

## **Psychological Empowerment and Its Relationship to Perceived Academic Self-Efficiency among Faculty of Najran University**

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**Abstract:** *The study aims at recognizing the relationship between psychological empowerment and the perceived academic self-efficiency among the faculty of Najran University. The sample consists of (90) faculty. The instruments of the study include the psychological empowerment scale and the perceived academic self-efficiency scale. Data was statistically handled by calculating the means, the standard deviations, correlation coefficients and the Linear Regression. The study has resulted that there are various levels of psychological empowerment among the faculty of Najran University and a statistically significant relationship between the dimensions of the psychological empowerment and the academic self-efficiency as well as the existence of a statistically significant effect for the dimensions of the psychological empowerment on the academic self-efficiency among the faculty of Najran University.*

**Key Words:** *Psychological empowerment, academic self-efficiency, perceived, Najran University*

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### **I. Introduction**

In light of the difficulties and challenges that Saudi universities face today in order to cope with the global changes and turning to knowledge society, lots of universities gave increasing interest for building new concepts and innovated approaches in management by which they can develop the managerial performance, invest the potential powers in those working for them and motivate them. One of these most apparent concepts is the concept of empowerment which is considered one of the most important basics of management. It is also considered the real effect for any work's success in addition to the good impact it has upon motivating workers and raising their morale and enhancing the democracy principles in management. Empowerment culture came as a turning point in many educational and learning institutions as it helps building human resources who are qualified for self-leadership which helps improving and developing the educational process and achieving its goals efficiently and effectively.

Employees' empowerment is a process by which they are given responsibilities and powers and encouraged to participate in decision making and given freedom, support and trust for making use of their powers and revealing their abilities (Mohamed and Ahmed, 2012). Biron and Bamberger (2010) showed that the concept of empowerment is related to giving individuals an increasing amount of trust in their potentials and readiness to practice the different performance tasks freely without referring to higher levels. Nafla, et al. (2011) saw that empowerment can strengthen the relationship between the administration and employees and it can break the administration inactivity which makes institutions concern about it as a basic element for their success. The studies of (Otaibi, 2004; Meyerson, S.L. & Kline, T.J.B. 2008; Laschinger, H. K. S. et al., 2004; Thorlakson, A.J.H., et al., 1996 and Thomas, K. W. & Velthouse, B. A., 1999) pointed that empowerment involves two general approaches which are:

#### **1.1 First: Administrational Or Environmental Empowerment**

This refers to creating the suitable work circumstances that enable individuals to do their works efficiently and create an environment that enables the individual to invest his potentials and abilities and increase his work independently. It also refers to a group of practices that involve authorization for powers for the low levels in the organizational structure of the institution. It also looks at the concept of the administrative empowerment as allowing employees in the institution to participate in training, development, planning and supervising the tasks within their jobs and participating in taking the organizational decisions and taking responsibility in carrying out these decisions as well as professionally qualifying them continuously so that they can do their jobs for reaching the positive results in work. (Lau and Wing, 2010; Abdelwahhab, 1999; Potochny, D. 1998; Alqadi, 2009; Boey and Ee Kuan, 2010).

#### **1.2 Secondly: Psychological Empowerment**

It is one of the empowerment types that the administrations of educational institutions apply with the purpose of affecting the motives of employees and their attitudes towards work and for preparing them psychologically in order to make them feel that the work they are doing is meaningful and valuable. It mainly aims at strengthening the psychological sides in the individual which enable him to take the suitable decisions. It is a motivating concept for self-efficacy as it enhances the individual's feeling with self-efficacy through discovering the work circumstances that enhance the employees' feelings of weakness and make them overcome them. It also involves feeling with the importance of the work employees are doing and the efficiency in achieving it and how to get freedom and independency in achieving work and the ability to take the right decisions. (Salem et al., 2008) saw that psychological empowerment through this perspective is focusing on how to employ the individual's experiences as the individual can feel professional in doing his works and in taking decisions. Al Jardi et al. (2012) indicated that the psychological method of empowerment gets its concept from the social psychological models and that it mainly focuses on improving the employees' feelings, it also focuses on the authorization of the power of decision making less frequently and shares clearly in upgrading the self-motives of individuals. Thus we actually find a bad need to apply and activate the psychological empowerment for employees in institutions generally and universities in particular.

