

Exploring the Entrepreneurial Spirit: Student Perspectives on Innovation, Education, And Career Aspirations

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Abstract

The landscape of entrepreneurship education in Indonesia is undergoing a significant transformation, as exemplified by Universitas PGRI Wiranegara's effort to instill entrepreneurial competencies in its students. This shift reflects a broader trend within the nation's higher education system, emphasizing the development of an entrepreneurial mindset through various programs and initiatives. The University, which evolved from STKIP PGRI Pasuruan in February 2020, likely employs mentorship programs, among other methods, to enhance student engagement and independence in entrepreneurship education. This article contrasts the current state of students' entrepreneurial spirit with the aspirational goals, highlighting the gap between present conditions and ideal aspirations in students' entrepreneurial journeys. It suggests that universities can bridge this gap by providing experiential learning opportunities, integrating entrepreneurship courses across disciplines, and fostering a culture of innovation and risk-taking. These strategies can create a supportive ecosystem for student entrepreneurs, preparing them for the challenges of the business world. Moreover, the research indicates that extracurricular activities have a more substantial impact on developing an entrepreneurial mindset than curricular activities. This finding underscores the importance of practical, real-world experiences in shaping entrepreneurial attitudes and skills

Keywords: *Entrepreneurial Spirit, Students Perspectives, Innovation, Education, Career Aspirations.*

INTRODUCTION

Developing entrepreneurship theories was tended to some researchers found circumstances out of prediction. Mostly the phenomenon on predominant in textbooks and studies, including the entrepreneurship conducted has lacked a theoretical basis. The current condition of teaching entrepreneurship at Universitas PGRI Wiranegara in Indonesia reflect a broader trend in the country's higher education system. Entrepreneurship education is a growing area of focus, aiming to develop students' entrepreneurial competencies and characteristics. Universitas PGRI Wiranegara, having transitioned from STKIP PGRI Pasuruan to a university in February 2020, is part of this evolving landscape. The institution likely offers various programs and initiatives to foster an entrepreneurial mindset among its students. This may include mentorship programs, which have emerged as a significant method to support student engagement and independence in entrepreneurship education.

(Amalia, 2021) Study revealed that the core components and execution of modern entrepreneurship education, including course content and pedagogical approaches, are predominantly concentrated on Java Island in Indonesia. Additionally, the research highlighted the rise of mentoring as a novel and evolving form of entrepreneurship in the country, which enhances student involvement and autonomy in learning, embodying the concept of 'learning by doing' in entrepreneurship. These insights offer valuable guidance for the Indonesian government, educational professionals, scholars, and policy makers to understand the present state of entrepreneurship education in Indonesia and suggest ways for its advancement.

At Universitas PGRI Wiranegara, the ideal entrepreneurial vision is one where students are empowered to cultivate a resilient mindset, akin to the "Patriot Gagah, Berani dan Tangguh"

ethos, which stands for bravery and resilience. This spirit is complemented by educational programs that not only impart relevant skills and knowledge but also shape character traits that align with their academic pursuits and societal contributions. Furthermore, the university encourages active participation in research and technological advancements, fostering an innovative culture that propels knowledge and sustainable resource development. Collectively, these elements form the cornerstone of an environment that nurtures innovation, bolsters entrepreneurial spirit, and supports students in realizing their career aspirations.

(Kusumojanto, 2021) Entrepreneurial intention is pivotal for the emergence of new entrepreneurs. This study delves into how entrepreneurial education, attitude, family background, and environmental factors contribute to vocational students' entrepreneurial aspiration. Utilizing a quantitative cross-sectional survey and Structural Equation Modelling Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS), the research surveyed vocational students in Malang, Indonesia. Finding underscore the significant influence of the students' environment and attitudes on their entrepreneurial intentions. Contrary to expectations, the impact of entrepreneurial education and family background was not as pronounced, suggesting a need to refine the educational model for entrepreneurship in vocational settings.

