



Content Analysis and the Challenges of Measuring Insurgencies in Nigeria: the Case of Boko Haram

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the relevance of content analysis as a methodological tool in the study of conflict situation in Nigeria. It attempts to test the widely held assumption that poverty is the major reason for the growing number of insurgencies in the country in recent time. The central argument put forth here is that despite the weakness associated with content analysis in terms of validity and reliability, it can be used to effectively examine the content of communication, especially in conflict situations. Thus, this paper seeks to identify the link between quality research and effective policy process in Nigeria. The paper relies essentially on secondary sources of data. It recommends that government should adopt dialogue in resolving the problem of insurgency at its formative stage rather than the use of counter violence as is the case with the current Boko Haram insurgency.

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Introduction

Since the emergence of the Fourth Republic, Nigeria has played host to a plethora of insurgencies. They came in different forms and sizes. Be it religious, communal or ethnic, they possessed the same denominator. To carry out any meaningful research in these areas of conflict is a daunting task. The conventional academic argument is that chronic insecurity makes it impossible to collect valid data and serious research therefore, has to wait until conflict ceases. Nonetheless, Content analysis can be used to carry out research in such environment by obtaining copies of recorded communication of the parties involved in the conflict.

The nature of social phenomena is different from the natural or physical phenomena. Natural phenomena are numerical and quantitative. On the other hand, social phenomena are abstract or qualitative. Qualitative phenomena, in their turn are ambiguous and complex. It is due to this fact that clear results are not easily available in social science research. Most information in the behavioural sciences has verbal and symbolic forms. The verbal data are gathered through questionnaire, while observation or interviews are mostly qualitative in nature. In order to arrive at results drawn from the collected data, it is necessary to classify them.

Content analysis is a multipurpose research method developed specifically for investigating a broad spectrum of problems in which the content of communication serves as the basis of inference. The effective use of content analysis as a methodological sampling technique is dependent on the quality of the classification of the associational variables in the statement of the problem.

The Islamic sect Boko Haram (Jama'atu Ahlus Sunna Lidda' Watiwal-Jidad) claims to be committed to the propagation of Islamic teaching and Jihad. The exact date of Boko Haram's emergence is controversial. A Nigeria military spokesman once claimed that, claims they have existed since at least 1995 and was led by Abubakah Lawan, who later left the country to study at University of Medina, Saudi Arabia (Elkaim, 2012). Boko Haram once flourished under the leadership of Mohammed

Yusuf. They believe that politics in northern Nigeria has been seized by a group of corrupt and false Muslims. Therefore, their mission is to wage a war against them, the federal government of Nigeria and, to create a "pure Islamic" state ruled by Sharia laws. Since death of Mohammed Yusuf and the emergence of Shekau Muhammad as its leader, it has carried out several attacks on security agents, government buildings, churches, mosques, markets, schools and private buildings, killing thousands of people. The Nigerian government responded with counter force and subsequently offered dialogue with members of the group which they rejected.

Conceptual Framework

Content analysis, according to Babbie (2007:302) is the "study of recorded human communication". Among the forms suitable for study are books, magazines, web pages, poems, newspapers, songs, painting, speeches, letters, email messages, news, bulletins, board postings the internet, laws, and constitutions, as well as any components or collections thereof. Content analysis is "any technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics of messages" Holsti, (1968: 600). Tulu (2010:56) argues that "content analysis is a methodological approach in the social sciences for studying the content of communication". It is commonly used by researchers in the social sciences to analyse recorded transcripts. Content analysis is also considered as a scholarly methodological approach in the humanities by which texts are studied as to their authorship and authenticity of meaning.

Berenson (cited in Palmquist 2006:6) defines content analysis as "a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication". This is a research tool focused on the actual content and internal features of media. It is also used to determine the presence of certain words, concepts, themes, phrases, characters, or sentences within text or sets of texts and to quantify this presence in an objective manner. Texts therefore can be defined broadly as books, book chapters, essays, interviews discussions, news paper headlines and articles,

historical documents informal conversations or really any occurrence of communicative language.

