Promoting Economic Security and Employment Generation through Effective Management of Education and Entrepreneurial Skills Curriculum in Nigeria

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Abstract: This paper focused on promoting economic security and employment generation through effective management of education and entrepreneurial skills in Nigeria. Highlighted in the paper were some means through which economic security, employment generation and entrepreneurial skills could be enhanced for students in tertiary institutions. The definition of some terms was outlined. Further discussed in the paper were: the importance of developing entrepreneurial skills curriculum in education; managing education through effective utilization of entrepreneurship education for promotion of economic security and employment generation; and the challenges affecting effective utilization of entrepreneurship education. Some recommendations were proffered towards managing education through effective utilization of entrepreneurship educations included: education stakeholders and government should ensure adequate funding of education; and effective propagation and utilization of entrepreneurship education; motion and utilization of entrepreneurship education; and effective propagation and utilization of entrepreneurship education; were profilered towards managing education into the school curricular. This should be done throughout all the levels of education from basic education, secondary education and higher education in order to inculcate into individuals entrepreneurial skills that will promote economic security and employment generation.

I. Introduction

Generally, education of any sort is not an end itself but a means to an end. That is why scholars have given many definitions of education as an instrument for socio-economic, political and cultural development. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) in the National Policy on Education described education as an instrument "par excellence' for national transformation and development. Education is the key to national development. This is because it unlocks the economic potentials of the people; empowers and equips individuals in society to participate in, and benefit from their national economy; facilitates economic development and provides the basis for transformation. Qualitative education is the essential tool for sustainability. Education is said to be qualitative when the inputs such as students, teachers, finance, facilities and equipment are sufficiently available and utilized to achieve meaningful learning. It occurs when all these are converted through teaching and learning (theory and practical) to produce a desirable output that is better equipped to serve themselves and the society. The quality of input influences to a large extent the quality of output. In other words, the quality of the input of entrepreneurship education such as teachers, curriculum, students and infrastructural facilities will influence greatly, the input of the output (Olorunmolu, 2010). Therefore, quality entrepreneurship education will enhance job creation which will subsequently reduce unemployment, poverty and social vices in Nigeria. These will also help to improve the standard of living; hence promoting social economic and political development in Nigeria which is the cardinal objective of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Also, for the recipient of entrepreneurship education to be a job creator rather than job-seeker, he needs to acquire essential basic skills and attitudes through a curriculum that will enable him to function as an entrepreneur.

Furthermore, through education the human capital of any country can be built and developed. Scholars also highlighted that the highly developed countries such the United States, Germany, China, etc, have obtained a greater economic status as result of the efforts and competencies of their human capital in which adequate attention is given to the Human Development Index (HDI). Education in these countries does not only serve the purpose of enabling individuals only to secure 'white collar' jobs but is also for development of human competence which enables one acquire 'technical skills, entrepreneurial and vocational skills for self-reliant, employment generation and wealth creation. Emphasis is on ways in which the human development index of countries would be properly managed through acquisition of knowledge, competence, abilities and skills that

will enhance economic security; create wealth and promote employment generation. Entrepreneurship education is therefore one means in which such could be obtainable. Through this means, the human capital of any country acquires entrepreneurial skills through a curriculum that enables them become self-dependent and self-relied even without white collar jobs; create wealth for themselves and generate employment (Olorumolu & Agbede, 2012).

Entrepreneurship education as part of the total educational system is the type of education that involves the acquisition of skills, ideas and management abilities necessary for job creation. An entrepreneur promotes employment rather than seek for an employment. Therefore, there is a need to embrace this type of education and provide all the necessary resources needed to make functional. Quality entrepreneurship education could be used as a tool for fighting the war against poverty and unemployment in Nigeria (Olorunmolu & Agbede, 2012). When the economic security and wealth creation through employment generation of citizens of any country is rest assured and guaranteed, then national security is highly propagated. Inegbenebor (2005) further opined that Nigeria faces a major problem of graduate unemployment. Young men and women leave the Universities and Polytechnics every year with very little hope of securing jobs. The present global economic crises suggest that the entire world is in war between financial/qualitative education and catastrophe (Aluwong, 2010).