Universities can significantly enhance student entrepreneurship by creating a rich academic and practical ecosystem. This includes offering experiential learning through competitions and startup programs, integrating entrepreneurship courses disciplines, and organizing skills workshops and networking events. Additionally, promoting interdisciplinary collaboration, providing access to research resources, and supporting mentorship and funding initiatives can further empower students. Such a multifaceted approach fosters a culture of innovation and risk-taking, equipping students with the tools and mindset needed to succeed in their entrepreneurial endeavors. (Febriyanto, 2018)

(Cui, 2021) suggest that extracurricular activities have a more significant effect on fostering an entrepreneurial mindset than curricular activities in entrepreneurship education. This mindset is defined by an awareness of opportunities, a willingness to take risks, a capacity for tolerating uncertainty, and an optimistic outlook.

(Yacine, 2023) support the notion that embedding entrepreneurship in higher education server as a pathway for students to engage with and contribute to society. This approach is effectively woven into students' academic work, particularly their theses, through dynamic interactions between entrepreneurs and the social milieu. Such integration transcends the traditional role of educators, enriching the implementation of entrepreneurship programs and fostering a deeper societal impact.

(Asykin, 2019) found that student-centered learning strategies, such as problem-solving, collaboration, and discussion, are effective in developing the entrepreneurial skills of Community College students. Despite existing entrepreneurship programs, there's a gap in entrepreneurial activity among technical and vocational students. The study suggests that lecturers with strong knowledge in entrepreneurship and varied teaching methods can significantly improve students' entrepreneurial intentions and skills. Universities can nurture students' entrepreneurial skills by offering dedicated entrepreneurship programs, providing resources for innovation, teaching self-management, and fostering an invorement that encourages entrepreneurial activities.

(Rahman, 2024) conducted a systematic literature review to identify key innovative teaching techniques that enhance entrepreneurship education. Using the ADO framework, they analyze 36 articles and pinpointed 13 techniques that are crucial for entrepreneurship education. These techniques are categorized into antecedents like innovative teaching methods, decisions such as active learning, and outcomes including creativity and entrepreneurial intention. This

research provides valuable insights for higher education institutions aiming to implement effective entrepreneurship education strategies.

To foster an innovative educational setting for entrepreneurs, it's essential to adopt new teaching methods that promote active learning and tackle real-world issues, encourage unique ideas that defy the norm, integrate multiple disciplines for novel solutions, and utilize that latest technology to advance learning and entrepreneurial initiatives (A. Maritz, 2023)

Universities are increasingly adopting practice-based teaching for entrepreneurship, as suggested by Yacine (2022), where theories are applied to real-world business activities. This method engages students in practical learning, using various techniques like studying classical literature, watching videos, sharing life stories, role-playing, and consulting experts. These approaches aim to inspire students, develop their potential, and emphasize the importance of entrepreneurship. Despite challenges in theoretical foundations, such education is vital for nurturing an entrepreneurial mindset, encouraging creativity, critical thinking, adaptability, and resilience, thus preparing students to solve problems and innovate.

(Anjum, 2021) highlights that entrepreneurship education is about more than just business; it's a transformative process that fosters creativity, critical thinking, adaptability, and resilience. This educational approach prepares students to solve problems, innovate, and take smart risks, shaping not only future business leaders but also change-makers who contribute positively to society. It's a gateway to unlocking students' full potential and guiding them towards a promising future. As (Leffler, 2020) found that a conceptual framework of entrepreneur was importance of teaching relationship with the students need.

(Hardie, 2022) The systematic review aimed to understand teachers' perspectives and leadership roles in entrepreneurship education. It analyzed 61 studies and identified six key factors for successful implementation: unified teaching methods, leadership support, an entrepreneurial culture at school, prioritization of entrepreneurship, ongoing professional development, and networking among teachers. The findings suggest a need for further research on leader support for professional development and effective strategies for applying entrepreneurship education. Meanwhile, (Fejes, 2018) research delves into the portrayal of entrepreneurship education in Sweden's latest curriculum and its interpretation by teachers. Applying Bernstein's classification and framing concepts, the study uncovers a 'dual definition' within the curriculum that, despite varied structuring, aligns with a market-oriented discourse. The research highlights that the concept's transformation in teaching practices is influenced by its weak classification and framing, as well as its limited legitimacy among educators. This situation may lead to diverse educational experiences, potentially impacting the consistency of upper secondary education in the future.

