# Extent of Availability and Utilization of Literacy Facilities in Teaching and Learning among Public Primary Schools in Umuahia North LGA of Abia State

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## Abstract

The aim of this study was to determine the extent of availability and utilization of literacy facilities in teaching and learning among public primary schools in Umuahia North Local Government Area, Abia State. The study was guided by five research questions and one hypothesis. The study adopted a survey design. The population of the study comprised of 694 public primary school teachers in the 45 public primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A. Through simple random sampling techniques by balloting without replacement, 15 schools were selected out of the 45 public primary schools. The researchers also used simple random sampling techniques to sample 13 teachers from each of the 15 schools selected giving a total of 195 teacher respondents. The instrument for data collection was a 22-item structured questionnaire developed by the researchers titled "Availability and Utilization of Literacy Facilities in Public Primary Schools Questionnaire (AULFPPSQ)". The instrument was validated by three experts. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha which yielded a reliability index of 0.76, 0.74, 0.78, 0.70, and 0.81 for the five clusters with an overall reliability of 0.75. The data was analyzed using mean scores. The findings from the study revealed that many literacy facilities ranging from audio, visual and audio-visuals were absent in public primary schools. Mostly available were visual facilities often used by teachers. The non-availability of these materials were due to lack of funds for purchase, location of some schools and activities of robbers in schools. Based on these findings, it was recommended that federal and state government should provide literacy facilities to public primary schools to enhance teaching and learning. It was also recommended that government should employ good security outfit to counter activities of robbers invading schools located in rural areas.

**Keywords:** literacy**,** Literacy facilities, teaching, learning

## Introduction

Education has been the most essential gift children may receive from their parents and guardians. This precious gift helps them become useful members in their respective societies. The soul of any society depends on education for survival as it passes through generations. In the view of Obidike and Onwuka (2012), education is fundamental to all kinds of development be it human, political, economic, social or intellectual, but more importantly, human resource. Supporting this view, Nwite and Adali (2012) held that education by its nature is one of the foremost and important instruments for change and development in the world today. Since education focuses on societal development, only literate individuals could make this

development a reality. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2000) states that one of the major indicators of development is literacy.

No nation develops when its citizens are illiterates. Literacy is a vehicle for societies to attain their various developmental agenda. Literacy merely means the ability to read and write. Literacy merely means the ability to read and write. UNESCO (2010), defined literacy as the ability of a person to function in all the activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning of a person's group and the community and also for enabling such a person to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for self and the community's development. Ameh (2015), states that in a technological society, the concept of literacy is expanding to include the media and electronic text as can be seen in various study centres especially in computer training centres. Literacy as defined by Alberta Education (2019), is the ability, confidence and willingness to engage with language to acquire, construct and communicate meaning in all aspects of daily living.

In the views of Obidike, Enemuo and Onwuka (2019), literacy means the ability to use language, numbers, images, computers and other basic means to understand, communicate, gain useful knowledge, solve mathematical problems and use the dominant symbol systems of a culture. Obidike *et al* posit that a person who travels and resides in a foreign country but is unable to read or write in the language of the host country would also be regarded by the locals as illiterate. Oyedeji, Olewa and Aiedu in Ameh (2015) identified three concept of literacy which are traditional, or conventional literacy. Functional or work orientation literacy also referred to as basic literacy and remedial literacy. Traditional or conventional literacy also referred to as basic literacy is the learning of the skill of reading, writing and computing. Functional literacy is of immediate use to recipient in his work life. For example, a carpenter is taught words, phrases and sentences that would help him to communicate in his trade. Functional literacy is sometimes referred to as work-oriented, also relevant literacy because it is of immediate use to the recent. Remedial literacy occurs when someone attaches self to an informal setting for the purpose of learning how to read and write and still functions effectively in his society regarding his work. Ampene in Yusuf, ladan, Usman and Halilu (2013) claims that the usefulness of literacy cannot be denied, the new literate, if properly instructed ad made aware that literacy is a tool for liberation and enriched living, gains confidence and dignity. Yusuf et al argued that without literacy there cannot be development. The authors further views literacy as a necessary tool for the reduction of poverty. In western education, one would be literate when exposed to a formal school where teaching and learning takes place.

