

Assessing University Libraries in Uttar Pradesh with Emphasis to Infrastructure and Information and Communication Technology Applications

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ABSTRACT

Academic libraries are confronted with the challenges of change. The aim of the present study is to investigate the prevalent scenario and status of university libraries (Central and State) in Uttar Pradesh in terms of collection, budget, manpower, and a special reference to ICT infrastructure. For the purpose of this study questionnaire is used as the tool to collect data from university libraries. It highlights different facets of libraries in the state only. The study reveals that libraries do not have proper infrastructure. The study is restricted to a limited number of university libraries in the state. Findings of the study will facilitate the authorities to take appropriate measures in improving the condition of the libraries in the State.

Keywords: Library, academic libraries, university library, higher education, Uttar Pradesh

1. INTRODUCTION

Libraries are an integral part of educational setup. The main function of the library is to educate. University libraries have their important place in academic and higher learning world. But, on the grass root level, very less effort are witnessed in the direction of integrating library services with the academic programmes offered by the universities. It is now more than six decades that the process of library automation started in the country. But the condition in Uttar Pradesh (UP) regarding the transformation of libraries is not very enthusiastic. At present, there is stagnation and decline in university libraries in UP.

2. LIBRARIES IN UTTAR PRADESH

Uttar Pradesh is one of the important states of India having 75 districts. Allahabad University, Banaras Hindu University, and Aligarh Muslim University are among the oldest Indian universities which are located in the State. Allahabad University is considered as the oldest university of UP established in 1887. Presently there are 22 state universities (these consist of 12 state universities, 3 agricultural universities, 1 open university, 1 law university, 1 medical university, 1 university for physically challenged, 2 technical universities and 1 Urdu university), 4 central universities, 10 deemed universities and 16 private universities. The tradition of libraries in the state is as old as its universities. Most of these universities have libraries since their inception. The present survey is an attempt to present the picture

of libraries in such a vast and centrally located state of India.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Nyamboga & Kemparaju¹ conducted a research on 6 university libraries in Karnataka (India), and concluded that these libraries still lag behind some other Indian universities in the application of information technology (IT), but the introduction of internet access is an important step forward. They suggested that with basic IT literacy, library users and staff are able to retrieve more up-to-date information, thereby increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the academic libraries as well as helping to bring the whole institution into the information age. Suku & Pillai² discussed the present scenario of automation activities in university libraries in Kerala. The survey findings mainly covered various aspects of library automation such as information technology infrastructure, in-house activities, information services and their usage, manpower development, and budget. The paper described the role of INFLIBNET Centre in accelerating the automation activities of university libraries, especially in the context of the UG.

Raza & Nath³ measured the use of information technology—the use of hardware and software facilities—in the university libraries of Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh (India) with an ulterior objective to establish some co-relation between quality in libraries and use of information technology.

Bansode & Periera⁴ conducted a study on 23 college libraries in Goa, India. Four of these were

fully automated, five were partially automated and 14 were in the early stages of library automation. The results showed that majority of the libraries lack the staff required for automation. Traditional barriers such as insufficient funds, lack of trained staff, and lack of space were faced by a majority of the libraries.

Amritpal Kaur⁵ presented the impact of e-journals on university libraries of India in terms of resources, staffing, space, technical services and equipment. The study revealed that the e-journals have impacted on subscription, infrastructure, staff, space, technical services, photocopying, inter-library loan, library use and reference services.

Husain & Nazim⁶ explored of the potential utilisation of different information and communication technologies (ICT) in Indian academic libraries. The study covered 30 central universities of India. The main findings are that academic libraries in India have mostly been involved in applying traditional ICT-based solutions for the management of various library functions and services, particularly for organising and retrieving information.

4. OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of this study are to:

- Present the state of the art of Uttar Pradesh university libraries;
- Provide status about various libraries in terms of collection, budget, ICT infrastructure, etc.;
- Identify the problems and difficulties faced by these libraries; and
- Provide suggestions for the betterment of these libraries.

The parameters used to know the status of these university libraries are: Library building, budget, collection, manpower, user services infrastructure and communication facilities. The present study has the following limitations:

- Only the central and state universities of Uttar Pradesh are covered in the study. Deemed universities, private universities, agricultural universities, technological universities and medical universities are not covered in this study.
- Data related to collection, budget and infrastructure are not given in detail by many universities.

