



QUALITY EDUCATION & TRIBES: NEW APPROACH TO ATTAIN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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ABSTRACT

Education is that bristle which assemblages all sustainable development goals in a single garland. SDG4 infers quality education which ensures all phenomena of human life in a happy index. Sustainable development ensures equitable development of all without compromising the needs of future generations. The main target of SDG4 has to furnish quality education to all and to develop requisite skills to set up a nation that will promote an ambience in which every child has got the opportunity to develop as per their preference and contributes to making a just, patient and democrat society specially for all including vulnerable groups. It simply alludes that the sustainable plan of nation should be framed without neglecting different world views of different social groups, without curtailing down the indigenous knowledge of marginalised groups and without prioritising their aged pedagogy. Amartya Sen in his famous book, 'Poverty and Famine' points out that people from marginalised groups with low literacy rates fail to avail democratic freedom in their every step. We can't attain sustainable development by leaving them behind.

Tribes are the prime vulnerable groups of India where their concentration is the 2nd highest in the World. But their literacy rate and socio-economic scenario in comparison to other social groups in India, are the bottommost. For mainstreaming them, from the very dawn of freedom, they have been allowed to get inclusive education. Based on Millennium Development Goals, they also get the opportunity to avail free and compulsory education along with different governmental schemes and projects specifically designed for them to boost them in path of Sustainability. But their dilapidated conditions arise the question of rethinking the design of sustainability for them through SDG4 education.

The present paper shows a roadmap for using SDG4 education to uplift their literacy rates, improve their socio-economic conditions by assimilating their indigenous pedagogy, world views for framing quality education to create an economic zone for their progress and prosperity.

KEY WORDS: Sustainable Development Goals, SDG4 – Quality Education, Tribes, Tribal Development

INTRODUCTION

The common fate is the prime motto of sustainable development goal and SDG4 is the main armour to attain it which is considered as a 'the golden thread that runs through all 17[SDGs]' (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2015). This is simply because of in calculating all forms of education into a single circle framing the vision to 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all' (UN 2015). This makes an archetype shift from parochial concentration on universalization of primary education as prescribed in 'Millennium Development Goals'(Millenium Development Goals and Beyond, 2015) and extends beyond the ambit of 'Education for All'. Aspirations that are set for SDG4 offer opportunities to collaborate every form of education be it formal education or non-formal education or may it be informal education and all designs of education starting from pre-primary to higher education including vocational and adult education also into a single skeleton. This paradigm transaction enlarges the breadth of education as a comprehensive strategy to improve literacy, and number skills, creating the ambience for gender equality, promoting

the wellbeing of society (SDG3), and stimulating women empowerment (SDG 5) by creating ethical and righteous work fields (SDG8). All those things again ensure no picture of hunger and poverty (SDG 1& 2) are seen in our society, sanitation practices will be given topmost priority (SDG3), and serene and global brotherhood attributes will prevail everywhere (SDG5).

India has the second highest tribal concentration. We emphasise the fact again and again about tribal concentration in India by not leaving them behind the screen by stigmatising them as they have low aspiration levels and walk in life with low motivational instincts (Pal & Sarkar, 2022). The great architect of Harappa and Mohenjodaro civilisation can't be simply blamed like that. After the invasions of Aryans, they were settled down in remote areas far from so-called civilised habitations based only 'production-consumption' economy keeping the 'common natural resources as far as intact which is in core completely different from our 'production-consumption-distribution' economy(Bhattacharya, et al., 2021). From the beginning in the reign of Lord Cornwallis and with the introduction of 'Permanent Settlement Policy', the inhumane uprooting of the tribal population had begun. The



plucking out from the root of tribes has made the process accelerated with the cockcrow of independence of India in order to attain unstoppable development. In name of progress, we snatch every essence of their very existence and leave them to thrive in such a situation in the name of mainstreaming which is completely opposite to the requisites of their very existence. Reservation policy has been introduced for their upliftment but only a certain section of people from their community can able to avail those facilities. Apart from that, a large section of their population is still out of the threshold of basic schooling and spent their cursed days in the name of just survival. Only providing a little financial help or implementing reservation policies and different programmes don't able to alter the picture or bring the desirable dawn by making an end their endless long nights. Franklin D. Roosevelt has outlined that "We can't always build the future of our youth, but we can build our youth for the future". Here lies the importance of SDG4 and quality education.