The definitions of content analysis have tended to changed overtime with development in techniques and application of the tool itself to new problems and types of materials. According to Osemwota (1996 cited in Ikuru 2008:6) "it is a structured document analysis technique in which the researcher first constructs a set of mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories that can be used to analyse documents and then record the frequency with which each of these categories is observed in the document studied". Nachmias and Nachmias (1996:324) in a broad effort, define content analysis as "a technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics of the research focus". The definitions offered by Nachmias and Osemwota provide that in content analysis, the inclusion or exclusion of content is done according to consistently applied criteria of selection. This requirement will naturally or artificially eliminate analyses in which only materials supporting the researchers' hypotheses are examined.

Holsti (1969 as cited in Chukwuemeka 2005:130) defines content analysis "as the systematic semantics of political discourse, the objective, systematic and quantitative description of any symbolic behaviour". To this end, content analysis may be considered a phase of information processing technique, in which communication content is transformed, through objective and systematic application of categorization rules into data that can be summarized and compared. Babbie (1977:233), nonetheless is of the opinion that "each methodological tool and classification is dependent on the association of variables as contained in the hypotheses formulated or stated proposition, with inherent advantages which are found appropriate for certain research topics than other methods." In summation, content analysis may be defined as a technique for making analysis by forming an opinion based on what is already known, systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics of the research problem.

Insurgency: Is an armed rebellion against the state or a constituted authority recognized by international organizations or community like the United Nations. When those taking part in the rebellion are not recognized as belligerents, then the rebellion is an insurgency. O' Neill (1996:13) defines insurgency as "a struggle between a non-ruling group and the ruling authorities in which the non-ruling group consciously uses political resources such as organizational expertise, propaganda, and demonstrations and violence to destroy, reformulate, or sustain the basis of legitimacy of one or more aspects of politics".

Insurgency is a protracted political-military activity directed towards completely or partially controlling the resources of a country through the use of irregular military forces and illegal political organizations. Insurgent activity includes guerrilla warfare, terrorism, and political mobilization. Most insurgent groups have the same intermediate objectives designed to help them achieve eventual domination of a country. Although both military and political means are used to achieve these intermediate objectives, the objectives themselves are essentially political.

According to Clapham (1998:203) "one of the clearest symptoms and causes of states decay in Africa was the growth of armed opposition movements against the state". Originating usually in the least accessible areas of the countryside, insurgency came to pose a serious challenge, not only to individual states, but to the African international order as a whole. Various described as guerrilla movements, liberation

struggles, or as private armies, terrorists or secessionist groups, militants, these movements may without overlooking the important difference between them, could be referred to as insurgencies. Clapham (1998:203) believes the "origins of insurgency lay almost entirely in the domestic politics of the state concerned" This is most noticeable and notably in the actions of governments which not only excluded substantial sections of their national populations from any form of effective political participation, but governed them in a manner so brutal and exploitative as to induce eventual resistance. Insurgency is the ultimate proof of the failure of monopoly statehood.

Perspectives on Boko Haram Insurgencies

Book Haram has been seen as directly related to the Al-Qaeda movement (Rogers, 2012). Some similarity of ideas, methods and outlook may certainly be there, but Boko Haram's support also stems from three specific aspects of the Nigerian situation; the relative economic neglect of the Muslim North; a country wide issue of very serious division of wealth and poverty and endemic problem of corruption, especially within the political system. In support of this argument, the Borno State Government Kashi Shettina identified hunger, extreme poverty and frustration as some as the causes of the Boko Haram problem in Nigeria Maram(2011).

Rogers (2012) argues further that despite the relatively high levels of economic growth in recent years (Nigeria has not evolved an improved sharing of the fruits of that growth. Indeed, the evidence actually suggests a greater concentration of wealth in fewer hands, at a time of a growing cohort of young people with minimal employment prospects. This results to disempowerment, resentment and anger. This has been powerfully captured in the 2012 poverty survey by National Statistical Bureau (NSB) which shows that 69% of Nigerians are defined as poor (NSB, 2012). The increasing poverty in Nigeria is accompanied by increasing unemployment. Unemployment is higher in North than in the south.