Dimitriades and Maroudas (2007) suggest that self-psychological empowerment for employees increases in case there are work relationships which are supportive and positive that help the individual to follow positive behaviors within the work environment. Spreitzer (1995) and the study of Wallach and Mueller (2006) resulted in an effective framework for the work that pushes individuals to work and feel able to create the work environment, the empowerment methods that work hard to create a cooperative atmosphere and a supportive work environment for employees are more able to support the self-effectiveness. Ali (2011) added that the psychological empowerment is not regarded as a mere individual feeling that employees have but it is a concept that needs a supportive environment, suitable organizational factors and mutual relationships that are based upon bases of trust and communication between work superiors and subordinates.

In order to realize the concept of empowerment from a motivation perspective, it is important to give interest to self-efficacy concept; this is because psychological empowerment depends firstly on motivating feelings of self-effectiveness and independence of individuals. Many researchers have found that there is a correlation between the psychological empowerment of those working in the educational process and achieving efficiency and effectiveness in performance widely. When a faculty member or a teacher is empowered, this participates in job satisfaction, increased efficiency, motivation, obligation and initiation in taking decisions and facing problems that may hinder their performance and thus increases their productivity. (Boey and EeKuan (2010); Mohamed (2012); Chegini (2009); Al Kubaisi (2004); Thornburg and Mungai (2011). According to Al Asmar and Al-Hazli (2014), the success of universities in achieving their educational and social goals is related to the efficiency of its faculty members, most international universities tried to promote their faculty members and their surrounding environment in addition to preparing opportunities for their professional development and helping them improve the level of their academic efficiency which greatly affects their academic performance. Many studies (Bailey,1999; Brian and Russell, 2009; Stajkovic and Sommer, 2000 showed that self-efficacy is a strong predictive for the academic performance which is related to the individual. Logan and Ganster (2007) indicated that individuals who have high academic self-efficacy deal with the problems and the difficult activities with more relaxation feelings, the more the individual feels efficacy, the more his effort and work increases. Landino and Owen (1998) confirmed that the individuals who have high realizations to the strength of self-efficacy exert greater efforts and their work and activity lasts longer compared to those who don't have high realizations to the efficacy. According to (Bandura, 1986; Wang and Peggy, 2009) self-efficacy represents the individual's appreciation for his potentials and abilities to organize his works for achieving his plans, this efficacy in the academic field has an apparent and outstanding impact so the individual's self-efficacy plays an effective role in achieving the academic success as the individual's feelings with his self-efficacy pushes him and lead him to achieve the unique tasks and thus exerts greater efforts and continues working for longer times and innovating a strategy for reaching his goals.

Al Zayat (1998) identified the concept of academic self-efficacy as the individual's belief or perception for the level, efficiency or effectiveness of his potentials or his self-abilities and what they involve of motivating knowledge and intellectual emotional components for dealing with the academic situations, tasks or problems. Thus here there is a reference to the importance of the knowledge, motivated and mind components in the individual's efficiency and effectiveness.

## **II. Literature Review**

Mareyke (2014) aims to obtain empirical evidence related to the effect of empowerment and self-efficacy variable of the commitment of the profession. The results of this study are expected to be the input for the decision-makers at the State University of Manado to empower human resources faculty in this regard so that high self-efficacy is formed so as to increase the commitment of lecturers' profession. The study population

was all faculties at the Manado State University totaling 827 people scattered in seven faculties. Determination of the sample determined by the technique several stages, and the number of samples randomly selected predication proportionally as much as 119 lecturers. The findings of this research as follows: 1) Empowerment direct positive effect on self-efficacy lecturer, 2) Empowerment direct positive impact on the profession's commitment lecturer, and 3) self- efficacy was a positive direct effect on the profession's commitment lecturer. Morteza & Mohamad (2014) confirmed the positive relationship between empowerment and performance efficiency and a relationship between feeling efficient, trust and performance. The study concluded that empowerment of teachers can generally improve performance. Fatemeh and Maryam (2014) pointed out that there is a correlation between teacher satisfaction and some of the empowerment dimensions represented in professional growth, position, self-independence and there are differences between the two genders in the levels of empowerment. Al-Asmar, et al. (2014) concluded that the level of empowerment for the research sample was generally high and that there were statistically significant differences towards the level of their empowerment in the dimension of participating in decision making and professional development and independency in performance for the faculty members.