The present paper will vividly describe the route map to include all tribal students of India in the education system and make themselves able to carry the plough of the nation on their shoulders and achieve the goals of sustainability. The research paper will help to focus on what level of quality education helps them to touch the prescribed sustainable development goals. All those scenarios will provide support to policymakers to bring necessary changes in presently prevailing quality education and reshapes it as per need.

SDG 4-- QUALITY EDUCATION

World Bank in 2014 asserts that quality education builds excellence and perfections among aspirants so that they can evolve as a productive part of human society being since self-sustainable resource and participate in the development of the society (King, 2011).

SDG4 extends the scope of education and to acquaint to the people from various backgrounds and ages with productive and applicable learnings (UNESCO, 2015). The both two terminologies indicate a lot of things are needed to be change if we want to attain sustainable development at desired levels. Learning should not be ended with storing only

information and gather recognising certificates related to it, rather than learning helps individual to acquire the skills and techniques along with basic knowledge of literacy and numerology that helps him to earn his bread and butter with dignity along with a handsome livelihood. Quality Education needs to have those basic criteria like 'comprehensive, holistic, aspirational, ambitious and universal' which makes an individual free to fly like a bird according to his own terms and conditions (UNESCO, 2015). The SDG4 accomplishes seven targets, among which the first three targets are directly related to access to education from primary level to university as well as technical institutions for children to adults. The fourth one is related to the development of employability skills as per markets' demands. The fifth target is set to provide an open door of educational facilities to all persons with disabilities, and vulnerable and marginalised groups. The sixth one is determined to make every youth expert in literacy and numeracy and gradually decrease the rate of illiteracy in the country. The seventh one is most crucial which engages with framing the requisite curriculum of education in accord with the needs of the society and individual's aspirations to develop a knowledgeable, skilled sustainable society where there are no gender discriminations, violence and bloodshed are practised and gradually the Earth becomes turn into the abode of peace and prosperity. Therefore the goals of SDG4 not only undergirds sustainability but also make a path for SDGs so that they can able to get in touch with reality (Wals & Benavot, 2017). This affirmation is undoubtedly competent as 'education can make a critically important contribution to progress towards the SDGs' (Sterling, 2016). SDG4 defines 'Formal Education' as a methodical education system betiding in institutions and ends with a reorganisation. 'Non-formal' education takes place outside of formal education set up to develop skills, professionalism and capacity. 'Informal education' simply deals with the day-to-day activities which develop indigenous knowledge out of the periphery of both formal and non-formal setups.

World Bank 2018 has given a clear picture of how quality education helps to attain benefits at all levels of society.

Table 1.1: Boons of Quality Education

	Individual/ Family	Community/ Society
Monetary	Higher chance to get employability, productive member of the family, decrease hunger and poverty	Higher amount of tax-payers, growth in economic progress, long-term development, lower ratios of hunger and poverty
Non-Monetary	Good health, lower mortality rate, resilience and better adaptability, responsible citizen, happy index in livelihood	Higher rate of upwards social mobility, better functioning of service sectors, high sense of values and responsibilities, peace and prosperity, social compatibility, decreasing of terrorist activities.

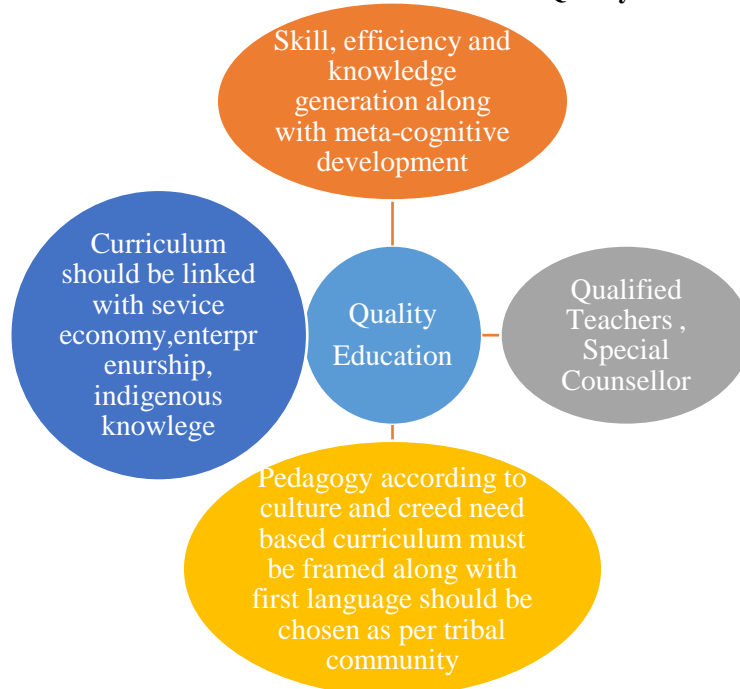
Source: (Gauthier, 2018)