Studies undertaken by Dabalen, Oni and Adekola (2000) on the labour market prospects of University graduates in Nigeria, as cited by Inegbenebor (2005) found the unemployment rate for graduates to be around 25% while their prospects for employment have worsened over time. Hoping to improve their chances of employment, some recycle themselves into postgraduate programmes. Others who do not see any hope of selfsustenance outside the University devise ways of remaining within the system but engage in various anti-social activities such as cultism. The problem is exacerbated because private sector organizations have found that they can only survive the fierce competition resulting from globalization by adopting new technologies and processes, and re-organizing themselves so that they can become more flexible and light-footed. This reorganization, re-engineering or right-sizing has resulted in massive less of jobs in the private sector. The public sector has also been infected by the virus of reorganization and repositioning following global imperatives. First, public policy has positioned the private sector, in place of the public sector, as the engine of growth of the economy. Second, to achieve efficiency which is assumed to be correlated with private sector model of management several public sector organizations have been or are being privatized or commercialized. The net effect of these changes is that the public sector which, historically, absorbed the bulk of graduates of tertiary institutions could no longer play this role. Perhaps the most significant factor that has complicated the problem of graduate unemployment is the slow growth of the economy. Between 1995 and 2002, GDP grew at an average of only 3.3% per annum (Inegbenebor, 2005). Thus, the capacity of the economy to absorb the products of an over expanding tertiary institutions is severely limited. Even though these fundamental and unprecedented changes are occurring and are obviously irreversible. Universities appear to produce graduates that are prepared to face the changes.

According to Yesufu (2000) cited in Inegbenebor (2005), most Nigerians are being educated out of context. Olibie (2013) noted that the curriculum for higher education is not entrepreneurship oriented and is not adequately suited for emergent global curriculum trends. Universities have paid very little attention to the changing labour market conditions in spite of promptings by public officials and international agencies urging them to do so. Rather than being at the forefront proactively converting these changes into opportunities for innovative programmes, the University system in Nigeria seem to have assumed a production orientation oblivious of the needs of the economy. With the recent evolvement of National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) which is described as a home grown medium term development and poverty reduction plan; this served as an inspiration to many education stakeholders. For instance, Inegbenebor (2005) further highlighted that it is in this context that Nigerian Universities under the aegis of the Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC) committed themselves to produce entrepreneurial graduates for the stimulation of private sector growth in Nigeria. Through NEEDS therefore the education and training of entrepreneurs in Nigeria became a national agenda. Before NEEDS however, the National University Commission had incorporated entrepreneurial development as a compulsory course to be taught in undergraduate programmes of administration and management under its approved minimum academic standards for Nigerian Universities. The aim of the Commission was to have a curriculum that will "encourage self reliance in the individual and of the nation". The University of Benin has had about twenty-five years of experience teaching entrepreneurship to undergraduate and postgraduate students in the Department of Business Administration. Subsequently and following the requirement of the NUC minimum academic standards, the course also became compulsory for undergraduate students in the Departments of Accounting and later Banking and Finance (2003/2004). In 1999, the Senate of the University of Benin approved that a 2-credit course in entrepreneurship be offered by all undergraduate students of the University irrespective of discipline (Inegbenebor, 2005).

When education is effectively managed through utilization of entrepreneurship education for instance; economic security, wealth and employment generation of the HDIs of such country is highly guaranteed and

national security achievable. Therefore, the thrust of this paper is to share the experiences from other scholars' opinions/views on the need and importance of promoting economic security and employment generation through effective management of education and entrepreneurial skills curriculum in Nigeria and to encourage discussion on strengthening entrepreneurship education for the management of education in Nigeria. The paper has been divided into four sections into to examine and discuss issues related to the paper. Section one is an outlook of the definition of some concepts, while section two examined the importance of developing entrepreneurial skills in education. Section three further discussed the essentials of managing education through effective utilization of entrepreneurship education for promotion of economic security and employment generation, while section four is an outline of the challenges affecting effective utilization of entrepreneurship education for promotion. The paper concluded by proffering recommendations towards promoting economic security and employment generation through effective management of education and entrepreneurial skills in Nigeria.

Entrepreneurship Education; Economic Security and Employment Generation.