The study by (Boldureanu, 2020) investigates the impact of entrepreneurial role models on students' entrepreneurial intentions and attitudes. Conducted with 30 graduate students in a Business Creation course, the research combined qualitative and quantitative methods to analyze the effects of exposure to successful entrepreneurs. The findings suggest that such exposure can positively shape students' entrepreneurial mindset, particularly towards the social benefits of entrepreneurship, like job creation. However, the study emphasizes the need for tailored educational approaches for business and non-business students to enhance the effectiveness of entrepreneurship education.

(Zhao, 2022) study evaluates the effects of Theory, competition, and incubation approaches in entrepreneurship education on the likelihood of starting a business and its success. The research, using propensity score matching, found that incubation notably increases the chances of creating new ventures and positively influences their financial performance and growth. Conversely, theory and competition only benefit non-management students and do not significantly affect business performance. This study contributes new insights into the teachability of entrepreneurship and its varying impacts.

In (Mukhtar, 2021) investigated how entrepreneurship education, cultural context, and an entrepreneurial mindset influence college student's intention to start a business. Using

structural equation modeling with data from 376 students, the study found that an entrepreneurial mindset boosts students' intentions, and both education and culture are closely linked to this mindset. Surprisingly, no significant direct correlation was found between entrepreneurship education and students' intentions, suggesting that universities play a vital role in shaping entrepreneurial aspirations through effective education models.

The 2019 study by (Kusumojanto, 2021) and colleagues, involving the University of Surabaya, Indonesia and Tokai University, Japan, addresses the need for entrepreneurship education in universities. It highlights the gap in business schools' curricula that fail to impart entrepreneurial skills to students. The paper advocates for a systematic inclusion of entrepreneurship concepts and practices in university courses to foster a significant increase in entrepreneurs. Using case studies from course in Supply Chain Management and Marketing, it underscores the importance of integrating entrepreneurship into the curriculum for effective monitoring and evaluation of educational outcomes.

In entrepreneurship education, various innovative teaching methods aim to cultivate practical skills and real-world insights among students. Case studies offer a profound learning experience by analyzing authentic business scenarios, fostering problem-solving, and decision-making skills.

The purpose of the study is to examine the evolving state of entrepreneurship education in Indonesia, particularly at Universitas PGRI Wiranegara. It aims to assess how the university's efforts in instilling entrepreneurial skills compare to the broader national trend of fostering an entrepreneurial mindset in higher education.

RESEARCH METHODS

Descriptive qualitative design was utilized to exploring the entrepreneurial spirit to know the student perspectives on innovation, education, and career aspirations. As (Regoniel, 2023) eloquently describes, qualitative research is well-suited for exploring phenomena within the context of a person, event, program or life cycle, often employed in case studies. (Cresswell, 2018) said that qualitative inquiry and research design, in this edition, they explore the philosophical underpinnings, history, and key elements of five qualitative inquiry approaches, a specially case study. The study involved 28 students from the Economic Department Study Program at Universitas PGRI Wiranegara. A well-structured questionnaire with 23 questions, employing a Likert Scale, was distributed online to assess students' level of interest.

To enhance accessibility and convenience, researchers distributed the questionnaire online, allowing students to participate through digital means. This method facilitated a broader reach and diverse participation, ensuring a representative sample while providing the flexibility for students to respond at their leisure, thus optimizing the efficiency of the research process.

The data collected from interview of individuals who have experience or knowledge of the phenomenon studies and also questionnaire. This study, involves identifying themes and patterns within the data that relate to innovation and entrepreneurship in education. The researcher employed a methodological and systematic approach to gathering, analyzing, and interpreting data. The researcher's keen attention to detail, timely data collection, and rigorous analysis resulted in a comprehensive and insightful study. Through adhering to their rigorous methodologies, the research produced credible and valuable findings, making significant contributions to the field of entrepreneurship education and providing guidance for future endeavors in this domain(Regoniel, 2023).

This study used Likert scales, there are 5 (five) option from the questionnaire responds, those are, SA: Strongly Agree, A: Agree, D: Disagree, SD: Strongly Disagree. The researcher used combination of both pencil-and-paper and online to increase response rate.

