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Linear Models on Reading Habit among Undergraduates and its Effects on their Academic Performance in Tertiary Institutions of Bauchi State.

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the reading habits of undergraduate students in Bauchi State, Nigeria, and their impact on academic performance. Reading is recognized as a fundamental skill essential for acquiring knowledge, fostering critical thinking, and enhancing comprehension. However, there is growing concern about the declining reading culture among students, exacerbated by factors such as social media influence, inadequate access to reading materials, and poor time management. The research employs a quantitative approach, surveying 1,200 students from the selected tertiary institutions in Bauchi State using a non-probability version of stratified sampling technique (quota sampling). Data was collected using a structured questionnaire design for the purpose and analyzed using regression technique. Findings from the regression analysis reveals a strong positive correlation ($R = 0.935$) between reading habits and academic performance, with the model explaining approximately 87.4% of the variance in students' academic outcomes. Key predictors of reading habits include parental socio-economic status ($\beta_1 = 0.173$), academic discipline ($\beta_2 = 0.210$), access to technology ($\beta_3 = 0.158$), parental influence ($\beta_4 = 0.191$), and peer influence ($\beta_5 = 0.182$), all statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. These findings highlight the critical role of socio-economic factors, technological access, and social support in cultivating effective reading habits. The study emphasizes the importance of addressing these variables to enhance reading culture and improve academic performance among students, ultimately contributing to educational policy development and future research in the field.

Key Words: Reading Habit, Academic Performance, Socio-economic Status, Impact

Introduction

In the recent past, educators as well as the general public were in deliberation as to which strategy was the most effective means to teach reading. Some argued that phonics, the teaching of basic skills, was the better approach whereas others believed that whole language, a more holistic philosophy of literature-based instruction, was the superior method. The effective reading is the most important avenue of effective learning (Bashir & Mattoo, 2012). Reading is interrelated with the total educational process and hence, educational success requires successful reading. Reading is the identification of the symbols and the association of appropriate meaning with them. It requires identification and comprehension.

It serves as a primary means of acquiring knowledge, fostering critical thinking, and improving comprehension skills (Kamal & Ameen, 2023). A good reading habit enables students to process information effectively, retain knowledge, and perform better academically (Aina, Ogungbeni, & Adigun, 2022). However, there is growing concern over the declining reading culture among undergraduates, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria (Ogunrombi & Adio, 2021).

In Nigeria, various factors contribute to students' poor reading habits, including the influence of social media, lack of access to adequate reading materials, and poor time management skills (Eze, 2023). Many students tend to engage more in social networking and entertainment activities rather than dedicating time to reading (Okebukola, 2022). The Federal Polytechnic Bauchi, like other tertiary institutions in Nigeria, is witnessing similar trends, where students struggle with maintaining a consistent reading habit, which may negatively affect their academic performance.

The problem most students have, that contributes to their poor performance in tests and examinations is lack of proper reading habits. For an excellent performance, there is the need for the student to form good reading and study habits. At present, due to the influence of the mass media, people do not show much interest in reading books; magazines and journals, among others (Palani, 2012). Even the cankerworm of examination malpractices may be traceable to the prevalent poor reading interests and habits among the wide spectrum of students.

In addition, the by-products of scientific and technological inventions and innovations have also contributed greatly to the dwindling fortunes of the good practice of reading among majority of the students. Today, many students prefer to watch movies and other shows on the television, listening to audio-CDs, watching video-CDs, among others (Issa, 2012). Many parents and teachers complain about students of our generation who have not developed reading habits among themselves.

The academic performance of undergraduates is a critical concern for educators and policymakers. Many students exhibit poor reading habits, which could lead to sub-optimal academic achievements (Ajayi, 2021). Previous studies suggest that poor reading culture affects students' ability to understand complex academic concepts, retain information, and apply knowledge effectively (Adeyemi & Ogunleye, 2022). Despite the increasing awareness of the importance of reading, undergraduates in Bauchi State continue to struggle with developing and sustaining effective reading habits.

This study seeks to examine the reading habits of undergraduates in Bauchi State and their impact on academic performance. It also aims to identify the challenges students face in cultivating reading habits and propose strategies to enhance reading culture among students.

