European Journal of Business and Management
ISSN 2222-1905 (Paper) ISSN 2222-2839 (Online)
Vol.9, No.27, 2017

Innovation, Training and Demographic Factors as Determinants of Academic Staff Job Performance among Private Universities

Adenekan Tolulope E.
PG/15/0067
Department of Information Resources Management, Babcock University, Ilishan - Remo, Ogun State

Abstract
Considering the pace of change in realm of science and technology in the business environment viz-a-viz the performance of academia in Nigeria there appears to be a large variance. This variance could account to the decline in the quality of academic outputs recorded in Nigerian institution. On this premise, this study investigated innovation, training and demographic factors as determinants of academic staff job performance among private universities.The study adopted a correlational design using a sample of three hundred (300 i.e. male=159 and female =141) academic staff were randomly selected from five private Universities in Southwest Nigeria. Reliable measuring scale with each having Cronbach alpha value of above 0.7 was used for data collection. Three research questions were raised and tested using Pearson's' product moment correlation and linear regression at 0.05 level of significance.The result revealed that staff innovation, training, gender are significant predictors of job performance. At prediction stage, the four factors combined accounted for 93.6% (Adj.R^2= .936) variance in the prediction of academic staff job performance. While innovation was found to be the strongest factor predicting job performance, followed by training. Age and gender were not found significant. By implication innovation and training are essential determinant of academic staff job performance.It was recommended among others that, Academic staff with outstanding innovative skills should be recognized to which might go a long way in making other academic staff to engage their innovation skills in their daily activities. Annual and bi-annual training should be held and various aspect of academics to make academic staff get abreast with the crest of change in the global scene. Staff age and gender should be considered when distributing tasks among academia.
Keywords: Innovation, Training, Age, Gender, Academic staff, Job performance, Private Universities

Introduction

Job performance is one of most essential elements of organizational behavior research that and has been considered as significant indicator for the effective organizations. Thus the success of an organization is dependent on good performance of its employee (Colquitt, LePine, & Wesson, 2010). Like other sectors, the educational sector is also dependent on the good performance of its employees as the quality of an educational process is influenced by teachers' job performance. Therefore effective job performance of a teacher is essential for improvement of educational system as whole (Yusoff, Khan, & Azam, 2013).

The issue of teaching effectiveness of lecturers has always been a point of attraction since teaching effectiveness hinges on effective learning. A system that is committed to a high value effectiveness needed to be subjected to continuous assessment in order to sustain its standard, lecturer's evaluation therefore is a vital part of educational process. Alongside, in as much as important decisions are made based on information obtained or received from any evaluation process, it is therefore necessary that any instruments used in the evaluation should be appropriate and valid.

It is becoming a common practice in almost all higher institutions to conduct evaluation report on lecturers in other to gather feedback about lecturers' teaching effectiveness. Many universities in Nigeria have devised various means of improving the performance of their students with a view of improving their productivity and performance in the world of work after graduation. Some of the approaches used are students' evaluation, classroom evaluation, students rating, students' achievement, peer rating, self-rating, teachers' interview, parents' rating, competency test and indirect measuring (Adeyemo, 2015).

The key problems associated with measurement and assessment of teaching effectiveness as highlighted by Otote (2004) was that current measures for assessing academic for promotion in most Nigerian universities were not often linked with the capacity to teaching effectiveness. They pointed out that the existing Federal University Policies for measuring teachers or lecturers effectively either rely almost exclusively on perceptions of the head of department or focus on the lecturers' course taking record or basic academic skills and subject matter knowledge. Aside qualification, paper publications, community service and commitment both at national and international levels were also considered as criteria for assessing promotion. These according to Faleye and Awopetu (2012) were good but that they were not good predictors of teaching effectiveness.

Training can influence academic staff performance in the delivery of academic activities. It can be conceptualised as a deliberate effort carried out by educational institutions to expose their staff to current trend of lecturing, researching and academic work delivery. Training is a tool or strategy used by educational

institutions to ensure that no gap exist between current performance and expected future performance. Training can be liken to preparing academic staff or upgrading them to meet and deliver quality educational resources towards students' academic success and the university as a whole. For instance, delivering lectures to large population of students, marking of scripts, recording and submission of academic scores of the students might be very demanding as such the use of modern information technology knowledge might be needed. Training might be very essential in helping academic staff to meeting academic needs in a convenient manner, at times two lecturers might be slated to supervise one student, which could only made using google-doc whereby two individuals can edit the same document simultaneously without any interruption is essentially dependent on workers exposure to training.