Teaching is a progressive process by which a teacher exposes the learner to different learning experiences. Bordenave and Pereira (2012), defined teaching as an intentional process of making it easier for one or more other persons to learn and grow intellectually and morally, providing them with planned situations for learners t have the experiences needed to produce the desired modification in a more or less stable manner. Teaching as perceived by Kalule and Bauchamina (2013), is an interaction involving the learner, the subject matter, and the teacher. Similarly, Fafunwa in Olaniyan (2015), defines teaching as the action of someone who is trying to assist others to reach their fullest potentials in all aspects of development. Yusuf and Dada (2016), posit that the quality of the education system depended on the quality, quantity and devotion of its teaching work force. In the views of Okotete and Kanu (2008), teaching is a systematic process of transmitting knowledge and understanding which gives rise to a positive change in behavior. The person that transmits the knowledge is the teacher while the receiver is the learner. In this study, teaching is an activity embarked by a teacher who was ab initio, trained and certified. It is also a process embarked by a teacher and with the use of appropriate facilities, helps a learner gain skills, knowledge and experiences necessary for good living. Teaching and learning are by this inseparable because whenever there is teaching, earning must take place.

Learning means gathering and remembering bits of information in accumulative manner. It is marked by countable number of facts and items remembered. Nwamuo (2010), defined learning as relatively enduring change in behavior which is a function of prior behavior usually called practice. According to Zailani (2015), learning is a relatively permanent change in behavior due to practice and experience. learning occurs after a teacher has passed instructions, knowledge and skills to the learner through means like teaching aids and methods, the learner at this point imbibes what was taught, internalize such knowledge and this could later result to change in behavior of the person. Similarly, Ojo (2012), view learning as a relatively permanent change in behavior as a result of insight, practice, experience or stimuli in the behavior. These definitions are not far from the views of Ghulam, Khurum, Naqvi and Nadeem (2015), that learning is a complex process. It can be defined as a change in disposition; a relatively permanent change in behavior over time and this is brought about partly by knowledge. Olaniyan (2015), also describes learning as something that could come to us unaware since the process of learning begins from the birth of children and continues throughout their life time. Hence, learning occurs when a sort of observable behavioural

changes have taken place in the life of such as individual. When learning is properly utilized, it enables the learners to discover basic ideals in the study and the leaning materials.

Learning can happen as an outcome of a fresh attained skills, principles, perception, knowledge, facts and new information at hand (Adeyanju, in Ghulam, Khurum, Naqvi and Nadeem, 2015). Learning can also be reinforced with different teaching/learning resources because they stimulate, motivate as well as focus learner's attention for a while during the instructional process. In the context of this study, learning refers to observed positive change in behavior of a child due to exposure to leaning experiences. It is through teaching and learning that a child learns how to read and write; this is what literacy is all about. However, literacy may not be progressive without availability of literacy facilities in schools.

Literacy facilities are comparable with instructional facilities which all facilitate teaching and learning. Literacy facilities are educative materials which teachers make reference with in carrying out literacy activities I schools. These materials have been given different names. For instance, Nnamuch (2018), referred to it as instructional materials, instructional aids, educational tools, educational media, teaching resources, curriculum materials, instructional resources and educational devices. Olewewe, Nzeazibe and Nzeadibe (2014), posit that the literacy facilities include; textbooks, charts, maps, audio-visual and electronic instructional materials such as computer, multimedia, internet connectivity, radio, tape recorder, television and video tape recorder. Okafor in Obiagwu and Usifo (2008), states that these aids are objects brought into play to emphasize clarity or visualize instructions. They help in effective teaching and are useful in the classroom by evoking in the children the same mental image as in the teachers, thereby helping them to retain what they have learnt. Ofoefuna (2008), posit that educational media are also called instructional materials which teachers needs to incorporate into the teaching learning process to help learners benefits maximally from hearing experience. These literacy facilities in the views of Isola (2010), assist teachers to present their lessons logically and sequentially to the learners. Furthermore, Oluwagbohunmi and Abdu-Raheen (2014) realized that these materials are such that are used by teachers to explain and make learning of subject matter understandable to the students during teaching and learning process. Ashaveri and Igyuve (2013), classify literacy facilities according to senses these materials appeal to, for instance, visual aids which appeals to the sense of sight, audio aids which appeals to the sense of hearing and audio-visuals aids which appeals to the sense of sight and learning. Literacy facilities are very significant as it concerns teaching and learning in primary schools.