Singh and Sarkar (2012) proved the great positive effect for the psychological empowerment on the created behaviors of teachers. The teacher's feelings with the value and meaning of the work he is doing makes him more engaged in his job that tends to have a positive effect on his creative behaviors. The results of the study showed that the level of empowerment differs in teachers according to their differences and their work engagement.

Gaudreau and Blanchard (2012) showed that there is significant difference between rate of employee's performance before and after Empowerment implementing, by the way Empowerment implementing emphasizing the factors, delegation, participating management and encouragement and giving reward cause employee's performance to improve. Ramezan (2011) aims at investigating and determining strategies for empowering human resources in educational organizations on the basis of descriptive method, Survey. The population contains all the school managers in Alborz Province in 2011 that are 2498 and the sample comprises 331 who are selected according to the stratified random sampling on the basis of Morgan's Formula for determining sample size. The tool for gathering data is a questionnaire which is prepared by the researcher himself and its validity is confirmed by 38 experts. Also the questionnaire's reliability is calculated on the basis of Cronbach's alpha and it is 0/77. The obtained results indicates that the most significant strategies for empowering the human resources in educational organizations can be categorized in five aspects which include the management styles in organizations, creating a spirit of competitiveness, creativity and innovation, motivational factors and practical and public training of the human resources in educational organizations. The study of Ronit (2004) handled the effect of empowerment on the professional and organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior and self-efficacy of teachers and the sample consisted of (983) teachers in secondary schools and the results indicated that perceptions of teachers for empowerment significantly associated with professional commitment they have and through the empowerment, self-efficacy of teacher can be predicted.

Mountjoy (2001) is an attempt to examine levels of empowerment among faculty in three private colleges in the United States and study sample consisted of (335) male and female faculty. The study resulted in the enjoyment of faculty members with high levels of empowerment in decision-making, professional growth and independence in the performance; it also showed no differences between the empowerment levels of male and female faculty.

### **III. Statement Of The Problem**

Thus, the study problem is included in identifying the relationship of the psychological empowerment of faculty members in Najran University with the academic self-efficacy for them and the study problem is identified in the following inquiries:

1. What is the level of psychological empowerment among the faculty of Najran University?
2. Is there a relationship between the dimensions of psychological empowerment and the academic self-efficacy among the faculty of Najran University?
3. Are there statistically significant differences for psychological empowerment dimensions due to the sex variable?
4. What is the effect of the psychological empowerment in the academic self-efficacy among the faculty of Najran University?

### **IV. The Study Hypotheses**

1. There is a positive statistically significant correlation between the dimensions of psychological empowerment and the academic self-efficacy among the faculty of Najran University.
2. There are various levels of psychological empowerment among the faculty of Najran University.

3. There aren't statistically significant differences for the dimensions of psychological empowerment that are attributed to the sex variable.
4. There isn't a statistically significant impact for the dimensions of the psychological empowerment on the academic self-efficacy among the faculty of Najran University.

### V. Objectives

The current study aims at recognizing the level of psychological empowerment among the faculty of Najran University; and clarifying the relationship between the psychological empowerment and the academic self-efficacy and investigating the differences between the male and female faculty members in the psychological empowerment.

### VI. Method

The study depends on the descriptive analytical approach due to its ability to analyze the study phenomenon and describing the relationship between the study variables, explaining and analyzing its results.

#### 6.1 Sample

The study sample consisted of (30) males and females of the faculty members in the different colleges of Najran University, (13 males) and (17 females). The basic study sample was (90), (38 males) and (52 females) from colleges of Education, Science and Arts, Community, Health Sciences, Engineering, Computer sciences and Shariaa.

Table (1): the study sample distributed to the university colleges, N=90.

College	Males	Practical	Theoretical	Females	Practical	Theoretical
Education	17	5	12	24	10	14
Science and Arts	6	4	2	13	8	5
Community	--	--	--	3	--	3
Health Sciences	4	4	--	3	3	--
Engineering	4	4	--	---	---	---
Computer Sciences	4	4	---	4	4	---
Sharia (Fundamental of Religion)	3	---	3	5	---	5
Total	38	21	17	52	25	27

#### 6.2 Instruments

##### 6.2.1 First: Psychological Empowerment Scale

This scale aims at measuring the psychological empowerment of the faculty members in the university.