In accretion, the first three goals are designed to achieve quality and equality in all ambit of the society. While the first aim tends to fabricate and elevate educational facilities so that all disadvantaged groups of people can attain an effective

teaching-learning ambience. The second target is to increase the scope of higher education in all developing and underdeveloped countries. To achieve all these components

effectively, there is a need to make an equilibrium between the need and supplies of qualified teachers.

Table 2: Framework of Quality Education



Source: Author

THE NEGLECTED PEDAGOGY

The Western philosophy of Education based on which our pedagogy has been made is completely different from tribal worldview and concepts. When in Western Philosophy, Earth is considered as a resource of different elements, but in their philosophy, they consider Earth as a mother and thus take care of it in every possible way. For innumerable times, they live in remote places which are considered as adverse to habitat in. Those places are rich in bio-diversity. They know how to preserve it despite using it. Their pedagogy had been generated due to their interrelations with nature and natural habitats. In western philosophy, when focus has been given on many facets of development but in their pedagogy, children only are provided guidance to make a humane along with the precious knowledge to live life sustainably. Education has to be the colloquy between past, present and future. If from the pedagogy, the glorious past of tribal completely be erased and no future planning is made in the prescribed pedagogy based on their past and present, then how can a tribal student assimilate himself with that pedagogy? In Western philosophy, there exist no fragrances of our soil and we select that very pedagogy for them to flourish. The obvious result we now receive at the end of delivery. A large portion of people can't make the utilised benefits of education for generating employability for them. Either they remain stagnant in the class or leave the classroom before finishing the minimum level of education. A thousand students can't feel the need even to cross the borderline of the entrance gate of school for once. Again, the pedagogy of the targeted population should be enriched with their culture and creeds, their pearls of wisdom and virtues, their ethics and rules and teaching learning should be accorded with the necessary knowledge

and skill development of the targeted population. Every policyholder should take care to look into tribal culture and indigenous knowledge and prescribe a curriculum based on their indigenous system of living. Indigenous community-based knowledge generally flourishes based on determinations made in agriculture fields, caring of health practices, preparation of foods, non-formal educational practices and management of natural resources. If before making pedagogy for them, we neglect all that knowledge, actually we neglect their very origin and existence. A polar bear can't live in the equator region, we have realised those things. Then how can tribal students thrive based on the foreign pedagogy that from the long span after independence is allotted for them to proliferate?

ALIENATION IN THE NAME OF ASSIMILATION

In the name of inclusion in an advanced progressive society, education has been considered as main armour 'imparting not only pedagogic instructions but attitudes, values and behaviours for creating equality and equity in the society' ("Delors Commission," 1996). But the result that we get is completely opposite to our expectations. The alienation is got its strength and the path of marginalisation becomes broadened due to the separation they face in the formal classroom in the name of 'inclusive education'. 'They are' and 'we are' approaches in classroom teaching segregate separate the path of proposed entanglement. Again the 'language policy' also follows the language of the dominant group of the then society. Further, they are deprived of the policy of 'mother tongue literacy programmes' (Kothari, 1964). At the beginning of education, they begin their study with a language which is irrelevant, unreasonable and meaningless to them. Without understanding the essence of language, they begin to



mimic it and study it based on rote learning and memorisation. With the introduction of English as a second language, we make their situation more horrible and devastated. Actually, if they get the facility to read their mother tongue as first language, then English should be taught as a third language in spite of the second and teaching of 3rd language homiletic is quite different from the teaching of 3rd language homiletic. This three-language formula unconsciously creates a disadvantage for tribal students from the very first day of schooling. Besides that, in the maximum portion of India, when the question arises of giving importance to tribal languages, the policy makers assemble all the tribal communities 'pan-santhal category' creating alienation within marginalised groups who don't have their own alphabets of written form of their language. Therefore, the government should come forward to introduce tribal pedagogy based on their indigenous knowledge which must have the hidden approach intending to 'one perfect shape fits in all'.