5. METHODOLOGY

Questionnaires were distributed to 16 university libraries of UP. Only 11 filled questionnaires were received back. The response rate is 68.75 %. So the final sample size for the study is 11 university libraries of UP. The present study covers 2 central and 9 state university libraries of UP.

Central Universities

1. Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University, Lucknow BBAU
2. Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi BHU

State Universities

3. Bundelkhand University, Jhansi BU
4. Chhatrapati Sahuji Maharaj Kanpur University, Kanpur CSJMU
5. Chaudhary Charan Singh University, Meerut CCSU
6. Deen Dayal Upadhyay Gorakhpur University, Gorakhpur DDU
7. Ram Manohar Lohia Awadh University, Faizabad RMLAU
8. B.R. Ambedkar University, Agra BRAU
9. Lucknow University, Lucknow LU
10. Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapeeth, Varanasi MGKVP
11. Veer Bahadur Singh Purvanchal University, Jaunpur VBSPU

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Generally, the structure in UP university libraries consists of one central library and some universities having departmental libraries also.

6.1 Information About the Libraries

All the 11 university libraries under study have their own building. The building is generally multi-storied ranging from 2-4 stories. Many libraries also have other departments in the same building. Some libraries have library and information science department in the same building. Most of the libraries have sufficient space in the building but have not been properly planned. The seating capacity in the library range from 80 to 1400 users. The budget varies from 20 lakh to 6 Crore 20 Lakh. Most of the libraries under study have provided total

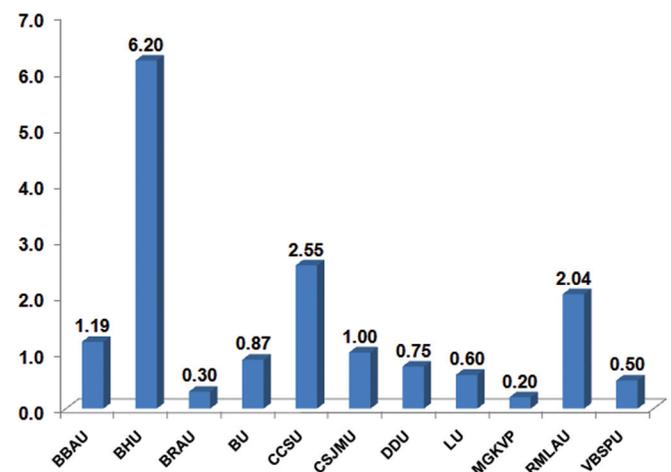


Figure 1. Budget sanctioned (per annum) (in crores).

budget but not the breakups of budget regarding expenditure on staff, IT, print or digital resources (Fig.1). Table 1 shows that out of 11 universities 6 are not participating in any co-operative venture such as library networks, etc.

6.2. ICT Tools

Table 2 presents the type of ICT used by the libraries. It was observed that out of 11 universities only 6 libraries have their own e-mail id others were not

Table 1. Status regarding space, budget and cooperation

| S. No. | University | Seating space for users | Budget (per annum) | Membership of library networks, cooperative ventures, etc. |
|--------|------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. | BBAU | 380 | 1 Crore 19 Lakh 15 thousand | NA |
| 2. | BHU | 1400 | 6 Crore 20 Lakh | INFLIBNET, DELNET, ILA, IASLIC, FID, IFLA, UN |
| 3. | BRAU | 200 | 30 Lakh | NA |
| 4. | BU | 80-90 | 87 Lakh | NA |
| 5. | CCSU | 850 | 2 Crore 55 Lakh | INFLIBNET, DELNET |
| 6. | CSJMU | 700 | 1 Crore | INFLIBNET |
| 7. | DDU | 200 | 75 Lakh | NA |
| 8. | LU | 380 | 60 Lakh | NA |
| 9. | MGKVP | 100 | 20 Lakh | INFLIBNET |
| 10. | RMLAU | Not mentioned | 2 Crore 4 Lakh | NA |
| 11. | VBSPU | 150 | 50 Lakh | INFLIBNET, DELNET |

having an e-mail account; only 2 libraries have facebook presence others were not having facebook presence; and 1 library (BHU) has its blog others were not using blog. Out of 11 universities only 4 libraries have their own websites and others are using the university website. Only 3 libraries have full Wi-Fi campus, 4 partial Wi-Fi and 4 have no Wi-Fi facility.