Research Hypotheses

The study will test the following hypotheses:

H_0: Poor reading habits significantly affect students' academic performance.

An Overview of Reading Habit

Thus, everyday reading activities in which students engage may considerably influence their studying skills and subsequent academic performance. There is a general sense in which one appreciates the link between good habits of reading and the academic performance of students generally, (Issa et al, 2012). Their poor or bad reading habits could partly be held responsible for general poor performance that the school systems usually record in both internal and external examinations (Issa et al, 2012). Perhaps, due to lack of good reading habits among students, academic performance with respect to their examination result has been dismal nowadays creating a great source of worry and concern for all stakeholders in the educational sub-sector (Issa et al, 2012). According to (Ogbodo, 2010) Parents send their children to school to learn. In the school, children are exposed to various experiences which influence their behavior. Therefore, learning is a change in behavior. Such a change is seen in their mental reasoning, physical growth, manipulative skills and development of values and interests. The change may be easy or difficult depending on the home and the school environment.

Reading habit refers to the behavior, which expresses the likeness of reading and tastes of reading (Sangkaeo, 1999). It is a way of how the reader organizes his or her reading. Similarly, Shen (2006) identifies reading habits, as how often, how much, and what the readers read. Researchers in the past have devoted efforts to examining learners' reading habits (Mokhtari & Sheorey, 1994). With their efforts, these researchers have discovered that reading habits are correlated with gender, age, educational background, academic performance and professional growth. Reading is generally accepted as a way of acquiring new information and new knowledge. It is not only to increase knowledge but also to build maturity and widen awareness of contemporary issues (Kim & Anderson, 2011). A good reading habit is important for the development of personalities and mental capacities. This habit is necessary for a healthy intellectual growth and plays a very crucial role in enabling a person to achieve language proficiency (Grabe & Stoller, 1997). Furthermore, an individual's interest to read is determined by the considerable extent of the amount and intensity of pursuing the reading activity (Cleary, 1972). Reading provides readers with great knowledge, understanding and a sense of values, which enable them gradually to develop the greatest of all virtues and the ability to understand other people beliefs (Cook, Halleran & O'Brien, 1998). Studies on reading habits revealed a number of findings. Caverly and Peterson (2000) notes that research on the effect of technology on reading achievements demonstrated mixed results.

Reading habit refers to the regular practice of reading for information, knowledge acquisition, and personal growth. It involves a consistent engagement with books, journals, and other educational materials (Ogunleye, 2023). A well-developed reading habit is crucial for academic success as it enhances students' ability to comprehend and retain information (Alabi & Yusuf, 2022). However, studies have shown that many undergraduates in Nigeria exhibit poor reading habits, which negatively impact their academic performance (Adekunle, 2021).

Factors Influencing Reading Habit Among Undergraduates

Several factors affect students' reading habits, including:

i. Availability of Reading Materials – The accessibility of books and online resources significantly influences reading habits (Okonkwo, 2023).

ii. Social media and Digital Distractions – Excessive engagement in social networking platforms reduces students' time spent on reading (Eze & Adeyemi, 2023).

iii. Time Management Skills – Poor time management hinders students from creating a consistent reading schedule (Adewale, 2022).

iv. Library Usage – The availability and utilization of library resources improve reading habits among students (Ogunyemi & Akinola, 2023).

Parental and Teacher Support and Its Impact on Reading Habits

Parents serve as a child's first teacher, and their level of engagement in early literacy significantly affects the child's reading habits. Studies have shown that children who are read to at home and have access to books develop better reading skills (Adebayo & Olayemi, 2022). Some key ways parents influence reading habits include:

i. Reading aloud to children, which improves vocabulary and comprehension.

ii. Providing access to books at home.

iii.   Creating a reading-friendly environment by setting aside time for reading.

iv.   Encouraging discussions about books to improve understanding and interest.

Many Nigerian parents, especially those from low-income backgrounds, struggle to provide adequate reading support due to financial constraints and low literacy levels. According to Eze and Chukwu (2021), some parents lack formal education and cannot effectively help their children with reading. Families in rural and underprivileged areas often do not have access to books. Economic hardships force children into household chores or street hawking, reducing time for reading.