In the context survey responses, level of interest can often be categorized based on the percentage of respondents who engage with or respond to a particular item. Here's a general guide to categorizing levels of interest:

- High interest; typically, if more than 50% of respondents show engagement or respond positively, it's considered a high level of interest.
- Moderate interest: this might be when around 25% to 50% of respondents are engaged or respond positively.
- Low interest: if less than 25% of respondents show engagement or provide a response, it would generally be considered a low level of interest.

These thresholds are not fixed and can vary depending on the specific context or the goals of the survey. Additionally, other factors like the intensity of responses and the nature of the engagement can be also provide insights into the level of interest.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the questionnaire percentage of students who are “highly excited” about each aspect of entrepreneurship. The survey consists of 23 questions, with responses categorized as Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). We can group the responses into three main categories: Innovation, Education, and Career Aspiration.

1. Innovation

There are 6 (six) statements from question number 1,4,12,14,17,19 show that a substantial majority of students, accounting for 60.71% express a high level of excitement and curiosity about entrepreneurship, while an additional 39.3% express agreement, collectively reflecting a robust and widespread interest in the subject. Moreover, 57% of students recognize the fundamental role of creativity in entrepreneurship, with an additional 43% in agreement, underscoring the significance placed on innovation within entrepreneurial pursuits. In terms of skill development, 54% of students express a keen desire to learn the art of identifying opportunities, accompanied by 43% in agreement, showcasing a proactive approach to cultivating entrepreneurial skills. This emphasis on opportunity identification is reiterated, emphasizing its importance in fostering an entrepreneurial mindset. Furthermore, a notable 54% of students display a shared enthusiasm for the intersection of technology and entrepreneurship, with an equal distribution between those expressing strong interest and agreement, reflecting a widespread acknowledgment of technology's pivotal role in the entrepreneurial landscape. Overall, these findings highlight a strong and dynamic interest among students in various facets of entrepreneurship, from creativity to opportunity identification and the integration of technology into entrepreneurial endeavors.

2. Education

There are 8 (eight) questions number 6, 7, 13, 15,18,20,21,23, shows that there exists a distinct divergence of perspectives among students regarding entrepreneurship courses, as 29% express openness, 46% affirm agreement, but a significant 25% exhibit disinterest, reflecting a degree of skepticism towards formal education in this domain. In the realm of understanding business intricacies such as models and strategies, over half the students, totaling 54%, display a keen interest, accompanied by 46% in agreement, illustrating a collective aspiration to grasp the mechanics of business operations. Building a professional network garners attention, with 32% acknowledging education's potential role and a substantial majority, constituting 61%

agreeing on the significance of networking. Notably, almost half of the respondents, at 46%, believe that education adequately prepares them for unpredictability, mirroring an equal agreement percentage, demonstrating a prevailing trust in the practical efficacy of education. The theme continues with marketing and promotion, where 36% express a moderate interest, and 46% agree, albeit with 18% in disagreement and a small 3.6% strongly disagreeing. Similarly, adapting to market changes follows a comparable pattern, with 36% eager to learn and 61% in agreement indicating a widespread acknowledgment of the importance of adaptability. These findings underscore the nuanced perspectives among students regarding the role of education in entrepreneurship, ranging from skepticism about formal courses to a strong desire for practical business insights and adaptability skills.

3. Career Aspirations

There are 9 (nine) statement from question number 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16, 22 A nuanced perspective emerges among students when considering entrepreneurship as a career path, as 39% express a firm belief in its viability, while a larger contingent of 54% agrees somewhat, suggesting a sense of optimism tempered by reservations. Over half of the student body, constituting 54%, perceives entrepreneurship as potent avenue for positive societal change, with a significant 43% also in agreement, highlighting the inclination to view business endeavors through a lens of social impact. In delving into the business startup process, interest is slightly lower, with 36% expressing intrigue and a substantial 57% in agreement, collectively signaling that a majority possess at least a moderate level of interest in understanding the intricacies of launching a business. The allure of real-life entrepreneurial success stories resonates strongly, with 50% expressing keen interest and an additional 36% indicating curiosity, underscoring the motivational impact that such narratives wield. A balanced perspective on risk willingness prevails, with 46% acknowledging risks but expressing a willingness to undertake them, while 54% outright agree, revealing a realistic yet daring attitude towards entrepreneurial challenges. The prospect of being one's own boss ignites excitement among a robust majority, encompassing 71%, with 29% in agreement, reflecting a high value placed on the autonomy and independence associated with entrepreneurship. Regarding empowerment through education, a minority (21%) strongly believes in it, but a substantial 64% express agreement, indicating a general consensus on the transformative potential of education. In the pursuit of entrepreneurial dreams, commitment levels vary, as evidenced by an equal split of 36% expressing strong willingness and agreement, while 14% disagree, showcasing a spectrum of dedication level among students. Overall, these findings unveil a complex tapestry of sentiments and attitudes towards entrepreneurship, ranging from optimism and excitement to cautious consideration and nuanced perspectives on various aspects of the entrepreneurial journey.

