence of SpLD does not imply scholastic potential. In any case, the path to success is more difficult and can require greater effort and specific skills and abilities. Furthermore, the challenge and opportunity in the classroom environment for teachers and students are to recognize the specific implications of these contradictions and

explore different strategies and interventions to facilitate exemplary learning. SpLD also has many qualities that can exceed or override weaknesses (Hall, 2008).

<u>ADHD</u>

As mentioned before that Specific Learning Difference includes dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyscalculia, and dysgraphia. This section will focus on ADHD because it will be the subject of the case study (Prior, 1996).

1. Definition of ADHD

Specialists and researchers have clarified multiple scientific definitions of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, which can be summarized by saying that ADHD is a chronic neurobiological behavioral disorder that affects emotions, behavior, and thoughts, causing difficulty in daily human life as a result of impulsiveness, inattention, and hyperactivity in some cases (Rief, 2012).

2. Causes of ADHD

There are several causes of ADHD, including environmental, genetic, and neurobiological factors. Associated problems may also consist of starting up and switching tasks, along with a very short attention span and high levels of distraction. Those who are hyperactive may act impulsively and erratically and be noticeably anxious. Moreover, some factors that may contribute to the development of ADHD include being born prematurely, having extreme stress during pregnancy, the mother smoking, using alcohol, and brain injury (Thapar, Cooper, Eyre, and Langley, 2013).

3. Characteristics and Symptoms

People with ADHD have symptoms of

hyperactivity/impulsivity/inattention and may display many (but not all) of the following characteristics, although all of these behaviors are normal in children to a certain degree, in those with ADHD, the behaviors exceed the normal form in terms (in frequency, level, and intensity). The following table demonstrates a comparison between inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity symptoms (Rief, 2012).

Inattention	Hyperactivity	Impulsivity
(distractibility)		
• Poor study skills.	• Cannot settle down.	• Difficulty in being
• Inconsistent	• Intrudes in other	patient.
performance.	people's space.	Loquacious.
• Difficulty	• Does not rest.	• Cannot wait for his
prolonging attention	• Highly energetic	or her turn.
in tasks.		• Getting bored easily.

Difficulty getting	• Difficulty in sitting	• Does not wait to be
started on tasks.	still.	called on and does not
• Easily getting bored.	 Doing actions or 	raise his/her hand
• Appears confused.	movements (running	before answering.
• Difficulty working	or climbing) in	• Interrupts others
independently.	situations in which it	(conversations or
• Seems not listening	is inappropriate.	games).
to direct words.	• Usually needs	• Cannot stand still in
• May fail to finish	something in hands to	lines.
tasks.	hold or play with.	• Despite knowing the
• Difficulty in	• Roaming inside the	rules and results,
following and	classroom (where he	he/she keep making
remembering rules	or she is assumed to	the same mistakes or
and instructions.	be).	breaking the rules.
• Loses possessions		• Difficulty to "stop
or is disorganized.		and think" before
• Easily distracted		actions which lead to
(sights, sounds,		problems.
movement).		• Making strange or
• Forgetful.		inappropriate noises.
• Limited or no		• They tend to be

awareness of time.		fearless or attracted to
		"dangerous" behavior
		because they don't
		think or worry about
		the consequences.
		• Frequent exposure
		to injuries as a result
		of being attracted to
		physically dangerous
		activities and not
		thinking in advance
		about the
		consequences.
		• Talks about what is
		in his/her mind
		without thinking.
		• Starts tasks without
		listening to the
		instructions first.
		• Complete tasks in a
		hurry and make many

	inadvertent mistakes.
	• Hardly finds time to
	edit, refine, or correct
	work.
	• Bothering or
	disturbing others.
	• Engages in
	unacceptable behavior
	such as hitting or
	snatching things from
	others when angry.

Social Justice in education

"Striving for social justice is the most valuable thing to do in life." Albert Einstein

Social justice

1. Social justice aims for complete and fair Participation of all people from different nationalities and social classes in a way that meets their needs. The process of social justice requires democratization and participation, respect for human diversity and difference, and cooperation with others to attain change. Social justice also distributes resources equitably, so that all pg. 406

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members of society are treated with respect, safety, and recognition (Adams, Bell, and Griffin, 2007).