On the other hand, lack of knowledge of use of modern technology and psycho-administrative skills such as academic networking, emotional intelligence, report writing and meeting institutional targets might negatively influence academic performance. Considering previous studies one might began to wonder that despite other studies relating training to job performance, are there no good pointers of role of training and its effect on performance.

Nevertheless, considering previous literature, the inability to consider trainers knowledge and expertise, quality of delivery method, training environment, content and materials might pose a weakness in past studies examining training among employees especially among academic staff. However, a good trainer is the one who has the skills to conduct a training program more purposeful by setting an appropriate training objectives and also deliver it in the best way so the employee can easily understand because training objectives is considered as the 'pillar' of training programs and lack of solid objectives leads to failure of training programs. Empirical literature confirmed that training is an important tool for the purpose of enhancing the workforce performance and it'll ultimately increase the worth of an organization but organization ought to be balance amongst training worth and training disbursement (Singh & Mohanty, 2012).

While Obisi (2011) argued that organizations in Nigeria should properly evaluate their training program by seeing that their organization objectives and missions are achieved or not and training cannot only change the ability of workforce not only concerning performing their current job but also aid them in fulfilling future task expectations. More so empirical literature, revealed that lecturers are not being sponsored to pursue higher academic training through study leave and in-service training and there is the problem of poor attendance of lecturers at academic seminars/workshops and conferences (Burkar, Idris & Bukar, 2011). However, Harris (2012) noted that a good administrator will help their lecturers by finding positive ways to encourage them to attend courses, workshop and activities that will ultimately help them to become better lecturers.

Innovation is another variable that could contribute to the variance in performance level of academicians among Nigeria Universities. It encompasses the process of taking creative ideas and turning them into useful products or work methods (Robbins & Coulter, 2006). Literature also perceives innovation as potential new combination that results in radical breaks with the past, making a substantial part of accumulated knowledge obsolete (Lim, Schultmann & Ofori, 2010). In the view of Lim, Schultmann and Ofori, (2010) who viewed innovation within the context of manufacturing industries as a means of developing and sustaining core competencies through development of internal capabilities, set ups of research and development R&D departments and strategized research scopes and investments. This is in contrast to invention which could be defined as the process of developing new ideas. Innovation is the ability to combine two or more knowledge in solving or meeting human needs. In academics, lecturers will be termed innovative when they consistently create new means and approach to the delivery of contents; that is, manipulating, adapting and updating contents to soot human needs or making learning easy and productive to learners.

Innovation in academics implies the lecturers having creative mind, being able to reflect on, to design and to apply new, diverse teaching methods or activities, understanding individual differences of students, other academic staff, stimulating students learning motivation and interest, enhancing the students learning effectiveness in the preparation before setting out for lecture, in the process of teaching and assessment (Shu-Mei Chen, 2010). As conceived in literature the purpose of lecturer innovation in the students' area: (a) Developing students' capabilities in independent analysis, thinking and judgement; (b) Stimulating students' interest and motivation for learning ; (c) Tapping the students' potential in creativity and problem solving; and (d) Enhancing students' learning ability. In the teachers' area: (1) Enhancing teaching quality and effectiveness; (2) Having rich and diverse teaching content and methods; (3) Having a diversified student assessment and; (4) Achieving educational goals and ideals (Chen-Wan Chiu, 2000; Ching-Shan Wu, 2002; Chi-Cheng Chang and Chiu-Meng Wang, 2008).