The study reveals a generation poised on the cusp of change, eager to embrace the entrepreneurial journey, yet mindful of the need for a solid educational grounding and the realities of the business world. It's a clarion call for educational institutions to evolve and for society to support these budding innovators who hold the key to our collective future.

When comparing the survey data on students' attitudes towards entrepreneurship with the finding of (Aldianto, 2018), we can draw some interesting result that the student survey reveals a strong interest in the innovative and creative aspects of entrepreneurship, with a majority eager to embrace technology and opportunity identification. However, there's a mixed response to formal education in entrepreneurship, with some skepticism despite recognizing its practical value. Career aspirations among students are optimistic about entrepreneurship's societal impact, though some hold reservations. They also share complement these findings by highlighting that effective entrepreneurship education programs (EEPs) in Indonesia don't correctly influence entrepreneurial spirit and behavior but do impact the processes that contribute to these outcomes. This suggests that the enthusiasm seen in the survey could be effectively

channelled through well-designed EEPs, emphasizing the importance of structured educational experiences to cultivate entrepreneurial talent.

Based on the interview-close interview, there are 9 (nine) points, those are:

Educational journey	My education has provided me a solid foundation in critical thinking and problem-solving, which are essential in entrepreneurship. Participating in business case competitions was particularly impactful in shaping my entrepreneurial mindset
Innovation and creativity	To me, innovation means introducing new ideas or methods that add value. An example of creativity in a project I was involved in is designing a user-friendly app that simplifies complex tasks for non-tech-savvy users.
Entrepreneurial challenges	Entrepreneurs today face challenges like market saturation and rapid technological change. I handle my entrepreneurial endeavors by staying adaptable, continuously learning
Career aspirations	In the next 5-10 years, I see my self leading a successful startup that contributes to sustainable development. I'm interest in exploring the renewable energy sector, as it aligns with my passion for environmental conservation
Balancing education and entrepreneurship	I balance my academic commitment with entrepreneurship by prioritizing tasks and setting clear goals. My advice to students is to be disciplined with their time and seek out entrepreneurial opportunities that complement their ideas.
Mentorship and guidance,	Mentors have been crucial in my journey, providing guidance and support. Mentorship is vital for aspiring entrepreneurs as it offers from experienced individuals who have navigated the entrepreneurial landscape.
Institutional support	Educational institutions can support entrepreneurship by offering practical courses and facilitating industry connection. Universitas PGRI Wiranegara has been helpful with its entrepreneurship workshops and networking events.
Inspirations and role models	Entrepreneurs like Elon Musk inspire me with their vision and resilience. Innovators who disrupt industries and pus boundaries motivate me to think big and challenge the status quo.
Advice for peers,	My advice is start small, learn from failures, and network extensively. Leverage your time in education to gain skills and knowledge that will be beneficial in entrepreneurship, such as finance, marketing, and management.

The conclusion from the interview result is that entrepreneurship and innovation are driven by a combination of passion, education, creativity, and resilience. Successful entrepreneurs balance their academic knowledge with practical experience, embrace challenges, and are continually inspired by mentors and role models. They aspire to create impactful businesses that align with their interests and values, and they believe in the importance of mentorship and institutional support to foster entrepreneurial spirit. Looking ahead, they see themselves as leaders in their chosen fields, contributing to industries that are innovative and forward-thinking. Finally, they advise peers to start small, learn continuously, and use their educational journey as a entrepreneurial success.

(A. Maritz, 2023) explored the status of entrepreneurship education in Indonesia (EPPs), to review neoteric global best practice entrepreneurship education. The findings provide critical insights for Indonesian higher education institutions leaders, researchers, practitioners, and administrators wishing to enhance entrepreneurship and start-up resources at Indonesian higher education institutions.