According to Isa (2010: 329), "the rising popularity of militant Islamist movements in northern Nigeria can be attributed to a combination of factors including increased inequality, injustice poverty, failed social services as well as failed Structural Adjustment Programmes". The emergence and subsequent transformation of the movement are linked with dissatisfaction associated with weak economic base of contemporary Nigeria economy which is characterized by poverty, deteriorating social services and infrastructure, educational backwardness, rising number of unemployed graduates, massive number of unemployed youths, dwindling fortunes in agriculture, inadequate and near lack of support for agriculture, and the weak and dwindling productive economy. To him, Boko-Haram movement described the current democratic enterprise as a set of political leaders who lead by deception and sloganeering of Islamic revivalism to mobilize and capture support by claiming to be reintroducing Islamic legal principles.

According to Elikaim (2010:21), "the rise of Boko Haram in the (northern Nigeria) has been simply because of the failure of successive Nigerian governments to curb corruption, deliver public services, generate economic opportunity, establish accountable security institutions, engage communities both north and south in a more full national polity. The severe wealth and infrastructure disparities and the failure of the Nigerian government to enact policies that would enable northerners to be better governed have not been properly addressed.

On religious differences, president of Christian Association of Nigeria drew the attention of those citing reasons other than

religion as the cause of insurgency by Boko Haram to a recent statement by the leader of the sect, Alhaji Abubakar Shekau where he called on likeminded Islamist in countries including Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq to join to create an Islamic state in Nigeria (Vanguard 31st, 2013 online).

Members of the group are calling for full implementation of Sharia law in the nineteen northern states of Nigeria. Roger (2012) Waldek and Jayasekare (2011) argue that it would be an over simplification to view the groups ideology as opposed only to Western education in line with previous radical northern Nigerian groups. The Boko Haram rejects all forms of secular authority and seeks to establish a Nigerian state governed entirely by Sharia laws. The group has not been appeased by the re-introduction of Sharia law in northern Nigeria as they perceive those in position of authority to be marred by corruption and western style ambitions. Book Harm is an Islamic sect that believes northern politics has been seized by a group of corrupt and false Muslims. It wants to wage a war against them and the Nigerian government generally to create a pure Islamic state ruled by Sharia laws. Dream (2011:6) argues that the emergence of Boko Harm signifies the maturation of long festering extremist impulses that run deep in the social reality of northern Nigeria". The group is an effect and not a cause; it is a symptom of decades of failed government and elite delinquency finally ripening into social chaos. Adebayo (2012) contends that Nigerians should not see the activities of the sect in Isolation insisting that their aim is to "Islamize" Nigeria. The sect believes that the financial educational and political life of the country is wrong; so they should be Islamized. The activities of the sect started as an innocent revolt against Western education and all it represents; the seeming secularity of its democratic forms of government based on the rule of law and democratic practices modeled after Western countries, including the United States and Britain. The sect appears to be hinged on hard Sharia inspired laws and allied Koranic injunctions (Bozimo, 2011).

According to Bello (2012:2 "a key part of the current picture relate to how a fringe of northern political and security actors have begun to support Boko Haram's terrorism. They have creatively co-opted it to exert pressure on the federal government. These groups composed of opportunistic coalitions of politicians, serving and retired security officials, and a clutch of similarly disaffected elites, claiming to act to defend the economically disposed masses in the north.

A significant section of the main stream northern business and political elites, former soldiers and security operatives are so dissatisfied that they would subvert state security to see a sea-change. Nigeria's once solid patronage network-structured around influential business people, political fixers, retired security officials has failed amidst the north-south tussle over the rotational presidency which ended with president Jonathan's ascension to power. Jonathan's rise after the death of former president Yar'Adua during his first term is regarded by many northerners as a violation of an elite's agreement of rotating the presidency. This according to Bello-has fed the sense of political dispossession now prevalent in sections of the north.

On politically motivated reasons for Boko Haram insurgency, in January 2012, President Goodluck Jonathan announced that Boko Haram had infiltrated the highest levels of politics and the military. According to Walker (2012:7) "the president painted a picture of a puppet group that was being used by aggrieved northern politicians to bring down his government". Also, as members of South-South Assembly described Boko Haram as a political tool in the hands of a small

group it described "power merchants and parasites" seeking to achieve their earlier threat made during the struggle for Jonathan's presidency to destabilize the nation. The group further said "it does not believe that he Boko Haram of today is the offshoot of the one crushed by the Yar'Adua Administration. Rather the name has become a metaphor for a more sophisticated struggle for political power Onoyume (2011:10).