Primary school, synonymous to primary education is that type of education made available for children between ages of six to eleven. Similarly, The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) in her National Policy of Education 2013) refers to primary school education as the education given in institutions for children between the ages of six to eleven years plus. Ahmet and Izzet (2013) defined Primary school education as an educational institution where children receive their education prior to their entry into secondary school. Primary school is where basic educational foundation for other levels of education is solidly laid. It is the key to the success or failure of the whole system of education as the rest of the education system is built upon it. It may be a truism that human resource are scattered among primary schools in Nigeria, there also exist material resources like instructional facilities that supports teaching and learning in primary schools. Teachers utilize available facilities in schools for teaching and learning.

The word '*utilization'* is the noun of the verb utilize. The English verb utilize came from the French word '*utilizer',* which came from the Italian word '*utilizzare*' and '*utile', which means* 'usable'. Utilization therefore refers to the use of something or the process of using it effectively (Market Business News (MBN) (2020). The extent teachers utilize literacy facilities determine the extent learners perform academically in school. Primary schools teachers are no exception in this case.

On the other hand, location of a school seems a hindrance to effective distribution and utilization of literacy facilities. Lumpkin (2013) asserts that the location of a school determines the distribution of teaching facilities and their use in classrooms. Epunam (2009) pointed out that schools located in urban areas tend to be well equipped with material resources needed to enhance learning. Similarly, Odeh, Oguche and Ivagher (2015) found out that schools located in urban areas are well equipped with teaching facilities than schools in rural areas. The researchers are worried because these similarities may have effect towards teaching and learning in primary schools. Against this backdrop therefore, the researchers tend to determine the extent of availability and utilization of literacy facilities in teaching and learning in public primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A.

**Statement of the Problem**

Literacy can never be successful in primary schools without the use of prerequisite literacy facilities for teaching and learning. This is because literacy facilities captures pupils' attention, facilitates quick understanding among school children and make the work of the teacher less boring. It is assumed that these literacy facilities are distributed among primary schools both in urban and rural areas in Umuahia North L.G.A. Unfortunately, most children

who passed out from primary schools find it difficult to spell out words or write their names correctly. A few number of them mope at you when requested to perform simple literacy activity like reading from their textbooks while a good number of them find it difficult to match objects with words. However, it has been observed that some primary school pupils in urban schools display little superiority over their colleagues in rural schools when it comes to literacy activities. This observed imbalance in performance and achievements may have future effects on children's future career; there should be equality in academics in primary education since it is the key to success or failure of other educational programme of a child. If truly primary education is the bedrock of other educational systems, great attention need to be paid at this level. The availability and utilization of literacy facilities at this level of education would significantly help children have sound literate foundation which is a sure vehicle for their future performances as they climax to different academic levels. In recognition that there are some available literacy facilities in public primary schools in Umuahia North, the researchers are not sure about the extent these facilities are being utilized by teachers in Umuahia North to facilitate teaching and learning. Based on this gap, it therefore became pertinent to examine the extent of availability and utilization of primary school literacy facilities in teaching and learning in primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A.