However, in contrast to the view of literature, innovation in academics transcends creativity in handling students learning. Innovation should cut across approach to research, community development and teaching, because lecturers performances assessment rests upon their quality of research output, community development and teaching (Burkar, Idris & Bukar, 2011). On this premise analyzing innovation in academics must not be myopic. On the other hand, innovation in research productivity should encompass being creative combining

ideas in solving human problems, estimating and testing coinages and inter-disciplinary approaches to solving national and economic problems in terms of research embarked upon. In the same vein, innovation in community development should involve adoption of emotional intelligence in settling human differences, bringing stakeholders together to see how communities can be upgraded and having citizens more comfortable. It could involve bringing resources together to attack endemic issues disturbing the peace of citizenry or borrowing the idea of developed nations and customizing it in a way that it will fit in to the context of the problems affecting the immediate society without losing cultural values and heritage. Empirical literatures have reported better performance when employee is innovative in nature (Chiu-Meng Wang, 2008; Shu-Mei Chen, 2010)

Age is another factor that is capable of influencing level of performance among academia. Age referred to as chronological growth of an academician. It dictates both the experience of an individual in life and the limitation of the physical strength an individual can exert on a particular task. In discussing age among academia, the classification of young and old could be objective in the sense that educational institutions are often interested in recruiting young sharps who will stay longer in the department than old folks. That notwithstanding, old academic folks too are considered at recruitment stage due to academic experience gained over the years for the purpose of reproducing such icons among the young sharps. Nevertheless age is an essential factor in academics, but the influence of age on performance of academic staff might not be early predetermined.

Considerable decline in academic staff performance attracted the demand to test the variation that might exist among the performance of old and young academia. This is found worthy of examination because educational output appears to be retrogressing in recent years (Afolabi 2013), it is worth investigating if been young is the problem or being old to be out of the academic arena. Xu (2007) contended that performance depends upon age. While Miron Erez and Naveh (2004) and Yun, Donahue, Dudley and McFarland (2005) perceived age from the aspect of experience and education level in determining job performance among academic staff. Age could impact both quality and quantity of academia performance. On the other hand, Nbina (2012) opined that teachers of today are buffered by many challenges which dampen their moral and lower their motivation to perform effectively with an adverse effect on the educational system. This could be as a result of some factors such as lecturer-students ratio, numbers of script to mark, numbers of academic projects and students on internship and other academic roles and activities which might require the physical strength of a young academic staff to undertake. On this premise the impact of age on job performance of academic staff might require further empirical investigation.

Gender is also a factor in this study which is capable of influencing academic staff job performance. Being man or woman could create unique performance although not really superior performance because they perform different roles. This leads to women and men having different experience, knowledge, talents and needs. Gender analysis explores these different needs of men and women. It also facilitates the strategic use of distinct knowledge and skills possessed by men and women. According to March and Mulchopadhyay (1999) the concept of gender also includes the expectations held about the characteristics aptitudes and likely behaviours of both women and men femininity and masculinity. It is observed that lecturing and other related academic activities are done mostly by men in all selected universities under study.

Despite this slight difference that appears to make men superior in academics. In recent times, women are also taking their place by taking lead role in departmental, faculty and administrative roles. Woman are also becoming professors which is an indication that their job performance is quite improving compare to the past. According to Lindo, Sanders and Oreopoulos (2008), who made a study on gender differences in response to performance and educational incentives while analyzing the previous studies, they established that women are more responsive to positive incentives than men. Women respond to advising and scholarship programs while men do not; tuition reductions impact college completion rates for women more than men; and the effects of high school achievement awards appear limited to women (Lindo, Sanders & Oreopoulos, 2008). The result of these studies has prompted a question that will the recent achievements of women accredit them to be better in job performance than their male counterparts?

Considering the forgoing, there appears to be scarcity of literature predicting academic staff job performance using training, innovation and demographic factors. Literature had over emphasized on studying research outputs alongside with infrastructural facilities. Nevertheless this study is taking a contrary approach by examining job performance of academic staff using training, innovation and demographic factors as determinants.

Theory of Planned Behaviour

Based on the work of early psychologists, Ajzen (1985, 1991) introduced the theory of planned behaviour widely accepted in the social science. This model explains the process of human behaviours. The theory of planned behaviour is an extension of the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975)

which was based on various attitudinal theories. It depicts the nature of the theory, which shows that an individual's intention is an immediate determinant of one's behaviour. The stronger the intention to perform a particular behaviour, the more likely the individual is to perform that behaviour. However, it is not particularly surprising to suggest that employees do what they intend to do. Therefore, Ajzen (1991) presented the predictors of behavioural intention. As the intention is a function of three predictors: attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control.