ROUTE MAP TOWARDS ATTENDING SDG4

The vision of SDG4 is to 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning' (UNESCO, 2015). The first criteria are inclusive. After uprooting a tribe, disposing them into formal schools without minimum concerns about their knowledge, culture and language should not be taken as inclusive education. Government should ensure to adopt the policy to reframe the pedagogy as per tribal indigenous knowledge and world view. Again, Government should reconsider the medium of transaction of lessons to tribal students. Language must extend its hands to make learning joyful and effective. If from the beginning of schooling, all tribal students struggle to find the cosy shelter of language, but they are unable to find so, teaching-learning language is step-mother for them. As a result, the learning outcomes are not operative for the future progress of tribal students and for the country too. If creating a multilingual society is the motto of Education Policy, then marginalised language also needs to give as much priority as dominant languages of the society. The language policies practised in the framing of pedagogy of inclusive education create more inequalities and discrimination within the boundaries of formal schooling. In a society of multilingualism, language creates more barriers and obstacles by setting up the ambience of an unequal society. If in an inclusive education system, the mother language should be used as the first language, in the case of marginalised groups diverting from this rule is not a healthy practice. The main aim of education is to create skilled protagonists with all humane qualities. It is the secondary priority of education to make individuals efficient in different languages. From the beginning days of school, a tribal student has to bear the burden of 4/5 languages on their tiny shoulders. Government should look into the matter to convert 'their vernacular language policy' into a language used to handle classroom resources as per needs and necessities and drive away the three language discrepancies that are thrust on them.

If Canada is able to generate first nation pedagogy prioritising the requirements of the tribal students (Maina,

1997), then why not we can? Development in every sphere is one of the concerns of sustainable development. Not only has it helped them to learn better, above than that, they feel proud of their culture and philosophy. Our curriculum never tells tribal students about their glorious history of the past, although they have to learn about our freedom struggles, the history of abroad countries. Making them deprived of essential nutrients of their lives, how can they grow properly? Even on the holiday list, no holiday is allotted for tribal festivals in a maximum part of India. If minimum importance is not given regarding any periphery of tribal in formal schooling, how can we call the system 'inclusive and equitable'? Therefore, there is a necessity to reframe pedagogy for tribal students to attain the utmost positive outcomes from them.

With the change of society and its' needs, education modifies itself (Pal & Bhattacharya, 2020). The introduction of Total Quality Management (TQM) is the need of the hour. TQM can resolve the aspect of imparting quality education and generating employability skills among the learners (S. & Bhattacharya & Pal, 2020). Our economy makes its journey from agriculture to industrial and now transmutes itself into a service economy making ample opportunities for youths and aspirants. Tribes are experts in agriculture knowledge, have wisdom in ecology, live their lives based on forests and MFPS, (Bhattacharya & Pal, 2022) are expertise in using different medicinal plants, have a culture of dancing and singing, and have awareness about soil and climate, have enlightenment about animal husbandry and collecting honey, have knowledge about sericulture etc. (Pal et al., 2022). Then why not we deliver professional and management training to tribal students besides opening those streams in the curriculum along with literacy and numeracy? It will provide the essential footings to make their life more sustainable through quality education. Again who will bring revolution in organic cultivation rather than tribes? The practical knowledge they form with continuous interaction with soil, climate and crop can be used as sources for ecological restoration. The hour has been knocking at our door to reframe the education system as per their indigenous knowledge and worldview to generate more taxpayers by putting a full stop to hunger and poverty (Bhattacharya & Pal, 2022). Again, the reservation policy (*Implementation of Reservation Policy in Respect of ST in Services & Posts under the Govt. of West Bengal*, n.d.) for tribes only serves and gives benefits to a little portion of people from their communities. A maximum of them fail to avail any advantages from those policies. We should reframe the curriculum and pedagogy helpful for them to stand on their feet rather than giving a little helps by formulating policies and rules. We should enlarge the scope of education for them so that they earn their bread and butter with dignity. The purpose of quality education is to make them socially strong, and make them efficient to earn democratic freedom which is not achieved by the government's concessions and donations. Donations and concessions don't serve the needs and priorities of the lives of the tribal.