2. Social justice education includes multiple axes, such as persecution and a set of interactive and experiential educational principles and practices. The term persecution has been used instead of discrimination and prejudice to emphasize the meaning of the inequality that is rampant in various institutions of society and thus the importance of individual awareness through an educational approach to teaching social justice, which works to increase individual and community awareness to boycott and change oppressive patterns and behaviors in themselves and in the institutions and societies of which they are apart. Moreover, social justice in education focuses on the level of equality within the education system, as it promises to provide equal opportunities and privileges to various members of society. social injustice is embodied in factors such as wealth, gender, and race that determine the type of education a person can receive (Ibid).

Approaches to social justice

1. <u>Utilitarianism</u>

John Stuart Mill confirmed the principle of Utility through the Utilitarianism theory; which states that actions are right if they enhance happiness and pleasure, while they are considered wrong if they prevent pleasure and happiness or cause pain. The main concern of the utilitarian idea is that politics and morality should be focused on the promotion of happiness (Mulgan, 2014).

2. <u>Rawlsianism</u>

Rawl's theory of justice as fairness embodies a society of free citizens enjoying equal fundamental rights and collaborating in an egalitarian system. Rawl's theory is based on two principles of social justice:

- a) Equality in basic rights and the required freedoms to protect the basic interests of equal and free citizens and to proceed with the diverse ideas of good.
- b) Equal and fair opportunities in employment and education that allow everyone to compete fairly for job titles and duties, including the minimum public resources such as income and wealth that citizens need to achieve their interests in a manner that preserves their self-respect as equal and free persons (Pogge, and Pogge, 2007).

3. <u>Capabilities</u>

An ethical and moral framework is illustrated in Sen's capability approach which suggests that social arrangements should be taken Mainly based on the scope of freedom that people need to encourage or achieve the functionings they value. The different groups of functionings that an individual can accomplish reflect his/her personal freedom of choice. The Capabilities approach focuses on the real freedom that enables individuals to do or to be what they want. As Sen explained that ability has two parts represented in freedom and objects and value verbs (functions). Moreover, the capability approach addresses the quality of life that individuals can attain. This quality of life is embodied in the terms of function and ability (Mitra, 2006).

Critical Race Theory (CRT)

The critical race theory is one of the educational theories aligning with the goal of social justice. Critical Race Theory (CRT) is concerned with the study and transformation of the relationship between race, power, and racism. The theory outlines the traditional racial and civil rights studies with a holistic perspective embracing economics, history, context, self and collective interest, and even feelings and the unconscious. Moreover, CRT is used as a means to assess inequality in education, and therefore it is considered a reference in educational institutions to become more realize social justice (Delgado, and Stefancic, 2017).

The Five Tenets of CRT

There are five basic principles of CRT which are:

Racism is normal, not rational; Storytelling and counter storytelling; convergence of interests; the social construction of race; and the idea that whites had already received civil rights legislation (Magdaleno, and Bell, 2021).

Transformative Learning

According to Jack Mezirow, transformative learning goes beyond acquiring knowledge to include deep, useful, and constructive learning. The definition of transformative learning involves a critical awareness of unconscious suppositions or expectations and the assessment of the relevance of their implications. Transformational learning is a process that results in a profound change in an individual's views, thoughts, convictions, feelings, or behaviors. This change is the result of a consciousness that permanently changes people's view of the world and leads to a shift in thinking that has a direct impact on future experiences (Mezirow, 1997). Transformative learning forms three types of learning; 'instrumental' where learners understand the best way to learn the information, 'dialogic' in which learners comprehend when and where this learning could best take place, and 'self-reflective' where learners acknowledge why they are learning the information (Kitchenham, 2008).

Three processes of transformative learning

Among the three types of learning, there are three learning processes.

- 1. In the first learning process, *learning within meaning schemes*, learners leverage what they already know by expanding, supplementing, and revising their current knowledge system.
- The second learning process, *learning new meaning schemes*, Harmonious development of existing meaning schemes within the learners' meaning perspectives to a new group of meaning schemes.
- 3. The last learning process, *learning through meaning transformation*, is the inability to resolve a problem through current meaning schemes or through learning new meaning schemes, so that the solution requires re-defining the problem (Ibid).