According to Ajzen (1988, 1991), an attitude is an individual's positive or negative assessment of the particular behaviour. The concept is the extent to which conducting the behaviour is positively or negatively valued. It is decided by a total set of accessible behavioural beliefs linking the behaviour to expected outcomes and other attributes. Subjective norm is an individual's perception of social normative pressures from other people, or relevant others' beliefs that he or she should or should not perform such behaviour. The third determinant of behavioural intention is perceived behavioural control which is an individual's perceived ease or difficulty of performing the particular behaviour. It is assumed that perceived behavioural control is decided by a total set of accessible control beliefs (Ajzen, 1991).

Rotundo and Sackett (2002) argued that there are two major perspectives to categorize employee job performance: micro perspective that focuses on specific individual behaviors versus macro perspective that focuses on productivity or effectiveness which is the consequence of employee's job behaviors. This study adopts the macro perspective to explain the place of training, age, gender and innovation in the prediction of academic staff performance (c.f., attitudes >behaviors >results).

In the context of this study academic staff attitude to training, age and gender variation determines their level of innovativeness which then determine the level of performance. Staff attitude is a reaction (which is often based on training, gender and age) this reaction produces a behaviour (innovation) which could be progressive or otherwise. This behaviour is what accounts for job performance as long as it is targeted towards organisational goals and objectives.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study was to investigate innovation, training and demographic factors as determinants of academic staff job performance among private universities. Specifically, it examined;

a. the relationship between the independent variables (training, innovation, gender and age) and the dependent variable (Job performance)
b. the joint contribution of the independent variables (parenting styles, training, innovation, gender and age) on the dependent variables (Job performance)
c. the relative contribution of the independent variables (training, age, gender and innovation) on the dependent variables (Job performance)

Research Questions

The following research questions were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

I. What is the relationship between the independent variables (training, innovation, gender and age) and the dependent variable (Job performance)?
II. What is the joint contribution of the independent variables (training, innovation, gender and age) on the dependent variables (Job performance)?
III. What is the relative contribution of the independent variables (training, age, gender and innovation) on the dependent variables (Job performance)?

Methodology

Design

The study adopted a correlational design. This design is appropriate because the researcher intends to examine the relationship that exist between the variables under investigation and the predictive power. More so, the researcher does not have control over the concomitant variables as their manipulation had already occurred.

Population

The target population for this study consist of private University academic staff in Southwest Nigeria. Southwest Nigeria has eighteen private universities.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling was used in selecting five private universities (Covenant University, Bells University of Technology, Crawford University, Babcock University, Bowen University). The justification for selecting them is based on the following;

Covenant University is chosen for this study because it is the best sought after private university in JAMB enrolment. The Bells University of Technology is chosen because it is the only university operating in the

southwest among its peers as University of Technology. For Babcock, because it is the oldest in the southwest while for Crawford University, it is new relatively to the first three mentioned and Bowen University because it secured 100% success for the second time within five years in 2008 edition of the nationwide National Universities Commission (NUC) accreditation exercise.

However, forty percent (40%) of the academic staffs in each university was randomly selected, in a whole three hundred (300) academic staff were randomly selected for the study. The respondents were selected based on interest and willingness for the study.

Universities	Staff Population size	40% Sampled
Covenant University	417	166
The Bells University	56	22
Crawford University	46	18
Babcock University	146	58
Bowen University	89	36
Total	**754**	**300**

Instrumentation

A questionnaire was used for data collection because of the literacy level of study population. The adaptation was made after extensive review of literature. The scales were piloted a week before the real administration to certify that the scales are fit and does not have ambiguous items. The questionnaire was divided into four sections. The sections are: A, B, C and D.

Job Performance Scale (JPS)

The Job Performance scales are of wide variety and also multidimensional in nature. The current study has utilized Goodman & Svyantek (1999) Job Performance Scale, which is consisted of 25 items, covering three dimensions of Job Performance, i.e. Altruism, Conscientiousness and Task Performance (Goodman & Svyantek, 1999). The first 16 items are related to Contextual Performance, whereas remaining 09 items are related to Task Performance. The Goodman & Svyantek's Job Performance Scale has been used in past for assessing the Job Performance among teachers. For example Yusoff, Khan, & Azam (2013) found it highly reliable and valid in their study on examining the multifold relationship between University Teachers' Stress, Performance and Emotional Intelligence in Pakistan (Yusoff, et al., 2013). It recorded a reliability value of Cronbach alpha= 0.88.