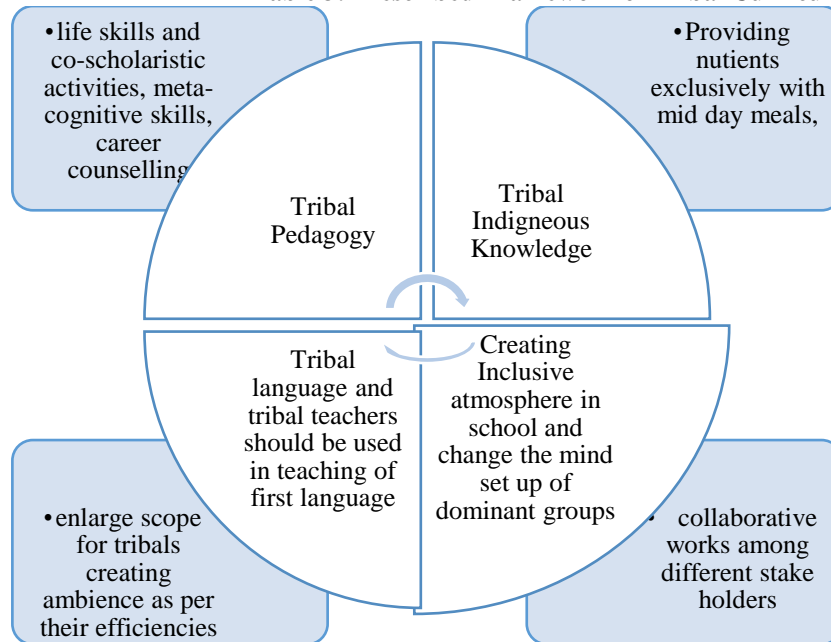
The following additions and reframing of curriculum and pedagogy along with creating human resources, help to generate qualities which help tribal students to get assimilated into larger society. It encourages them towards getting lifelong

learning as per the necessity of the hours. It helps them to think critically, and thoughtfully to build, rebuild and unbuild their learning to stay in the professional field and to combat the rat race of success with others.

The main lookout of quality education is to provide its aspirants opportunities and desired experiences so that aspirants can make communication with the outer world and the employability market along with making a sustainable

connection with what they already have in their cognitive mind. If we impose a completely different pedagogy and curriculum which don't have any connection with their existing cognitive knowledge, is similar to leaving them amidst of labyrinth. In inclusive education, policymakers should focus on making a curriculum which can share the common experiences of both or they should concentrate to put both two experiences together.

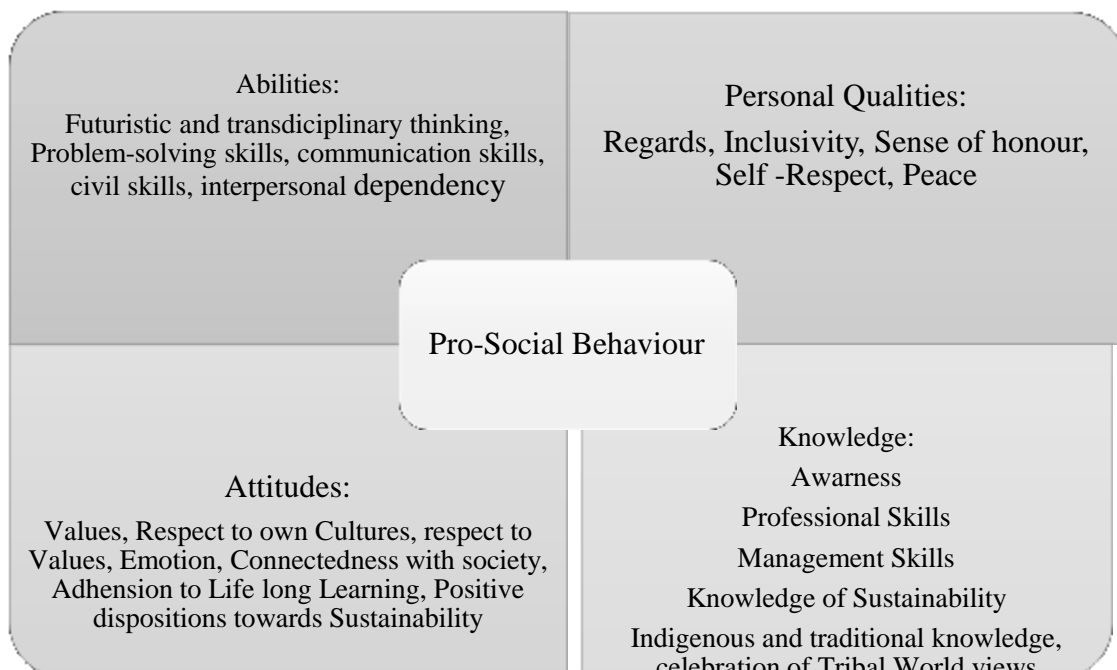
Table 3: Prescribed Framework of Tribal Curriculum