Mezirow's 10 phases of transformative learning

- "1. A disorienting dilemma.
- 2. Self-examination with feelings of fear, anger, guilt, or shame.
- 3. A critical assessment of assumptions.
- 4. Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared.
- 5. Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions.
- 6. Planning a course of action.

7. Acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans.

8. Provisional trying of new roles.

9. Building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships.

10. A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective". (Mezirow, 2000, p. 22) as cited in (Nohl, 2015).

Inclusive and differentiated learning

This section will introduce Inclusive learning, explain differentiated Learning, and SOLO taxonomy as it involves learners in their differentiation and highlights the difference between surface and deep understanding. In addition to Vygotsky's zone of proximal development theory which enables learners to gain more self-confidence, be engaged, minimize frustration, and increase motivation.

Inclusion in education

One of the most effective ways to give all students equal and fair opportunities to attend school, learn and prosper is inclusive education; where children acquire the skills that enable them to develop. The meaning of inclusive education is that all students attend the same classes and the same schools, providing the opportunity for real learning for previously excluded children. Moreover, the inclusive education system is for the common good and allows all students to receive education, thrive, grow, and develop side by side (Unicef.org, 2019).

<u>Active learning</u>

Active learning is a form of teaching where students are actively engaged in the course material through discussions, problem-solving, case studies, role plays, and other methods. Furthermore, active learning falls under inclusive education, where teachers can monitor and follow up on students' understanding and progress toward learning attaining their goals, and accomplishing the required results (HEA, 2020).

Differentiated Learning (DI)

Differentiated instruction which is well known as differentiated education is a framework for influential education, with a variety of ways for all students in the learner's diverse class community to understand and learn new information related to content acquisition. In another word, differentiated education is an approach to teaching and learning students of different abilities in the same class with different backgrounds, motivations, languages, learning, interests, and reaction preferences; aiming to maximize the development and individual success of each student by meeting everyone. This teaching approach emphasizes the importance of quality learning for all students with their many differences and the pursuit of success for all (Tomlinson, 2001).

Solo taxonomy

John Biggs developed the Solo taxonomy which analyzes the learner's level of understanding as well as the depth of knowledge and focuses on observable learning outcomes. It is used to reinforce the quality of learning, develop a deep understanding, and help learners and educators monitor the progress of the learning process (Biggs, and Collis, 2014).

Five stages of Solo Taxonomy

Solo Taxonomy is divided into five stages or levels of understanding, arranged from simple to complex. The levels are hierarchical so that each level is built upon and influenced by the one before it. The stages are divided as follows

- Prestructural: learners do not understand the task.
- Unistructural: learners understand only one or two concepts of the task.
- Multistructural: learners gained a lot of information, but they cannot compile it yet.
- Relational: learners demonstrate a deep understanding of a task and more complicated thinking skills.
- Extended Abstract: learners have mastered an advanced understanding of the task and the ability to apply it in different contexts (Ibid).

The zone of proximal development (ZPD)

Vygotsky defined the zone of proximal development (ZPD) as the distance between the level of actual development through solving a problem independently and the expected level of development through solving a problem in cooperation with more capable peers, or under adult guidance. In the zone of proximal development for a particular task, the student gets suitable help which boosts him/her to accomplish the task. Moving through the (ZPD) requires focusing on three main points within the learning process:

- 1. The existence of a more knowledgeable person than the learner.
- 2. Interacting with a skilled educator (or peer) and enabling the learner to monitor and pursuit their skills.
- 3. The educator (or more competent peer) supports the learner in the task through the (ZPD) process which is called Scaffolding.

The support is then withdrawn so that the learner can complete the task on their own again. Just as a scaffold is removed from the building during the construction process.

In 1976 Wood, Bruner, and Ross used the term scaffolding as a synonym for (ZPD) in literature, although Vygotsky did not use it in his writing. Moreover, cooperative learning, scaffolding, and guided learning are all terms with the same meaning (McLeod, 2012).

Case study

Introduction

This section will discuss a personal case study of an inclusive intervention for an ADHD pupil in the art class through my own professional practice as an art teacher and the outcome of applying the previous theories and concepts in this case study.