##### 6.2.2 Validity And Reliability

Correlation coefficients were found between each axis and the total mark of the psychological empowerment scale and the correlation coefficients ranged between (0.542 – 0.893)

To measure the reliability of the scale, the researchers calculated Cronbach's alpha = (0.910), which confirmed the reliability of the scale.

### VII. Results And Discussion

**The first hypothesis** states that "There is a positive statistically significant correlation between the dimensions of psychological empowerment and the academic self-efficacy among the faculty of Najran University." In order to verify the validity the hypothesis, Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated between the scores of the main sample's individuals as N = 90 on the psychological empowerment scale and their scores on the self-efficacy scale. The following table shows the value of the correlation coefficient and its statistical significance. Table (2) indicates the value of the correlation coefficient between the scores of the main sample on the psychological empowerment scale and their scores on the self-efficacy scale and its statistical significance. N=90.

Dimensions	Correlation Coefficient	Significance Level
Independency	0.253*	0.05
Professional development	0.259*	0.05
Meaning	0.498**	0.01
Effect	0.525**	0.01

Participation in decision making	0.310 **	0.01
Job satisfaction	0.537**	0.01
Total	0.551**	0.05

Table (2) shows that the first hypothesis of the study is valid as there is a positive statistically significant correlative between all the dimensions of the psychological empowerment and self-efficacy at significance level (0.05) and (0.01) ranged between (0.235) as a minimum and (0.551) as a maximum. It was revealed that there is a correlative statistically significant relationship at the significance level (0.05) between the total psychological empowerment and self-efficacy which means that applying the strategy of the psychological empowerment is positively reflected on the self-efficacy of the faculty members. It is also noticed that the strongest correlative relationship was found between the effect dimension and the dimension of job satisfaction which means that the belief of the faculty member that his work affects the strategic results of the faculty and the university where he works and his job satisfaction makes his self-efficacy better and creates in him a positive feeling towards work.

This result agrees with the study of Gaudreau and Blanchard (2012); Morteza and Mohamad, (2014); Mareyke, (2014) where their results concluded that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between empowerment and self-efficacy and a relationship between feeling efficiency, confidence and performance; these studies concluded that the empowerment of the individual improves performance generally while there is a contrast in this result that the current study concluded with the results of the study of Fatemeh and Maryam (2014) that found out that there isn't a correlative relationship between some of the dimensions of empowerment which is the dimension of job satisfaction and the self-efficacy of individuals. The researcher referred this result as literary theories stated that using the empowerment style in institutions results in creating a cooperative climate and a supportive environment for employees that are more able to support their self-effectiveness which as a result is considered a key for the good distinguished and effective performance in the work environment.

**The second hypothesis** states that "There are various levels of psychological empowerment among the faculty of Najran University." In order to verify the validity of this hypothesis, the differences between the frequencies of the psychological empowerment scale for the acceptance degree were calculated and they are: Always, often, sometimes, never through Ka2 or Kay square test for the significance of the differences between frequencies, the following table shows the results of the differences between the frequencies for the main sample, (N= 90) in the psychological empowerment scale.

Table (3) shows the values of Ka2 for the significance of the differences between the frequencies of the main sample, N=90 in the psychological empowerment scale.