Table 3 depicts the various IT infrastructure for users and staff. It seems that most of the universities do not have good infrastructure in this regard. Only two libraries have printer for users and other libraries do not have any printers for users and no library has scanner for users. The computers with internet connection for users range from 7 to 400. Some libraries have RFID while most other libraries do not have RFID and others just have internet connectivity. There seems a wide gap between the IT infrastructure available in the university libraries of UP.

Some libraries have three servers. Many libraries do not have their own server. Equipments available in the library are generally to be used by the staff not by the users directly.

6.3 User Services and Facilities

Table 4 presents the status of all 11 university libraries showing the user services and facilities that are being provided in these libraries. Generally the universities are providing traditional kind of services like circulation, reprographic/photocopying service, reference, etc. OPAC and Web OPAC are only available in 50 % libraries. Only one library (BHU) is using SMS alerts for circulation. Same is the condition with translation service only one library (BHU) is providing translation service. Similarly, only four libraries are providing ILL service. The finding matches with the study conducted by Husain &

Table 2. ICT facilities used by the libraries

| S. No. | University | E-mail | Facebook page | Blog | Library website | Wi-Fi |
|--------------|------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. | BBAU | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| 2. | BHU | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 3. | BRAU | No | No | No | No | No |
| 4. | BU | Yes | No | No | Yes | Partial |
| 5. | CCSU | No | No | No | No | No |
| 6. | CSJMU | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| 7. | DDU | No | No | No | No | Partial |
| 8. | LU | Yes | Yes | No | No | Partial |
| 9. | MGKVP | No | No | No | No | Partial |
| 10. | RMLAU | No | No | No | No | No |
| 11. | VBSPU | Yes | No | No | Yes | No |
| Total | | 06 (54.5 %) | 02 (18 %) | 01 (9.09 %) | 05 (45.4 %) | 07 (63.6 %) |

Table 3. IT infrastructure for users and staff

| S. No. | Univ-ersity | Servers | | Computers with internet | | Computers without internet | | Printers | | Scanners-simple | | Scanners-barcode | | Scanners-RFID | | PDA | |
|--------|-------------|---------|-------|-------------------------|-------|----------------------------|-------|----------|-------|-----------------|-------|------------------|-------|---------------|-------|-------|-------|
| | | Users | Staff | Users | Staff | Users | Staff | Users | Staff | Users | Staff | Users | Staff | Users | Staff | Users | Staff |
| 1. | BBAU | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2. | BHU | - | 03 | 400 | 135 | - | - | - | 20 | - | 04 | - | 02 | - | - | - | - |
| 3. | BRAU | - | 03 | 07 | 04 | - | 05 | 02 | 04 | - | 01 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 4. | BU | - | - | 26 | 25 | - | - | - | 02 | - | 01 | - | - | 03 | 03 | - | 03 |
| 5. | CCSU | - | 03 | 75 | 10 | - | - | - | 04 | - | 04 | - | 03 | - | - | - | - |
| 6. | CSJMU | - | 02 | - | - | 40 | - | 02 | 06 | - | 02 | - | 06 | - | - | - | - |
| 7. | DDU | - | 01 | 10 | 02 | 10 | 02 | - | 03 | - | 01 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 8. | LU | 02 | - | 50 | 72 | - | 10 | - | 06 | - | 03 | - | 02 | - | - | - | - |
| 9. | MGKVP | 01 | 01 | 15 | 06 | - | - | - | 04 | - | 02 | - | 02 | - | - | - | - |
| 10. | RMLAU | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP |
| 11. | VBSPU | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP | NP |