Background Information

Sarah is a caring, kind, and intelligent girl in Y3 class; she participates in physical activities such as swimming and gymnastics. Although she interacts well with her peers, they often ignore her and do not involve her in playing with them; on the other hand, Sarah gets bored easily so she may interrupt others and involve herself in dialogues or games trying to engage with her peers. Furthermore, she has difficulty working independently and may fail to finish tasks on time resulting lack of self-confidence. She is making repetitive mistakes, and breaking rules. Sarah often has difficulty with focusing and sustaining her attention while doing a task. However, she hyper-focus on activities of interest. Her parents and teachers noticed that she is restless, cannot sit still, and she is constantly running around in class. When the child was shown to a specialist, she was diagnosed with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Methodology

Through my art class, my plan was to work on Sarah's weak points, boost her self-confidence, try to change and transform her negative thoughts about herself (Transformative theory), and get her involved in her learning process. In the beginning, it was important to introduce the expected learning objectives to her and set a chart of these objectives, and monitor the level she reaches through the learning process (Solo taxonomy). Then, applying active learning as a part of inclusive learning inside the class; asking her questions while demonstrating the lesson presentation and giving her choices for answers if she did not know the answer. The lesson was explaining weaving and students started weaving the threads but Sarah struggled as it was hard for her; so, differentiation in this lesson was a must for her and finding an alternative for the threads which was stripes of construction paper. With my help at the beginning, she started to copy my steps in weaving the stripes then she got the idea and continued (Scaffolding). Sarah was encouraged to write a story and draw a storyboard about herself, she was excited and she did it ably as she draw herself playing, jumping, and running. She expressed herself as a hyper child and she read the story to the whole class about herself; her peers liked the story and clapped for her (Counter storytelling). Generally, the school was keen to give Sarah the opportunity to do what she wants and appreciates through giving her different choices and space of freedom that allows her to flourish and discover her capabilities.

Findings

Social justice theories were applied with Sarah through the storytelling (CTR theory) and giving her choices and the needed amount of freedom to enhance her capabilities (*Capabilities approach*); the impact of applying social justice made Sarah more interacting positively with her peers, minimized bothering others, and reinforced her self-confidence. The usage of active learning as a way of inclusive teaching and the learning objectives chart (Solo Taxonomy) helped Sarah to increase her attention, made her more alert, motivated, engaged her in her learning process, and reduced breaking the rules. Scaffolding theory supported Sarah to gradually work independently; after receiving help from more experienced or skilled people in the past, her mistakes were minimized and She became more motivated to finish her tasks. However, she still struggles when it comes to a new task as she needs help and may take more time. All previous strategies as well as transformational theory worked together in changing Sarah's negative thoughts and self-assumptions to form a new positive perspective of seeing herself. Finally, Sarah needs more improvement in the hyperactivity part because when she gets bored, she runs around and does not sit still. Therefore, more strategies must be sought to reduce her boredom and decrease her excessive movement.

Conclusion

This study clarified the importance of social justice and its essential role in providing students with special needs or learning difficulties with equal, fair, and equitable educational opportunities, away from bias, racism, and discrimination. Moreover, it illustrated an explanation for Special Education Needs & Disability (SEND), Specific Learning Difference' (SpLD), focused on attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and its characteristics, social justice and its approaches, Transformative learning, Inclusion, and differentiate learning.

The case study embodied my experience in exploring different strategies and interventions to facilitate exemplary learning for an ADHD student inside the art class through experimenting with transformative learning, social justice, inclusion, and differentiated learning; using several theories and approaches such as transformative theory, Solo taxonomy, Scaffolding theory, Critical race theory, and Capabilities approach. All the theories and approaches used in the case study were useful and effective to a great extent; however, more strategies were needed to be applied (in Sarah's case) to reduce the hyperactivity. The case study indicated that the application of inclusion with SEND children makes them more involved in society and develops their social skills, which achieves the desired social justice. It is recommended that teachers study in detail how to deal with SEND children in a way that enables them to use successful and effective strategies with these children so that they take their opportunity to learn like the rest of their peers by providing education that takes into consideration their needs, their individual differences, the development of their skills and the achievement of social justice among the various students. In addition to providing continuous follow-up to the development of these students in achieving educational goals through inclusion programs that suit them.

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