(Mbeteh, 2018) study acknowledges entrepreneurship education as a crucial strategy against unemployment, especially in African nations with high youth unemployment rates. The research, which involved fifteen higher education institutions in Sierra Leone, identifies significant challenges in executing entrepreneurship programs effectively. Its' point out structural, cultural, and pedagogical barriers hindering the development of such programs. The study concludes with recommendations for policymakers to take decisive actions that could improve the state of entrepreneurship education in developing countries.

The research by (Purwati, 2020) explored the impact of entrepreneurship education on university students' self-efficacy, motivation, and entrepreneurial intentions in Pekanbaru, Indonesia. Analyzing responses from 400 students using SEM with the AMOS program, the study revealed that while entrepreneurship education did not significantly boost motivation or intention, it did enhance students' entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Interestingly, motivation did not mediate between education and intention, but self-efficacy emerged as a potential full mediator, suggesting that fostering self-efficacy could be key to nurturing students' entrepreneurial intentions.

Regarding the students' interest in entrepreneurship teaching, relevant with (Castro, 2021) the researcher' study revealed that students displayed significant interest in sustainable business ideas that address both local and global issues. The data indicated a strong enthusiasm for social entrepreneurship and the establishment of companies based on the knowledge acquired during their educational journey. As the data from the initial question shows that a substantial majority of respondents (60,71%) are strongly in agreement with the idea that "learning about entrepreneurship excites and sparks their curiosity". Moreover, a significant portion (39,3%) also agree with the same statement. This suggests that large number of participants in the study display a positive and enthusiastic response to entrepreneurship education.

(Othman, 2020) discuss the implications of entrepreneurship education in enhancing awareness of business opportunities and developing tolerance for uncertainty. They link these implications to various dimensions of the entrepreneurship mindset, as explored by (Guerrero, 2020)

(Sirelkhathim, 2015) study delves into the rapidly expanding field of entrepreneurship education (EE) and address of lack consensus on curriculum content and teaching methods. They conducted a systematic literature review using Nvivo software, which narrowed down the field to 129 relevant articles. The study found the EE programs vary widely, from theoretical courses designed to raise awareness to practical ones aimed at preparing students to start businesses. The research suggests that practical courses align well with entrepreneurial learning, which focuses on developing students' competencies.

Those data indicates that there is a significant level of interest and enthusiasm among student for entrepreneurship education. The study's results demonstrated that students exhibit a strong enthusiasm for sustainable business ideas that tackle both local and global issues, emphasizing a specific interest in social entrepreneurship, possessing knowledge about entrepreneurship is seen as a motivating factor for individuals to pursue entrepreneurship. various teaching methodologies, such as games and innovative approaches, can help instill confidence in students and foster their interest in entrepreneurship. additionally, the study underscored the significance of entrepreneurship education in raising awareness of business opportunities and cultivating tolerance for uncertainty. On the whole, the results indicate a growing enthusiasm for entrepreneurship education and a recognition of its merits in enhancing problem-solving skills and nurturing an entrepreneurial mindset among students.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the landscape of entrepreneurship education in Indonesia, particularly at Universitas PGRI Wiranegara, is undergoing a significant transformation. The shift towards a more practical and experiential learning approach reflects a broader trend in the country's higher education system. This evolution is characterized by the integration of entrepreneurship into the curriculum, the establishment of mentorship programs, and the provision of real-world platforms like competitions and incubators. These initiatives are crucial in developing the entrepreneurial competencies and mindset needed for students to thrive in their entrepreneurial journeys.

The current state of entrepreneurship education aligns with the aspirations of students who seek to enhance their entrepreneurial spirit, innovate within their education, and achieve their career goals. The role of universities is pivotal in this regard, as they provide the resources, support, and cultural environment conducive to fostering student entrepreneurship. By embracing interdisciplinary collaboration and offering access to research and development resources, universities can empower students from various fields to innovate and commercialize their ideas.

Ultimately, the goal is to prepare students not just for academic success but for the rigors of the business world, equipping them with the skills and mindset necessary to navigate and succeed in an increasingly entrepreneurial global economy.

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