Item s	Values of Ka2	Sig. Level	Item s	Value s of Ka2	Sig. Level	Item s	Values of Ka2	Sig. Level	Item s	Values of Ka2	Sig. Level	Item s	Values of Ka2	Sig. level
1	45.55*	0.001	13	21.73*	0.001	25	34.35*	0.001	37	56.22*	0.001	49	33.28*	0.001
2	29.73*	0.001	14	26.88*	0.001	26	43.95*	0.001	38	43.77*	0.001	50	22.86*	0.001
3	22.97*	0.001	15	34.17*	0.001	27	47.77*	0.001	39	54.79*	0.001	51	19.40*	0.001
4	26.08*	0.001	16	39.51*	0.001	28	63.68*	0.001	40	48.40*	0.001	52	66.26*	0.001
5	20.66*	0.001	17	41.82*	0.001	29	16.80*	0.001	41	64.04*	0.001	53	47.86*	0.001
6	42.35*	0.001	18	44.13*	0.001	30	36.75*	0.001	42	11.95*	0.005	54	53.55*	0.001
7	20.04*	0.001	19	45.55*	0.001	31	36.86*	0.001	43	16.36*	0.001	55	47.33*	0.001
8	32.40*	0.01	20	11.40*	0.01	32	72.22*	0.001	44	7.82**	0.05	56	20.00*	0.001
9	12.97*	0.005	21	32.06*	0.001	33	41.73*	0.001	45	17.82*	0.001	57	11.35*	0.01
10	34.88*	0.001	22	56.31*	0.001	34	52.48*	0.001	46	18.53*	0.001	58	24.75*	0.001
11	71.15*	0.001	23	37.55*	0.001	35	11.40*	0.01	47	29.02*	0.001	59	18.88*	0.001
12	70.44*	0.001	24	66.00*	0.001	36	14.29*	0.005	48	54.62*	0.001	60	14.26*	0.005

\* Significant at (0.01)

\*\* Significant at (0.05)

Table (3) shows that all the sentences of the psychological empowerment scale have statistically significant differences within the frequencies for Ka2 values which prove that there are various levels of psychological empowerment among the faculty. To make sure of the nature of the faculty's responses along

with cut-off score, the numbers of individuals and percentages of their responses were calculated as shown in the following table:

Table (4) shows the cut-off scores and frequencies and parallel percentages of the psychological empowerment levels among the faculty. N= 90.

Statistical Values	Cut-off score	frequencies	percentages	Level "degree of empowerment"
Psychological empowerment scale	80 and below	2	2.22%	weak
	81-160	13	14.45%	Medium
	161-240	75	83.33%	Strong
Total	-	90	100%	-

Table (4) shows that there are different levels of psychological empowerment among the faculty: weak, medium and strong while the highest percentage is for the strong attitude which proves there is an agreement for about 83.33% of the faculty towards the psychological empowerment. with this result, the current study agrees to the study of Mountjoy (2001) which concluded that the faculty are of high levels of empowerment in the dimensions of empowerment and the study of each of Al Assaf (2006) showed that level of practicing career empowerment at the academic leaders in the public Jordanian University was medium and Abdel-Rahman (2002) concluded that there are differences in the levels of empowerment between the sample for the most empowered category. A study by Singh and Sarkar (2012) indicated that the level of empowerment differs in individuals according to the difference in their participation and engagement in work. Referring to the theoretical literature that most institutions enhance the belonging of their employees by involving them in the operations and by adopting their views regarding decision making which makes the employee work hard to achieve continuous improvement and change and achieving the goals of the institution voluntarily; thus the most distinguished level for this category is the strong level and enhancing the idea of psychological empowerment in the educational institution and that there is a low percentage of psychological empowerment among the faculty which is explained by the two researchers to the obstacles faced by the process of empowerment in some institutions such as the inactivity for change, weakness of participation in decision making, fear of employees of taking responsibility or being questioned besides the strict procedures that don't encourage initiation and creativity – agreed to the results of a study by Al Otaibi (2004) which found that these obstacles face the Arabic organizations and limit its abilities to empower employees such as the organizational structure, strict centralization in decision making and fears of the supreme leadership of losing power.

**The third hypothesis** states that "There aren't statistically significant differences for the dimensions of psychological empowerment that are attributed to the sex variable." In order to verify the third hypothesis, "T test" was conducted to significance of differences between the means among the faculty males and females in the dimensions of the psychological empowerment and results were as follows:

Table (5) shows the differences between the means of the scores of the main study sample on the psychological empowerment dimensions scale among the faculty using "T test" and its statistical significance: N= 90.