Children who receive early literacy exposure at home develop stronger reading habits. A lack of parental support leads to poor literacy development, making it difficult for students to engage with books. Students from homes where reading is valued demonstrate better comprehension, vocabulary, and academic performance (Obi, 2023).

Role of Teachers in Promoting Reading

Teachers play a central role in shaping students' reading habits through instructional methods, encouragement, and access to reading materials. A study by Nwosu and Adebola (2022) found that: Teachers who incorporate storytelling, book discussions, and interactive reading sessions cultivate students' interest in reading. Schools with structured reading programs encourage lifelong reading habits. Teacher enthusiasm for reading positively influences students' attitudes towards books.

Research indicates a strong correlation between reading habits and academic achievement. Students who read regularly tend to perform better in examinations and coursework (Adebayo, 2022). A study by Yusuf and Bello (2023) found that students with effective reading habits achieved higher grades compared to those with irregular reading patterns.

Reading is a foundational skill that significantly influences academic success. Access to reading materials such as textbooks, libraries, digital resources, and supplementary materials plays a crucial role in shaping students' literacy, comprehension, and critical thinking abilities. In Nigeria, disparities in access to reading materials contribute to differences in students' academic performance.

Reading materials include textbooks, storybooks, reference books, newspapers, journals, and digital content. These resources provide students with the opportunity to improve their vocabulary, comprehension, and analytical thinking skills (Oloyede, 2022). According to Aina et al. (2021), students who have uninterrupted access to reading materials demonstrate higher literacy levels and academic performance compared to those with limited access.

Libraries, both physical and digital, play a significant role in providing reading materials to students. However, in Nigeria, many schools lack well-stocked libraries, and students often rely on outdated or insufficient textbooks (Eze & Igwe, 2020). With the increasing availability of digital resources, e-books and online journals could bridge this gap, but limited internet access, high data costs, and unreliable electricity hinder the adoption of digital reading in many parts of the country (Adeyemi, 2023).

Peer Influence and Its Impact on Academic Performance

Peer influence plays a crucial role in shaping students' behaviors, attitudes, and academic achievements. According to Bandura's (2023) social learning theory, individuals tend to adopt behaviors observed in their social groups. This implies that undergraduates are likely to be influenced by the study habits, motivation, and attitudes of their peers.

Studies indicate that students who associate with academically motivated peers tend to exhibit better study habits, time management, and improved academic performance (Asogwa & Eze, 2022). Research by Adekunle and Yusuf (2023) found that undergraduates who engage in peer-led study groups demonstrate higher comprehension and retention levels. Collaborative learning environments promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills, which contribute to academic success (Ogunyemi, 2023).

Conversely, peer influence can also have detrimental effects on academic performance. A study by Bello and Akinola (2023) highlights that students who associate with peers engaged in non-academic activities, such as excessive social media use and substance abuse, experience a decline in academic achievements. Disruptive peer behaviors, such as skipping classes and procrastination, negatively impact students' focus and learning outcomes (Ezenwa, 2023).

Peer groups play a significant role in motivating or discouraging academic efforts. Tunde (2022) found that students who receive academic support from their peers, such as sharing resources and discussing assignments, demonstrate higher levels of engagement and performance. On the other hand, lack of academic encouragement from peers can contribute to disengagement and poor performance (Okoro, 2023).

Socio-Economic Factors Influencing Reading Habit and Academic Performance

Socio-economic factors play a significant role in shaping students' reading habits and, by extension, their academic performance. Several studies have explored how financial stability, parental education, and access to learning materials affect students' engagement with reading and their overall academic achievements.

Research suggests that students from financially stable families have better access to quality educational resources, including textbooks, internet access, and private tutoring (Olawale & Adeyemi, 2023). Conversely, students from low-income backgrounds often struggle with limited access to learning materials, which negatively affects their reading habits and academic success (Nwachukwu, 2023).