* NP: Not present

Table 4. User services/facilities (Traditional and automated)

| Services | BBAU | BHU | BU | CSJMU | CCSU | DDU | RMLAU | BRAU | LU | MG-KVP | VB-SPU |
|---|------|-----|-----|-------|------|-----|-------|------|-----|--------|--------|
| Traditional services | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Readers' guidance-ILL | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Translation | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | Yes | No | No |
| Reading room (for personal books) | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| Referral service | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| Book reservation | No | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Book renewal | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Organization of user orientation programmes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Organization of book exhibitions | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Automated Services | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Readers' guidance- Online | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | Yes | No |
| OPAC | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes | *UP | No | No |
| Web OPAC | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | UP | No | No |
| Information search and delivery | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | Yes | Yes | No |
| Reprographic/Photocopy service | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Online search by user | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | UP | Yes | Yes |
| Online search by library staff | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | UP | Yes | Yes |
| Information search and delivery by E-mail | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | UP | Yes | No |
| Information search and delivery by mobile/phone | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | No | UP | No | No |
| Barcode -based circulation | No | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | UP | No | No |
| RFID- based circulation | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | No | UP | No | No |
| SMS alert on circulation transaction | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | No | No | UP | No | No |
| Links of open access resources in library website | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | Yes | No | Yes |

* UP: Under process

Table 5. Status of print and digital collection

| S. No. | University | Books | | Journals | | Thesis and dissertations | | Newspapers & magazines | | Manu scripts | Audio-visual |
|--------|------------|----------|---------|----------|---------|--------------------------|---------|------------------------|---------|--------------|--------------|
| | | Print | Digital | Print | Digital | Print | Digital | Print | Digital | | |
| 1. | BBAU | 37,978 | - | - | - | 130 | - | 14 & 12 | - | - | - |
| 2. | BHU | 9,71,962 | 52560 | 1,41,056 | 11,879 | 13,476 | - | - | - | 7,233 | 400 |
| 3. | BRAU | 1,65,000 | - | - | - | - | - | 09 | - | - | 150 |
| 4. | BU | 1,25,365 | - | 200 | 10,000 | 4,200 | 4200 | 17 | - | - | 4,200 |
| 5. | CCSU | 1,40,997 | 55 | 328 | 103 | 10,300 | 3100 | 49 | - | - | 550 |
| 6. | CSJMU | 1,19,665 | - | 19,416 | - | 11,000 | - | 15 | - | - | - |
| 7. | DDU | 3,50,000 | - | 20,000 | - | 1,500 | - | 20 | - | - | - |
| 8. | LU | 5,57,000 | - | - | - | 13,000 | - | 46 | - | 2,000 | 3,000 |
| 9. | MGKVP | 2,70,000 | - | 50 | 3000 | 5000 | - | - | - | 1,200 | - |
| 10. | RMLAU | 1,16,000 | - | 21 | - | 100 | - | 25 | - | - | - |
| 11. | VBSPU | 92,676 | 2200 | 350 | 1500 | 10,000 | 96 | 16 & 25 | - | - | - |

Many libraries responded that they are only subscribing the journals available through Inffibnet and Delnet.

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6.4 Collection

Table 5 reflects that print collection still dominates Nazim⁶ that most of the Indian Universities are still applying traditional techniques for user services..

6.4 Collection

Table 5 reflects that print collection still dominates in this digital age. The printed books range from 37,978 to 9, 71,962. Old libraries like BHU have large collection of print material but new libraries like BBAU has low collection (as collection grows with time). Only 3 libraries have manuscript collection. The audio-visual collection is also not very good in the libraries of the State. Six libraries don't have any audio-video material in their collection.

Table 5 reflects that the status of digital contents

is not satisfactory in most of the libraries. Only 3 libraries have books in digital format. No libraries have newspapers and magazines in digital format in spite of the fact they are available free also. This may be due to lack of awareness and qualified staff. Old university like BHU has better digital collection as compared to other libraries in the State.

6.5 Membership

The membership ranges from 191 to 19925 users. The main membership consists of UG and PG students (Table 6).

6.6 Staff

Table 7 reflects that 6 positions of librarians are vacant, 1 university has honorary librarian and only 4 universities have librarians. 3 libraries do not have sanctioned post of deputy librarian. Most of the assistant librarian's posts are also vacant. During the survey it was noticed that management