Statistic values /Dimensions	Male faculty N=38		Female Faculty N=52		T value	Sig. level
	Mean	S.D	M	S.D		
Independency	31.97	4.22	27.82	6.28	3.522	0.01
Career development	32.65	3.77	30.28	5.86	2.180	0.05
Meaning	34.00	2.95	31.73	5.87	2.186	0.05
Effect	33.60	3.55	32.26	5.14	1.377	Non-sig.
Participation in decision making	31.57	5.00	27.73	7.06	2.873	0.01
Job satisfaction	33.31	3.80	30.11	4.86	3.369	0.01

The results of table (5) show that the third hypothesis of the study is partially verified as there were differences between males and females in the dimensions of psychological empowerment for the males except the dimension of (Effect) for which the results showed no clear differences between the males and females and this through the T values and their statistical significance as shown in the above table. These results agree to the results of the study of Al-Asmar et al. (2014) that found statistically significant differences towards the level of empowering the members in the dimension of participation in decision making, professional development and independency in performance for the male faculty members. Also study of Fatemeh and Maryam (2014) found differences in the two sexes in the level of empowerment for males while the results of the current study differed with the results of Mountjoy (2001) whose results showed no differences between the empowerment levels of the males and females faculty members and the two researchers explain that this result is due to the freedom male faculty have in Saudi Arabia rather than female faculty in decision making and receiving more professional training and they also have better opportunity than females in practicing their roles and affecting the work environment greater than females which results in more job satisfaction than females who don't have enough opportunities for direct contact with bosses and management which makes them feeling less empowered than male faculty.

**The fourth hypothesis** states that "There isn't a statistically significant impact for the dimensions of the psychological empowerment on the academic self-efficacy among the faculty of Najran University." For verifying the validity of this hypothesis, linear regression of the data analysis was conducted by SPSS as there are six dimensions for empowerment which are arranged as (independency, professional development, meaning, effect, participation in decision making and job satisfaction) only along with subsidiary variable which is the perceived self-efficacy as the results are shown in table (6): Beta values, T values, R2 value, freedom degree, F value and the significance level.

Table (6) shows the results of the variance analysis for regression of the independent variable (psychological empowerment)

Variable	Sum of Squares	Degree of freedom	Mean square	F	Sig. level
Regression	5785.105	6	964.184	9.699	0.001
Error	8250.850	83	99.408		
Total	14035.956	89			

Defining coefficient R2= 0.412

Table (7) indicates the results of the linear regression analysis for the dimensions of the independent variable (psychological empowerment)

Variance source	B	Std Error	Beta	T value	Sig.
Independency	0.177	0.231	0.083	0.766	0.446
Professional development	0.269	0.275	0.111	0.979	0.330
Meaning	0.691	0.260	0.273	2.658	0.009
Effect	0.564	0.314	0.205	1.795	0.076
Participating in decision making	0.236	0.212	0.122	1.113	0.269
Job satisfaction	0.688	0.324	0.258	2.125	0.037

The regression analysis results show that there is a statistically significant impact for the independence variable (psychological empowerment) as a general dimension on the perceived self-efficacy of the faculty as the value of "F" = (9.699) with significance level at (0.001) and the value R2 refers to the strength of the relationship between the variables as it explains the variable of the psychological empowerment (41,2%) of variance in the self-efficacy of the faculty, this result agrees to the study of Mareyke (2014) whose results concluded that there is a positive effect for empowerment on the self-efficacy of the lecturers. Gaudreau and Blanchard (2012) showed that the application of the dimensions of empowerment had the great effect upon improving the performance and efficiency of individuals. A study by Ronit (2004) concluded that empowerment and self-efficacy of the teacher can be predicted, by studying the effect of each of the dimensions of psychological empowerment in the perceived self-efficacy of the faculty members, it is revealed that there is a statistically significant effect for the dimensions of (meaning and job satisfaction) as the highest value for Beta is represented in those two dimensions, the two researchers explain the result by referring to the feeling of the faculty with the importance of the work they are doing which works as a motivation for them to work and think they are professional in their work performance, decision, and feeling with their value, the meaning of the work and job satisfaction with the work make them more engaged in the job which increases their efficiency and effectiveness in work.

### VIII. Recommendations

1. Preparing the work environment in a way that supports empowerment through enhancing the values and the organizational traditions.
2. Urging those who are responsible for the educational process in universities to provide the spiritual support for the faculty by showing trust in their abilities and in their appreciation for the efforts done that supports their feeling with their self-effectiveness.
3. The necessity of the periodically reconsidering for the systems, rules and procedures followed in the different educational institutions which are relevant to practicing of the activities in order to increase the motivation of the faculty to work.

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