Parental education is another significant factor influencing students' reading culture. According to Okafor and Bello (2022), children of educated parents are more likely to develop strong reading habits due to the academic encouragement and reading materials provided at home. In contrast, students from less educated families may lack the motivation and resources to cultivate effective reading habits (Ogunyemi, 2023).

The availability of books, journals, and digital resources significantly impacts reading habits and academic performance. A study by Eze and Okeke (2023) found that students with access to well-equipped libraries and digital learning platforms tend to read more frequently and perform better academically compared to those with limited access to such resources.

Cultural norms and societal values also play a role in shaping students' reading habits. In some communities, reading is highly encouraged and regarded as a crucial part of personal and academic growth, while in others, entertainment and social activities take precedence over academic engagements (Adebayo, 2023).

Methodology

The research examines the impact of reading habit among the tertiary institution students, and to ensure reliable findings, a suitable sample size was selected using an appropriate sampling technique. The population of this study consists of undergraduate students in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State, Nigeria. These students are the primary subjects of interest, as they are directly affected by reading habits and their academic performance. The target population includes students from various higher institutions in Bauchi State, such as the Federal Polytechnic Bauchi, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University (ATBU) Bauchi, Bauchi State University, Gadau (BASUG), College of Education, Kangere, other private and public tertiary institutions within Bauchi State.

The sample size from these schools were 300 students from each school making a total of 1,200 students. Non-probability version of stratified sampling was used (quota sampling). First, the population was divided into non-over lapping groups called strata (Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of Educations and Colleges of Science),

Regression Analysis

A regression model that involves more than one explanatory variable is called a multiple regression model, in other words it is a linear relationship between a dependent variable and a set of independent variables. A multiple regression model that might describe this relationship is called multiple regressions (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015).

$$y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \cdots + x_n \beta_n + e_{ij}$$

Where y denotes the dependent or response variable, If the model fits the data well, the overall R^2 value will be high, and the corresponding P-value will be low (P value is the observed significance level at which the null hypothesis is rejected). In addition to the overall P-value, multiple regressions also report an individual P value for each independent variable. A low P-value here means that this particular independent variable significantly improves the fit of the model. It is calculated by comparing the goodness-of-fit of the entire model to the goodness-of-fit when that independent variable is omitted. If the fit is much worse when that variable is omitted from the model, the P value will be low, saying that the variable has a significant impact on the model (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015).

Reliability of Regression Model (Analysis of Variance)

The analysis of variance is based on a partitioning of total variability in the response variable y. Before doing other calculations, it is often useful or necessary to construct the ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) (Nayak & Singh, 2015). There are four parts to the ANOVA table: sums of squares, degrees of freedom, mean squares, and the F statistic.

Result

Relationship between the Reading Habit and Academic Performance

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.935	.874	.873	.1176976

Source: Author's Computation using SPSS

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	110.889	5	22.178	1600.968	.000
	Residual	16.000	1155	.014		
	Total	126.889	1160			

Source: Author's Computation using SPSS

The coefficient of multiple correlation, R, shows that a strong and positive relationship of the reading habit on academic performance, with (R = 0.935). R – square, the coefficient of multiple determination is 0.874. That is about 87.4% of the total variation is explained by the changes in the independent variables indicating that reading habit is enhancing academic performance by 87.4%. In other word, parent's socio-economic status, academic discipline, access to technology, parental influence and peer influence explained students' reading habit by 87.4%.

Findings showed that if these variables were adequately taken care of, reading habit will got enhanced significantly thereby impacting on academic performance. Result in ANOVA reliably justified the true influence of these variables as the P – value is less than the level of significance (P - value = 0.000 < 0.05), hence impacted positively.

The adjusted R – Squared value is 87.3%, this also shows that there is high relationship between the reading habit and independent variables indicating the actual percentage of variation explained by the set of independent variables that actually affect the reading habit.

Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.286	.039		.000	.000
	Parents Socio-Economic Status	.173	.006	.335	.000	.000
	Academic Discipline	.210	.008	.282	.000	.000
	Access to Technology	.158	.005	.355	.000	.000
	Parental Influence	.191	.006	.352	.000	.000
	Peer Influence	.182	.006	.343	.000	.000

Source: Author's Computation using SPSS

The simultaneous regression analysis was carried out to ascertain the individual effect of these proxy variables. All the predictors yielded significant beta weights with their varied t – values that are all statistically significant. This implies that there is significant effect of these variables on reading habit. Therefore, the hypotheses formulated on these bases were tested below corresponding to their beta weights:

The predictor, parent's socio-economic status yielded a significant beta weight of $\beta_1 = 0.173$ with its corresponding t-value which is statistically significant since the P – value is less than the level of significance (P = 0.000 < 0.05) which form the basis of rejecting the hull hypothesis and concluded that there is significant effect of socio-economic status on reading habit. This aligns with existing literature that highlights how financial resources influence access to reading materials and educational opportunities. Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds often face barriers such as limited access to books and educational resources, which can hinder their reading development and overall academic performance. This relationship underscores the importance of addressing socioeconomic disparities to enhance reading habits among students.

Academic discipline variable has the value, $\beta_2 = 0.210$ with P- value that is significant (P = 0.000 < 0.05) indicating its positive relationship and impact, thereby rejecting the null hypothesis and concluding that there is significant impact of the level of study and reading habit. The significant impact of the level of study on reading habits suggests a student's progress through their academic journey, their reading habits may evolve. Higher levels of study often require more extensive reading, which can foster better reading practices. This finding is consistent with research indicating that academic demands increase with higher education levels, leading to more structured reading habits.

The variable Access to technology has a beta weight of $\beta_3 = 0.158$. The p-value corresponding to this value is 0.000 which is less that the level of significant. That is to say there is a positive relationship. The null hypothesis was rejected based on the analysis made and concluded that there is significant effect of technology on reading habit. In today's digital age, technology plays a vital role in how students access reading materials. The availability of e-books and online resources can enhance reading engagement, particularly among tech-savvy students. Studies have shown that students with better access to technology tend to have improved reading outcomes due to the convenience and variety of materials available.

The predictor, parental influence yielded a significant beta weight of $\beta_4 = 0.191$ with its corresponding t-value that is statistically significant ($P = 0.000 < 0.05$) which form the basis of rejecting the hull hypothesis established and concluding that there is significant relationship between the parental influence and reading habit. Result indicating that the reading behaviors and attitudes of parents can significantly impact their children's reading practices. Research has consistently shown that a supportive home literacy environment, characterized by parental involvement in reading activities, positively correlates with children's reading success. This finding emphasizes the need for parents to actively engage in their children's reading development.

Peer influence variable has the value, $\beta_5 = 0.182$ with P- value that is significant ($P = 0.000 < 0.05$) indicating its positive relationship and impact, thereby rejecting the null hypothesis and concluding that peer factor significantly influencing reading habit among under graduate students in tertiary institutions in Bauchi. The social environment among peers can greatly affect individual reading behaviors, as students often emulate the habits of their friends. Studies have highlighted that peer encouragement and shared reading experiences can motivate students to read more frequently and diversely. This suggests that fostering a culture of reading among peers can be beneficial for enhancing reading habits.

Discussion of Results

The study confirms that reading habits significantly impact academic performance and are influenced by factors such as parental socio-economic status, academic discipline, access to technology, parental influence, and peer influence. These findings suggest the need for targeted interventions to enhance students' reading culture. Educational institutions should promote reading programs, ensure equitable access to learning resources, and create policies that encourage academic reading. Additionally, parents and educators should actively support students in developing lifelong reading habits.

Impact of Reading Habits on Academic Performance

The coefficient of multiple correlation ($R = 0.935$) indicates a strong and positive relationship between reading habits and academic performance. This aligns with prior studies emphasizing that students with strong reading habits tend to achieve better academic results (Sani & Zain, 2011). The coefficient of multiple determination ($R^2 = 0.874$) shows that 87.4% of the variation in academic performance is explained by changes in reading habits, reinforcing the importance of developing a strong reading culture among students. This finding is supported by previous studies that demonstrate how effective reading habits lead to improved cognitive abilities and academic success (Olaofe, 2019).