Table 6. Status regarding membership

| S. No. | University | Faculty | Researchers | UG & PG | Staff | Others | Total |
|--------|------------|---------|-------------|-----------|-------|--------|--------|
| 1. | BBAU | 89 | 285 | 1680 | 05 | 09 | 2068 |
| 2. | BHU | 3798 | 875 | 7470/7782 | - | - | 19925 |
| 3. | BRAU | 25 | 68 | 53 | 34 | 11 | 191 |
| 4. | BU | - | - | - | - | - | 10,000 |
| 5. | CCSU | 40 | 250 | 2000 | 40 | 05 | 2335 |
| 6. | CSJMU | 300 | 500 | 7000 | 1200 | - | 9000 |
| 7. | DDU | 200 | 50 | 10000 | 500 | 20 | 10770 |
| 8. | LU | 767 | 3400 | 21000 | 1760 | - | 26927 |
| 9. | MGKVP | 200 | 500 | 8000 | 400 | - | 9100 |
| 10. | RMLAU | 50-50 | 50 | 2400 | 15 | - | 2565 |
| 11. | VBSPU | 126 | 300 | 2600 | 500 | - | 3526 |

Table 7. Status of supervisory staff

| S. No. | University | Librarian | | Deputy Librarian | | Assistant Librarian/ Documentation Officer | | Information Scientist | |
|--------|------------|------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--|------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| | | Sanctioned | Present position | Sanctioned | Present position | Sanctioned | Present position | Sanctioned | Present position |
| 1. | BBAU | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 2. | BHU | 1 | 1 | 4 | 6* | 17 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| 3. | BRAU | 1 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| 4. | BU | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5. | CCSU | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6. | CSJMU | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 7. | DDU | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 8. | LU | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 9. | MGKVP | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| 10. | RMLAU | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 11. | VBSPU | 1 | 1 (Hon.) | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Table 8. Status of subordinate staff

| S. No. | University | Professional Assistant | | Semi-professional Assistant | | Para Professional | | Other Support Staff | |
|--------|------------|------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| | | Sanctioned | Present Position | Sanctioned | Present position | Sanctioned | Present position | Sanctioned | Present position |
| 1. | BBAU | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 2. | BHU | 36 | 34 | 70 | 58 | 40 | 40 | 64 | 33 |
| 3. | BRAU | 0 | 0 | 9 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 4. | BU | 0 | 0 | 8 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 5. | CCSU | 8 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 6. | CSJMU | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 7. | DDU | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 8 | 16 | 8 |
| 8. | LU | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 28 | 19 | 30 | 22 |
| 9. | MGKVP | 2 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 4 |
| 10. | RMLAU | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 4 |
| 11. | VBSPU | 1 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

lacks interest and initiative in filling the vacant posts. In some cases suitable candidates were not found for senior position in the libraries. Table 8 shows the status of subordinate staff. The para-professional staff is known by different names in different universities as library assistant (BBAU & BHU), book lifter (BU), data entry operator, library assistant, junior library assistant and library clerk (LU). Many libraries do not have sanctioned post for support staff they have them on temporary basis as per requirements.

7. PROBLEMS FACED AND FUTURE INITIATIVES

Librarians have mentioned the following problems faced by them:

- Financial crisis
- Lack of support from management

- Paucity of staff
- Lack of trained staff
- Lack of IT infrastructure
- Removal of RFID tags by the users
- Maintenance of infrastructure

The problems stated by the librarian's matches with the problems as mentioned in the study by Bansode & Periera.⁴

Librarians have plans to introduce following facilities in their libraries in the future:

- Remote access facility
- CCTV cameras for security
- Use of Mobile technology
- Information literacy programmes

- RFID implementation
- Recruitment of skilled professionals
- Institutional repository

8. SUGGESTIONS

- Vacant posts in libraries should be filled on priority basis.
- Library staff should be sent regularly for training courses to upgrade their knowledge and skills.
- University libraries should be equipped with more information technology (IT) facilities and for this purpose the provision of a special budget for development of information technology infrastructure should be considered.
- All the universities should develop proper infrastructure for providing access to e-resources.
- The opinion of library professionals should be given due attention while taking any decision for library development.
- Libraries must follow the building plan of a modern library.
- Co-operative venture membership should be taken without any delay.

9. CONCLUSIONS

Libraries are undergoing transformation, but the results of the present study indicate that university libraries in UP have a long way to go. The libraries need to respond to the growing and diversifying information needs of the end-users. There is the need to revamp the situation of these libraries and provide services according to the changing behaviour of the users. It is true that the infrastructure and administrative support are limitations for the libraries and it has been observed that the libraries of U.P. need to build a good ICT infrastructure. There are many challenges ahead which can be overcome with the right skills, right attitudes and initiatives by library professionals and government as well.

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