**Purpose of the Study**

The general purpose of this study is to examine the extent of availability and utilization of literacy facilities in teaching and learning in public primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A. Specifically, this study seeks to;

1. Find out available literacy facilities in public primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A.
2. Examine the extent public primary school teachers utilize audio literacy facilities in teaching and learning among public primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A.
3. Find out the extent public primary school teachers utilize visual literacy facilities in teaching and learning among public primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A.
4. Investigate the extent public primary school teachers utilize audio-visual literacy facilities in teaching and learning among public primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A.
5. Examine the extent location of public primary schools affects utilization of audio-visual literacy facilities in teaching and learning among primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions guided this study.

1. What are the available literacy facilities in public primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A?
2. To what extent do primary school teachers utilize audio literacy facilities in teaching and learning among public primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A?
3. To what extent do primary school teachers utilize visual literacy facilities in teaching and learning among public primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A?
4. To what extent do primary school teacher utilize audio-visual literacy facilities in teaching and learning among public primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A?
5. To what extent do location of public primary schools affect utilization of audio-visual literacy facilities in teaching and learning among primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A?

**Hypothesis**

The null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance

$Ho_1$: There is no significant difference in the mean response of urban and rural teachers on the utilization of literacy facilities in public primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A.

**Method**

The aim of this study was to determine the extent of availability and utilization of literacy facilities in teaching and learning among public primary schools in Umuahia North Local Government Area, Abia State. The study was guided by five research questions and one hypothesis. The study adopted a survey design. The population of the study comprised of 694 public primary school teachers in the 45 public primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A. Through simple random sampling techniques by balloting without replacement, 15 schools were selected out of the 45 public primary schools. The researchers also used simple random sampling techniques to sample 13 teachers from each of the 15 schools selected giving a total of 195 teacher respondents. The instrument for data collection was a 22-item structured questionnaire developed by the researchers titled "Availability and Utilization of Literacy Facilities in Public Primary Schools Questionnaire (AULFPPSQ)". The instrument was validated by three experts. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha which yielded a reliability index of 0.76, 0.74, 0.78, 0.70, and 0.81 for the five clusters with an overall reliability of 0.75. The data was analyzed using mean scores. The level of extent

of the items was determined in relation to the boundary limits as indicated in the four-point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE) =3.50–4.00, High Extent (HE) = 2.50 – 3.49, Low Extent (LE) = 1.50 – 2.49 and Very Low Extent (VLE)= 1.00 – 1.49.

**Results**

**Research Question 1:** What are the available literacy facilities in public primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A?

**Table 1:** Percentage of availability of Literary Facilities in Public Primary Schools

| S/N | Items | Available | % | Not Available | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | **Audio Facilities** | | | | |
| | Radio | 7 | 46.7 | 8 | 53.3 |
| | Guitar | 3 | 20 | 12 | 80 |
| | Piano | 0 | 0 | 15 | 100 |
| | Telephone | 0 | 0 | 15 | 100 |
| | Microphone | 15 | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| | Bell | 15 | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| | Speaker | 0 | 0 | 15 | 100 |
| **2** | **Visual Materials** | | | | |
| | Chart | 15 | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| | Chalkboard | 15 | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| | Textbooks | 15 | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| | Models | 15 | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| | Pictures | 15 | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| | Flashcard | 14 | 93.3 | 1 | 6 |
| **3** | **Audiovisual Facilities** | | | | |
| | Television | 0 | 0 | 15 | 100 |
| | Computer | 0 | 0 | 15 | 100 |

Table 1 above indicated that available literacy facilities in the 15 schools visited were lacking majorly in audio and audio-visual materials, but had visual facilities which aids teaching and learning.

**Research Question 2:** To what extent do primary school teachers utilize audio literacy facilities in teaching and learning among public primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A?

**Table 2**: The extent primary school teachers utilize audio literacy facilities in teaching and learning

| S/N | ITEMS | $\bar{X}$ | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | Radio | 2.26 | LE |
| 5 | Guitar | 2.00 | LE |
| 6 | Piano | 1.89 | LE |
| 7 | Microphone | 2.99 | HE |
| 8 | Telephone | 3.27 | HE |
| 9 | Talking books | 2.15 | LE |
| 10 | Bell | 3.02 | HE |

Table 2 above shows that the mean scores from item 1-7 were 2.26, 2.00, 1.89, 2.99, 3.27, 2.15 and 3.02 respectively. Items 1, 2, 3 and 6 were to a low extent rejected because their mean score are below 2.50. Other items were to a high extent accepted because their mean score were 2.50 and above.