Education has been described previously as an instrument for socio-economic and political development. It involves any form/kind of training given to an individual through knowledge and skills acquisition in order to bring about changes in ones ideologies, attitudes, character and behaviour and moulding the individual to enable him fit properly into the society. According to Olorunmolu and Agbede (2012) education is the key to national development and the progress of a nation is a function of the level of the resourcefulness of the people which to a great extent, relates to the level of quality of the training and purposeful development of education in that nation. Such progress or development could only occur when an individual in the society is gainfully employed and per capital income is enhanced. This could only be possible when government educational policies are geared towards a functional education that can lead to job creation viz-à-viz self reliance. Quality entrepreneurship education is a means through which government could attain such development in the society and likewise economic security, national security and employment generation rest assured (Olorunmolu & Agbede, 2012).

On the other hand, many scholars and writers have given definitions of entrepreneurship education. According to Osuala (2010), entrepreneurial education is a specialized training given to students of vocational and technical education to acquire the skills, ideas and managerial abilities and capacities for self-employment rather than being employed for pay. It is also a programme or part of a programme that prepares individuals to undertake the formation and or operation of small business enterprises which also includes franchise operations for the purpose of performing all business functions relating to a product or service with emphasis on social responsibilities, legal requirement and risks for the sake of profit involved in the conduct of private business enterprises. Idogho and Ainabor (2011) described entrepreneurship education as education which prepares individuals not only to be gainfully employed but also to be self-employed and be employer of labour. The programme is however designed to make beneficiaries look beyond white-collar jobs. From the above definitions, it is evident that entrepreneurship education could turn around the economic fortune (i.e. promoting economic security) of Nigeria by providing jobs and reduce the unemployment rate (i.e. employment generation) in Nigeria hence reducing the poverty level of Nigerians for enhancement of national security. It could also help an individual to identify investment opportunities and help them to harness untapped natural resources in Nigeria in order to produce the goods and services needed in the country. These will no doubt reduce or eliminate poverty and help to increase per capital income in the country which is one of the cardinal points of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (Olorunmolu & Agbede, 2012). When individuals skills and competences have been empowered through entrepreneurship education; both employment and wealth creation is generated and economic security achieved.

Economic security according to the Wikipedia the Free Encyclopedia (2013) is the condition of having stable income or other resources to support a standard of living now and in the foreseeable future. It includes: probable continued solvency; predictability of the future cash flow of a person or other economic entity, such as a country employment security or job security. Economic security more often refers to individual and family money management and savings. Economic security tends to include the broader effect of a society's production levels and monetary support for non-working citizens. The Business Dictionary online describes economic security as a situation of having a stable source of financial income that allows for the on-going maintenance of one's standard of living currently and in the near future. This includes individuals having access to basic social security, skill security and work security. Employment generation as describe by the Federal Government in NEEDS 2004 is a situation where jobs are created for citizens of the country to enable them have essentials of human life for their daily sustenance, longevity and like have a decent standard of living.

The Importance of Developing Entrepreneurial Skills in Education

According to Idogho and Ainabor (2011), entrepreneurs have the ability to spark new ideas and develop new products and services that create new businesses. The entrepreneur is not a man of ordinary

managerial ability but one who introduces something entirely new. The economies of African countries are no doubt characterized by a growing population and a general decrease in formal employment. Full employment guarantees stability, security and balanced economic development. However, this full employment cannot be fully realized under the public sector-driven economy, hence the need for entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship education as introduced in tertiary institutions in Nigeria by the Nigerian Federal Government is expected to inculcate in students the practical skills and experience needed to be self-employed and be self-reliant, through the management of small-scale businesses. To this end, to Idogho and Ainabor (2011) outlined that technical training institutions like Polytechnics and other training providers must empower their trainees with the needed entrepreneurial skills that will enable them to be self-employed and to fit into the modern world of work.

The importance of developing entrepreneurial skills in education as culled out from the objectives of entrepreneurship education highlighted and spelt out by Osuala (2010) and Olorunmolu & Agbede (2012) which includes: 1. Entrepreneurial skills provides meaningful education for youth which could make them self reliance and subsequently encourage them to drive profit and be self independent; 2. It provides graduate with the training and support necessary to help them establish a career in small and medium size business; 3.It provides graduates with training skills that will make them meet the manpower needs of the society. 4. It provides graduates with enough training in risk management to make uncertainty bearing possible and easy; 5. Entrepreneurial skill stimulates industrial and economic growth of rural and less developed area; 6. Provides graduate enough training leer will make them creative and innovative in identifying new business opportunities; and 7. Provides small and medium sized companies with the opportunity to recruit qualified graduates who will receive training and tutoring in the skills relevant to management of the business centre.