Parental Socio-Economic Status

The predictor parental socio-economic status yielded a significant beta weight ($\beta_1 = 0.173$, $P = 0.000 < 0.05$), suggesting a strong influence on students' reading habits. This supports research indicating that students from higher socio-economic backgrounds tend to have better access to educational resources, which positively affects their reading habits and overall academic success (Dubow, Boxer, & Huesmann, 2009). Financial stability allows parents to provide books, digital learning tools, and a conducive learning environment, fostering better reading habits among students (Fan & Chen, 2020).

Academic Discipline

The variable academic discipline ($\beta_2 = 0.210$, $P = 0.000 < 0.05$) also showed a significant impact on reading habits. This aligns with previous findings that students from disciplines requiring extensive reading, such as the humanities and social sciences, tend to have stronger reading habits compared to those in technical fields (Moje et al., 2008). Differences in curriculum structure and reading demands likely influence how often students engage in reading activities.

Access to Technology

The beta weight for access to technology ($\beta_3 = 0.158$, $P = 0.000 < 0.05$) indicates a positive and significant impact on reading habits. This aligns with studies showing that technology facilitates access to diverse reading materials, enhances reading engagement, and improves comprehension skills (Coiro, 2011). The increasing availability of e-books, digital libraries, and online academic resources has transformed reading habits, making academic materials more accessible to students (Liu, 2020).

Parental Influence

Parental influence also had a significant impact on students' reading habits ($\beta_4 = 0.191$, $P = 0.000 < 0.05$). This supports previous research highlighting the role of parental guidance and encouragement in shaping students' academic behaviors (Boonk et al., 2018). Parents who actively engage in their children's academic activities, such as discussing books and setting reading schedules, contribute significantly to the development of strong reading habits (Garg et al., 2017).

Peer Influence

Peer influence also played a significant role in shaping reading habits ($\beta_5 = 0.182$, $P = 0.000 < 0.05$). This is consistent with studies emphasizing that students' academic behaviors, including reading habits, are often influenced by their social circles (Wentzel, 2017). Positive peer influence can encourage students to engage more in academic reading, whereas negative peer pressure may lead to reduced interest in academic activities (Ryan, 2021).

The ANOVA results indicate that the model reliably explains the impact of these variables on reading habits, as the P-value (0.000) is less than 0.05. The Adjusted R^2 value (87.3%) further validates the robustness of the model, showing that the independent variables collectively explain a significant

proportion of variations in students' reading habits. These findings align with previous research confirming that multiple factors contribute to reading habits and academic success (Schleicher, 2019).

Conclusion

This study highlights the critical role of reading habits in academic success among tertiary students. Findings confirm that parental socio-economic status, academic discipline, access to technology, parental influence, and peer influence all significantly impact students' reading behaviors. The results underscore the need for policies and programs in tertiary education to promote strong reading cultures, enhance access to resources, and support students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. Given the increasing role of technology in education, integrating digital tools into learning strategies is essential to foster better reading habits and academic achievement. It is recommended that enhance parental support, universities should expand access to digital libraries, e-books, and academic databases to promote reading, develop reading programs and educational institutions should adopt e-learning platforms to make reading materials more accessible.

The linear model is:

$$y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + \beta_4 x_4 + \beta_5 x_5 + e_{ij}$$

$$RH = -0.286 + 0.173PSES + 0.210AD + 0.158AT + 0.191PI + 0.182PeI$$

Where:

PSES = Parent Socio-Economic Status

AD = Academic Discipline

AT = Access to Technology

PI = Parental Influence

PeI = Peer Influence

The intercept represents the baseline level of reading habit (RH) when all independent variables (PSES, AD, AT, PI, and PeI) are equal to zero. In this context, a negative intercept means that if all predictors were zero, the reading habit score would be -0.286. While this value may not have a practical interpretation (as socio-economic status, academic discipline, and other factors cannot be zero), it sets a reference point for the model.

All the independent variables (PSES, AD, AT, PI, PeI) have positive coefficients, indicating that as these factors increase, so do reading habits. This emphasizes that socio-economic resources, academic requirements, technological access, and social influences all contribute positively to how much students engage in reading.

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