**Research Question 3:** To what extent do primary school teachers utilize visual literacy facilities in teaching and learning among public primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A?

**Table 3:** Extent primary school teachers utilizes visual literacy facilities in teaching and learning

| S/N | ITEMS | $\bar{X}$ | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|
| 11 | Chart | 2.90 | HE |
| 12 | Chalk/white board | 3.19 | HE |
| 13 | Textbooks | 3.27 | HE |
| 14 | Models | 3.19 | HE |
| 15 | Pictures | 3.10 | HE |
| 16 | Pictures in fine alphabet books | 3.02 | HE |

Table 3 shows that mean scores from item 8-13 were 2.90, 2.19, 3.27, 3.19, 3.10 and 3.02 respectively. All items were to a high extent accepted because their mean score were above 2.50 the approved mean.

**Research question 4:** To what extent do primary school teachers utilize audio-visual literacy facilities in teaching and learning among public primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A?

**Table 4:** Extent primary school teachers utilize audio-visual literacy facilities in teaching and learning

| S/N | ITEMS | X | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|
| 17 | Television | 1.09 | VLE |
| 18 | Computers | 1.92 | LE |

Table 4 above shows that mean scores from item 14-15 were 1.09 and 1.92 respectively. All items were rejected because their mean score to a very low extent and low extent were below 2.50 the approved mean.

**Research Question 5:** To what extent do location of public primary schools affects utilization of literacy facilities in teaching and learning among primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A

**Table 5:** Extent location of school affects utilization of literacy facilities

| S/N | ITEMS | $\bar{X}$ | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|
| 19 | Use of literacy facilities in village schools is low because robbers cart away these facilities | 3.09 | HE |
| 20 | Literacy facilities used in town schools cannot be stolen by robbers | 3.14 | HE |
| 21 | Lack of access road to some schools hinders distribution of educational facilities and this affects use of literacy facilities in teaching | 2.92 | HE |
| 22 | Teacher knows how to use most literacy facilities are in town schools than in village schools | 2.22 | LE |

Table 5 above shows that mean scores from item 16-19 were 3.09, 3.14, 2.92 and 2.22 respectively. Item 16-18 were on high extent and accepted because their mean score were 2.50 and above. Item 19 was on low extent rejected because its mean score was below the approved mean.

**Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the mean response of urban and rural teachers on the utilization of literacy facilities in public primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A.**

**Table 6:** t-test on the significance difference in the mean response of urban and rural teachers on the utilization of literacy facilities in public primary schools in Umuahia North LGA

| Respondents | N | SD | X | t-cal | Df | A | T-crit | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Urban | 98 | 0.62 | 0.71 | 0.103 | 172 | .05 | 1.98 | Accept Null Hypothesis |
| Rural | 76 | 0.47 | 0.44 | | | | | |

On table 6 above, t-cal (0.103) is less than t-crit (1.98). The null hypothesis is accepted. This means that both teachers' in urban and rural public primary schools make use of available literacy facilities for teaching.

**Discussion**

Findings in table 1 revealed the available literacy facilities for teaching and learning in public primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A. Findings revealed that available audio, visual and audio-visual facilities for teaching and learning in public primary schools in Umuahia North includes bell, microphone, chart, chalkboard, textbooks, models, pictures and flashcards. Other facilities such as radio, guitar, piano, speaker, television and computers were not available. This proves that most primary schools in Umuahia North L.G.A to an extent were lacking some facilities needed in teaching and learning. The low extent of these facilities can be attributed to poor financial power to schools in procurement of needed facilities for teaching and learning. In line with the above findings, Oko (2016) posits that the absent of educational facilities in schools is due to financial limitations and inadequate funding of schools that have plunged schools into a barren system.