From the above importance, it is evident that entrepreneurship education if given all it deserves through effective management and properly implemented in education will produce quality graduates that will foster wealth creation, employment generation and job creation and reduce or eliminate poverty as means of promoting economic security and national security in Nigeria. This could be realized when the graduates are self-reliant by establishing their own business small/medium scale enterprises. Employment generation and job creation is one of the cardinal objectives of Millennium Development Goals and means to promoting economic security and national security. When ample job opportunities are created it will invariably help to reduce unemployment, poverty and enhance better standard of living of an individual in Nigeria as pointed out and envisaged by Idogho and Ainabor (2011). Olorunmolu and Agbede (2012) were also emphatic that quality entrepreneurship education plays a vital role in the social, political and economic development of any Nation and this is possible when jobs are created for the citizenry by establishing a lot of businesses that will accommodate the unemployed youth in Nigeria. A qualified graduate of entrepreneurship education would have acquired enough skills relevant to management of small business centre. However, the benefits of developing entrepreneurial skills in education as stated by Olorunmolu and Agbede (2012) include the following: - Creation of self-employment. An entrepreneur provides job for himself by establishing small business centre. This, according to Idogho and Ainabor (2011) helps to reduce the problem of unemployment (by generating employment) and other social vices in Nigeria. The entrepreneur does not only provide jobs/employment for himself alone, but provides for others too. This in turn helps the individual to increase per capital income hence improve standard living.

- The entrepreneur determines or identifies the specific wants of the people and the type of goods and services that will fulfill those wants most comfortable. Emeruwa (2005) asserted that the entrepreneur does not only identifies but mobilizes and organizes the resources to tap the opportunities by assisting men, materials, money and machines to explore the opportunity.

- Production of goods and services that is important to the well-being, comfort and happiness of individuals in the society at large.

- Entrepreneurship stimulates rural, economic and industrial development. They contribute to the development of rural areas. They do this by establishing their small/medium scale enterprise in such areas by discouraging rural migration. They provide ample job opportunities to the rural dwellers. They also provide goods and services, which could be found in an urban area and sometimes provide infrastructural facilities.

- The entrepreneurs are usually motivated in their activities not only by the need for material contributions to the welfare of the communities but also desire to make profit. This uplifts the dignity of labour.

- Through entrepreneurship education, utilization of local resources is made possible. The graduates of this specialized education set up their small/medium scale business, which will enable them to utilize the local resources available in their vicinity. The uses of local raw materials are discarded by products of large firms as primary input in their production processes. Olorunmolu and Agbede (2012) further asserted that in terms of their economic benefits small firms can be said to be greater in local resources maximizes than their large counterparts. The provision of raw materials for the big firms helps them to increase their production hence employ more personnel thereby creating jobs for unemployed youth in the country.

- Through entrepreneurship education, A pool of potential entrepreneurs who are well equipped with skills and technical know how to manage small/medium scale industries are produced. This will equally help in job creation. Through quality entrepreneurship education, Nigeria could produce a lot of entrepreneurs who could establish and manage businesses on their own. Based on the above merits, it is no doubt that entrepreneurship education could be used as major weapon in achieving economic security and employment generation by empowering the individual in the society to be self- reliant. This will help in strengthening national security.

Managing Education through An Entrepreneurship Education Curriculum for Promotion of Economic Security and Employment Generation

Curriculum means planned instructional experience designed to help learners develop and extend individual capability. This takes place in schools and is the result of the reconstruction of learners' knowledge and experiences (Olibie, 2013). It is vehicle for transmitting education as it specifies the aims and objectives, content, learning experiences and methods as well as the evaluation processes of education. One major feature of the curriculum is that it changes to meet emergent realities and needs of the society. One of such emergent realities is entrepreneurship education.