Innovation Intelligence Scale (IIS)

Innovation Intelligence Scale was adapted from Ceserani (2015) electronic innovation quotient scale. The adaptation was made to fit in for academic staff, it intends measuring academic staff level of manipulative creativity towards fulfillment of university aims and objectives. It is rated on 4-point response scale ranging from 1-strongly disagree (SD) to 4-Strongly agrees (SA). Examples of items on the scale; "In your department, there is a cordial relationship between different functional areas so that ideas can be exchanged" and "staff meetings at your university often produce truly innovative results". The psychometric property of the scale recorded a Cronbach alpha value of 0.83.

Training Opportunity Scale (TOS)

Training opportunity scale was developed by the researcher. It measures the number of training opportunity they have been granted by their institution and the institutional organised or sponsored training they have experienced, It is rated on a 4-point response scale ranging from 1-strongly disagree (SD) to 4-Strongly agrees (SA). Example of the items on the scale; "Training is provided as an incentive for increased work performance" and "Departmental training programmes are aligned with departmental objectives and goals". The psychometric property of the scale recorded a Cronbach alpha value of 0.78.

Procedure for Data Collection

Copies of the questionnaire were administered to the academic staff of each of the selected private institutions in Southwest Nigeria. Having obtained permission from the head of each department involved in the study. The participants were adequately briefed on the need to cooperate with the researcher. They were also assured of confidentiality of their responses. The data collection spread over three weeks, during which about 300 questionnaires were administered and returned. These were scored and the data obtained were subjected to data analysis.

Method of Data Analysis

The data was collected and analysed with the aid of Pearson product moment correlation and multiple linear regression analysis to test the three research questions at 0.05 significant level. Using Statistical packages for social sciences (SPSS) now called Statistical Products and Service Solution (SPSS), afterwards the result obtained was interpreted.

Result

Research Question 1:

What is the relationship between the independent variables (training, innovation, gender and age) and the dependent variable (Job performance?)

Table 1: Correlation matrix showing the relationship between study variables.

Variables	Mean	Std.Dev	1	2	3	4	5
Job performance	46.39	7.61	1.000				
Training	25.09	7.69	.545**	1.000			
Innovation	32.05	.79	.967**	-.055	1.000		
Gender	2.76	1.60	.497**	.245**	.455**	1.00	
Age	17.45	5.43	-.324**	.200*	.123	.032	1.00

*Correlation is significant at 0.05(2-tailed)

Table 1 revealed the relationship of each independent variables (Training, Innovation, Gender and Age) with the dependent variable (job performance); job performance positively correlated with innovation (r= .967, p< 0.01), training (r = .545, p<0.01), and gender (r= .497, p<0.01). Job performance negatively correlated with age (r= -.324, p<0.01). This implies that the higher the influence of training, gender and innovation the better the performance of academic staff, while age reduces academic staff performance.

Research Question 2:

What is the joint contribution of the independent variables (parenting styles, training, innovation, gender and age) on the dependent variables (Job performance)?

Table 2: Summary of regression for the joint contributions of independent variables to the prediction of job performance.

R =.968
R Square =.937
Adjusted R square =.936
Std. Error =1.86793

Model		**Sum of Squares**	**Df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1	Regression	15189.633	4	3797.4083	1088.332	.000[b]
	Residual	1029.306	295	3.4892		
	Total	16218.940	299			

Table 2 reveals significant joint contribution of the independent variables (training, age, gender and innovation**)** to the prediction of job performance. The result yielded a coefficient of multiple regressions R = 0.968 and multiple R-square = 0.937. This suggests that the four factors combined accounted for 93.6% (Adj.R^2= .936) variance in the prediction of academic staff job performance. The other factors accounting for the remaining variance are beyond the scope of this study. The ANOVA result from the regression analysis shows that there was a significant effect of the independent variables on the Job performance, $F_{(4, 295)}$ = 1088.332, P<0.01.