Not only that, but if we don't give importance to traditional and indigenous knowledge, the knowledge will fade away

from the domain of human reign. The outcomes of the prescribed curriculum are given in detail in table no 4.

Table 4: Expected Learning Outcomes



Source: Author



One of the aims of Quality education is to generate pro-social behaviour which helps them to assimilate with the world and its changing scenarios by making their dignified contribution to bloom society more and make them competent to manage their skills and proficiencies to get employed and remain connected with globe keeping their backbone straight.

CHALLENGES IN PATH OF PROMOTING QUALITY EDUCATION FOR TRIBES

- There are approximately more or less 712 types of tribes residing in India. Therefore, to build pedagogy based on their world views and indigenous, there needs a lot of research and patience. Again to frame the curriculum, the committee should also keep members for different tribal communities which is itself a challenge in terms of collaboration between different stockholders.
- After completing so many years after Independence, still, a large section of the tribal population chooses the path of child labour between the tussle with education. To arrange two meals per day is the prime necessity rather than getting an education. Again, there are shortages of schools, further schools also suffer from lack of infrastructures, qualified teachers, and basic necessities etc. which create hindrance in the path of quality education.
- Every student is an asset to an institution. Every student must get enthusiasm and support from the end of teacher and the institution. But in the classroom scenario, only bright and gifted students can able to draw the attention of teachers, no co-scholastic activities or extra-curricular activities get that much focused and appreciation at the end of school, school authorities and family. The outlook must have to be changed to achieve the goals of sustainable development through quality education.
- In order to make human resources, we forget to focus on values and moralities. We should mingle this flavour in quality education so that the base of appropriate social behaviour can be built in the mind of students and the distinguish ambience of 'we-they' prevailing in the school can be abolished. The mindset of the teacher and the distinctive behaviour of the teacher should be put an end for benefit of society as well as tribal students.
- An outdated curriculum needs to be replaced in connection to the market's demands so that appropriate human resources can be formed. Different courses and branches are needed to be formed in tune with the field of the service economy.
- Government should enlarge the budget allocation for education fields so that more taxpayers can be evolved. India has one of the largest education systems, if the budget is not adequate then the main necessary parts and the essential portion may be remained untouched.

CONCLUSION

SGD4 lays the infrastructure for expansion for other SDGs to develop in its complete sense. It is clear as daylight that education has the magical power to eradicate numerous problems like mist but the noteworthy point is that, not any education, the power only has under 'Quality Education. So without wasting any time, it is the hour necessary to implement Quality Education in real sense. The noteworthy points to be kept in the mind of policymakers and stakeholders are that quality education has to be in tune with modern society and employability markets, in accordance with soft computing and ICT facilities, technical and management skills so that every student can transform themselves into human resources. Government should enhance the allocation in the educational field to meet these needs and metamorphoses its structure and components. Teachers again necessitate to upgrade themselves to make them competent and efficient with the changing needs of the society to aggrandize quality education. Unless and until political motivation invests put their time, will, energy and monetary investment in this field, all contributions of paper and research work are only limited to the pen and paper. Without education, achieving success in a sustainable development plan is not possible.

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