The role of entrepreneurship education in national security and development cannot be overemphasized. It promotes economic security and generates employment for people. Therefore, it is necessary to manage education through this means for economic progress in the nation, since most white collar jobs cannot contain the number of graduates in flocks in the labour market. According to Idogho and Ainabor (2011), entrepreneurship is globally accepted to be critical to economic growth and development in an emerging economy. It is a veritable tool for the improvement of the life and quality of citizens in any given nation and likewise seen as the driving force behind employment. Therefore, imparting in students the independent business management skill development through entrepreneurship education in Nigerian educational institutions could be a panacea for the growing unemployment in Nigeria. Idomeh, Ainabor and Okolie (2008), equally highlighted that the growing importance of the role of entrepreneurs in a country's economic growth and development has stirred up both developed and developing countries to formulate policies that would promote its development in their economies. It is in line with this that the Nigerian Federal Government as part of its initiatives, directed that entrepreneurship education be introduced into the curriculum of Nigerian tertiary institutions while countries like Japan, Taiwan and Korea became highly industrialized mainly due to their strong and deep entrepreneurial culture (Idogho & Ainabor, 2011). This also underscores the fact that in this era of globalization, a vibrant industrial sector that is governed by competent entrepreneurs will help the nation's economy to be largely export-competitive. Entrepreneurship education has tremendous impact on promoting economic security and employment generation. Thus, knowing its merits and contributions to economic security and national development, the need arises to teach and encourage entrepreneurship among students at all levels of education in order to stimulate the spirit of resourcefulness among the youth.

According to Adavbiele and Imeokparia (2006) cited by (Idogho and Ainabor, 2011), the training on entrepreneurship will help to check the imbalance in the educational system, which seems to be producing the wrong mix of manpower stock. The production of graduates from various disciplines without monitoring the manpower needs of the nation coupled with poor state of the Nigerian economy are identified as largely responsible for the high rate of unemployment. Uwameiye (1994) argued that though graduates of vocational and technical education may possess the skills necessary for a better chance of success in self-employment, they may have tough times in succeeding in business because they have not been exposed to entrepreneurial culture. They require a lot of exposure to a well structure entrepreneurship education curriculum in theoretical and practical terms. Studies carried out by Adavbiele and Imeokparia (2006) cited in Idogho and Ainabor (2011), revealed that students were not enterprising enough to set up their businesses. Further revealed in their studies included that despite the students' claim that they were skilled practically to enter into this venture, their responses showed that they are afraid to be involved in risk-taking, which signified that they had no entrepreneurship education.

Equally, Idogho and Ainabor (2011) carried out a study which sought to find out whether entrepreneurship education as taught in Nigerian technical institutions like Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi, has imparted in students the needed skill development to set up small-scale businesses after graduation. Findings of the study revealed that 295 respondents out of 300 respondents, about 98.3% stated that entrepreneurship education exposed them to learning experiences needed to set up small-scale businesses. It therefore means that almost all the respondents agreed that they were armed with the skills and experiences needed to set up smallscale businesses, having undertaken entrepreneurship education. The study further sought to find out respondents' reactions to the level of satisfaction with the teaching of entrepreneurship skill as a course. 248 respondents representing 82.6% said they were satisfied with the teaching of entrepreneurship skill, while only 17.3% expressed their dissatisfaction with the teaching of entrepreneurship programme. 216 respondents representing (72.0%) were of the opinion that entrepreneurship education as introduced in tertiary institutions in Nigeria has made impact on them while 84 respondents (28.0%) said that the programme did not make impact on them. The study further revealed that despite the students' claim that they were skilled practically to enter into this venture; their responses showed that they are afraid to be involved in risk-taking, which signified that they had no entrepreneurship education, having acknowledged being self-employed after graduation. The need to introduce entrepreneurship education (which has positive impact on students' skill development) into the curriculum for tertiary institutions was further emphasized in the study. Idogho and Ainabor (2011), envisaged that since skill development takes time to acquire, the students should be exposed even from their first day at school to activities concerned with the establishment and operation of business enterprises, which include among other things, the identification of investment opportunities, promotion and establishment of business enterprises, aggregation of the scarce resources for the enterprise, risk-taking and innovations, will be meaningful, if students are exposed early enough.