Research Question 3:

What is the relative contribution of the independent variables (training, age, gender and innovation) on the dependent variables (Job performance)?

Table 3: Relative effect of the independent variables to the prediction of job performance.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	48.040	5.702		8.425	.000
	Training	.889	.066	.866	13.442	.000
	Innovation	8.976	.186	.967	48.254	.000
	Gender	-.149	.081	-.032	-1.836	.067
	Age	-102	.054	-.021	-.803	.083

Table 3 shows that three out of five predictors **(**parenting styles, training and innovation**)** are potent predictors of Job performance. The most potent factor was innovation (Beta = .967, t= 48.254, P<0.01), followed by training (Beta = .866, t = 13.442, P<0.01). Except gender and age. This implies that, training will increase job performance by 86.6%, while innovation will increase job performance by 96.7%.

Discussion of the findings

In the study, it was discovered that job performance positively correlated with innovation, training, and gender. Job performance negatively correlated with age. This implies that the higher the influence of training, gender and innovation the better the performance of academic staff, while age reduces academic staff performance. The

result of this study corroborated Lim et al (2010) who studied the effect of innovation on performance of construction firms using data statistical data across 18 Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries and expert interviews in Singapore. They discovered that due to the fact that construction projects are awarded by clients based on lowest cost, innovation appears to be an unfeasible competitive strategy. However, their study revealed that construction firms can develop their competitive advantage through manipulating innovations that consumers are willing to pay for and innovations that would reduce construction costs. By implication, innovative academicians have the capacity to perform better in academics than their counterparts.

On the account of training, the result of this study also agreed with the study of Raja et al (2011) who showed that there is a positive correlation between the two variables training & employee performance areas. Similarly, the results of Afshan et al (2012) which was investigated in the telecom sector of Pakistan revealed that 50.1% change in the employee performance can only be achieved by proper training sessions. With T-value of 8.58 explaining that training is a good explanatory variable to the employee performance. However, age and gender significantly correlated with job performance, but age had negative correlation which signifies that staff performance will decline as they grow older. This result is incongruence with Gede (2001) who arrived at the reported that overall job performance is a function of chronological age and gender. He further confirmed that age makes performance unstable due to some factors that comes with age which reduces performance level of workers.

At prediction stage the study revealed that the four factors combined accounted for 93.6% variance in the prediction of job performance. The most potent factor was innovation, followed by training. Except gender and age. This result of this study agreed with Duncan (2012) who discovered the existence of a relationship between innovation and organisational performance. Similarly Costa and Cabrel (2010) studied the effect of differentiated knowledge source and learning process on technology capacity to innovate and competitive performance using selected Brazilian export companies. The study found the existence of a positive relationship between knowledge, innovative capabilities and competitive performance.

Considering the prediction result of training, this result agreed with Abdul et al (2011), in their research paper related to employee performance and development said that employee is the major element of every firm and their success and failure mainly based on their performance. This assertion explained that the merits of training and its positive influence on employee performance. If there is a proper planning for making the training procedures then it will be fruitful for both the employee and for the organization as well. On the other hand, gender and age were not found significant at prediction stage. This indicates that at long run age and gender differences might not matter when academic staff are adequately exposed to training and as well develop innovative ability in this wise performance will be in evitable.

Conclusion

This study investigated innovation, training and demographic factors as determinants of job performance among academic staff in private universities in south-west Nigeria. The study revealed that staff innovation, training, gender are significant predictors of job performance. At prediction innovation was found to be the strongest factor predicting job performance, followed by training. While age and gender were not found significant. By implication innovation and training are essential determinant of academic staff job performance.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following are recommended;

I. It was recommended that academic staff should be given the liberty to display their innovative capabilities towards moving the university to a greater height.
II. Academic staff with outstanding innovative skills should be recognized to which might go along way in making other academic staff to engage their innovation skills in their daily activities.
III. Annual and bi-annual training should be held and various aspect of academics to make academic staff get abreast with the crest of change in the global scene.
IV. Staff age and gender should be considered when distributing tasks among academia.
V. During employment exercise age should be considered so as to reduce large staff strength with low capability.
VI. Staff innovativeness and numbers of local and international seminars or workshop attended should be considered in their grading.

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