Findings in table 2 revealed the extent primary school teachers utilize audio literacy facilities in teaching and learning. Findings revealed that to a high extent, primary school teachers utilize microphone, bell and their mobile phones during teaching and learning. This finding is in line with Nwankwo (2003), who posits that the use of cell phones by teachers for certain learning had helped children become conversant with the use of phone for communication. These children were also allowed manipulate certain electronics at home. Nwankwo further stated that a modern Nigerian pupil can easily turn on and off a television, dial a number and thus, speak with his parents who reside in a distant land. Also, the findings are in agreement with that of Echefu (2005), who posits that the availability and use of microphone and bell could be attributed to their durability and presence in the school garden for teaching children about culture and local communication. Similarly, the findings are in line with that of Nnamuch (2018), who posits that teachers have succeed teaching in the use of their cell phones in teaching children about modern communication because children of this twenty first century are more conversant with its operations.

Findings in table 3 revealed the extent primary school teachers utilize visual literacy facilities in teaching and learning. Findings revealed that to a high extent, visual literacy facilities such as charts, chalk/white board, text books, and pictures were all used by primary school teachers in teaching and learning. These findings are in consonant with Okpala and Onwurah (2009), who posits that most visual facilities found in the classroom include flannel board, pictures, blackboards and flashcards. Okpala and Onwurah pressed that the absence of these facilities in most schools made lessons boring and less academic.

Findings in table 4 revealed the extent primary school teachers utilize audio-visual literacy facilities in teaching and learning. Findings revealed that to a low extent, television and computers were not used in teaching and learning. These findings are in consonance with that of Bakare (2009), who posits displeasure over the state of audio-visual facilities and materials available in schools. To Bakare, absent of audio-visual gadgets such as video players and television in schools limit the effectiveness of the teacher and pupils interest. These findings are in agreement with Fakomogbon (2015), who posits that non provision of audio-visuals for school children had made learning of some school subjects such as English language and mathematics less effective.

Findings in table 5 revealed how location of public primary schools affects utilization of audio-visual literacy facilities in teaching and learning. Findings revealed that to a high extent, the use of literacy facilities in rural public primary schools is low than schools located in urban areas. It was also revealed that to a high extent, robbers hardly invade educational facilities in urban schools as they do in rural schools and that to a high extent, lack of access road to some rural public primary schools hinders distribution of educational facilities which limits their use for instructions in the affected schools. The finding is in consonant with that of Aliade (2008), who posits that schools located in rural areas were always robbed of its valued material resources owing the fact that most of these schools are not safely guided by good security outfits. Community members easily troop in and out of such schools with different informal excuses. Findings are also in line with that of Odeh, Oguche and Ivagher (2015), who posits that location of schools affects distribution and use of literacy facilities and that location of school does not only affect distribution of educational facilities but affects the ways teachers come to school. Farombi in Odeh et al argues that local of a school sends a bad signal towards the academic performance of such schools because materials are not evenly distributed.

## Conclusion

Literacy facilities are major contributor in laying good educational foundation for our school children beginning from the primary school level. Literacy facilities also help teachers do their job efficiently and effectively. The availability of literacy facilities in schools determines the extent these facilities are being used by teachers. Location of schools also determines availability and utilization of literacy facilities for teaching and learning.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended as follows;

1. Federal and State government should ensure that public primary schools are fully equipped with literacy facilitate that would facilitate teaching and learning.
2. Primary school teachers need to be sensitized on the use of literacy facilities to facilitate teaching and learning in public primary schools.
3. Colleges of education and other institutions that involve in teacher development should ensure that would be teachers are guided on the use of various visual instructional facilities and their applications in teaching and learning.
4. The use of audio-visual materials in teaching and learning must be applied by teachers in public primary schools to help our children in their early stage of development.
5. Location should not be a barrier in distribution of educational materials. In line with this, government should ensure that the roads leading to various schools are through and that sound vehicles are made available for resource distribution. Again, government should assist rural schools in terms of provision of funds to help secure these educational materials.

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