Therefore, managing education through effective utilization of entrepreneurship education is very vital for promotion of economic security, employment generation and creation of job and wealth. Definitely, this will involve laying down strategies for effective utilization of the entrepreneurial skill/development in education. Effective and implementable policy and planning with adequate consultations must be done on this sort. However, infrastructural development is essential for propagation of the programme in education. Adequate provision of both human and material resources must be considered as well. Effective utilization of entrepreneurship education and implementation of the programme in education generally will inculcate the necessary skills and competencies that would help the youth to be self-reliant. This would lead to the much desired development in the economy to build our nation. Entrepreneurial skills equips youth with managerial skills to manage human and material resources of their own business through the acquisition of skills and competencies in areas of entrepreneurship education. Thus, it is necessary to address the challenges which affect managing education through effective utilization of entrepreneurship education as means of promoting economic security and employment generation in Nigeria.

Challenges affecting Effective Utilization of Entrepreneurship Education for Promotion of Economic Security and Employment Generation

Olorunmolu and Agbede (2012) in highlighting the challenges affecting entrepreneurship education in Nigeria, envisaged that quality entrepreneurship education could played a vital role in equipping individual with necessary intellectual capacity, skills and right type of work habit and attitude to be able to create jobs for the growth of the Nigeria economy. However, what is quite essential is the extent to which the entrepreneurship education in the teaching-learning processes is confronted with a lot of challenges which brought a setback in the attainment of its objectives. These challenges which can be caused by both internal and external forces have not enable students to enjoy the benefits of this programme as expected and likewise limits the achievement of the economic security and employment generation for national security. Some of the challenges have been pointed out by Olorunmolu and Agbede (2012) include:

- Poor funding by government and non-governmental organizations.
- Poor or ineffective planning, policy implementation, supervision of information and evaluation of the programme across the board in education.
- Inadequate teaching materials, equipment and infrastructural facilities.
- The challenges posed on globalization, information and communication technology (ICT) have effect on curriculum, methodology, facilities, staff and equipment for effective programme utilization.
- Inadequate qualified teachers and instructors as well as supporting staff at all level.
- Inadequate motivation for available teaching and non teaching staff which affects staff efficiency, retention, creativity and initiative.
- Emphasis on theoretical Knowledge rather than practical knowledge due to lack of entrepreneurship education centre.
- High level of corruption and very poor maintenance culture in the system.
- Poor enabling business environment, access to credit/ loan, infrastructural decay, mass poverty, inflation, technological infraction, political instability and insecurity of lives and properties which hamper economic and business activities.

II. Conclusion

This paper has made an exposition on the vitality of promoting economic security and employment generation through effective management of education and entrepreneurial skills in Nigeria. Entrepreneurial skills acquired through entrepreneurship education has the potentials of enabling beneficiaries acquire the

competence that will promote economic security and generate employment. According to Olorunmolu and Agbede (2012) entrepreneurship education is a potent tool for equipping beneficiaries to emerge as job creators in the crucial Nigeria's business and economic environment. The paper is however, of the strong opinion that for effective utilization of entrepreneurship education for promotion of economic security and employment generation, the challenges affecting its management in education must be optimally addressed, because this is also a means through which economic security and employment generation could also be rest assured.

Recommendations

In view of the foregoing discussions, the following recommendations have been proffered:

- Education stakeholders should ensure effective propagation and utilization of entrepreneurship education into the school curricular throughout all the levels of education from basic education, secondary education and higher education in order to inculcate into individuals entrepreneurial skills.
- Courses on entrepreneurship development should be introduced to students in all departments in the tertiary institutions as such made a core curricular subject and a separate discipline like medicine, education, psychology, etc.
- Adequate resources, finances and materials should be provided for effective management of the programme in education. However, infrastructural development must equally be facilitated e.g. development of entrepreneurship centres.
- ICT should be incorporated into entrepreneurship education as well.
- Entrepreneurship education curriculum should be streamlined along the lines of practical skills acquisition in tandem with up to date technological innovation in the world of business.
- Effective supervision and evaluation of programme implementation and funding must be ensured on a continuous basis through government support and other private institutions support.
- Since the business world is dynamic in nature with constant changes; emphasis must be on practical skills rather than on theoretical for the management of this programme in education.
- Educational institutions must collaborate with industries and the private sector in order to utilize this programme in the schools.

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