On economically and politically dimension to Boko Haram insurgency, Isa (2010:321) argues that "one of the trigger of Sharia advocacy in some northern Nigerian states was the resentment of being at the periphery of Nigerian politics and its power configuration. There were times when the northern political leaders held powerful political position in Nigeria, and others when the northerners accepted their economically marginal position. However, with the federal elections of 1999, the balance of political power shifted to the south without a marked transformation in the economic marginality of the north, hence, the politics of Sharia advocacy was part of a protest against regional economic inequalities in Nigeria. Olagunji (2012:10) argues that "Nigeria will see sustained militant violence in its northern region". As aggrieved political elites in the north, believed that the government of President Goodluck Jonathan stole political power from them and, will seek to use the Boko Haram militant group to their advantages, as part of their campaign to regain political power in the 2015 national elections. These northern politicians will provide Boko Haram with arms and funding, while protecting it politically.

To Turton (2013), the president of the council of Unification of Cherubim and Seraphim Churches identified the cause of the Boko Harm insurgency in the northern part of Nigeria as the politics of presidential contest. According to him "if President Goodluck Jonathan declares today that he is not interested in a second term of office, these terrorists would be demobilized. He also alleged that the northern political elite are the one behind the Boko Haram insurgency with the sole aim of recapturing the presidency.

It has become an historical fact in Nigeria to use violence to attain the presidency. It was the intrigue and the fight that greeted the annulment of the June 12, 1993 election that led to the emergence of Obasanjo, a Yoruba as president in 1999 and the armed militancy in the creeks of Niger Delta that produced Jonathan an Ijaw as the current president. Naturally, the north too is foisting its own violence on the country even though they hide under the cloak of religion by killing Christians.

According to Alozieuwa (2012:15) "it is this political feud theory that has generated more interest than any of the perspectives that attempt to explain the Boko Haram phenomenon as it also further exposes division among Nigeria's disparate social groups. Soyinka (2012) view on the problem perhaps captures this scenario most succinctly.

To Alozieuwa (2012:19), "the political feud perspective has acquired more dimensions as it also reveals emergent dynamics in Nigeria's power relations". Jonathan's Ijaw ethnic group claims Boko Haram is a northern attempt to undermine the president's power. At the same time, there is an emergent school of thought that the specific focus of the terror campaign is the 2015 presidential election; an attempt to ensure that power returns to the north by 2015, especially amidst speculations that Jonathan may yet contest the presidency at that time. Senator Uche Chukwumerije, who has canvassed this view, links Jonathan's accession to power from the vice-president in 2007 to the elected president in 2011, to the Niger Delta militancy spear-headed by the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) from the late 1990's. Obasanjo's emergence as

Nigeria's president in 1999 is also owned to the militancy by the Yoruba ethnic militia, the Odua People Congress (OPC) as an aftermath of the 1993 presidential election annulment. Thus, his suggestion to ethnic Igbo nationality to mobilize its own militia; movement for the Sovereign States of Biafra (MASSOB), to "devise a means of constructive engagement with youths towards 2015 (Vanguard online, 29 September 2011) Chukwumerije's call for the mobilization of the Igbo militia should be seen within the context of the mobilization of ethnic groups for political ascendancy in Nigeria.

Measuring Boko Haram Insurgency with content analysis

Statement of Problem: The problems affecting northern Nigeria are poverty, bad governance, corruption, regional economic inequalities, injustices, failed social services, educational backwardness or high illiteracy rate, rising number of unemployed youths, insurgent activities and high military presence.

Objective of the Study: Look into the deepening nature of Islamist insurgency in northern Nigeria and the government efforts at taming it.

Universe: The universe is theoretical and hypothetical aggregation of all elements as defined for a given survey. So the universe for this paper is the mass media in Nigeria (The print and electronic media).

Population: The population for this paper is the print media, this include the magazines and newspapers. Our choice of print media is due first of all to their ease of access as they are at least readily stored away in the libraries and some of them are also available online or internet.

Sample: For the purpose of this paper two newspapers were selected: Vanguard and the Punch newspapers. The choice of these papers was because of their widespread, their coverage of the Boko Haram insurgency and they are privately own.

Sampling Technique

The sampling technique used for this study is simple random sampling. This is the process in which every element or unit of the population has equal chance of being selected

Sample Frame: From the sample indicated above we collected a total of 1660 editions of the two newspapers. Our sample frame was from January 2009 to October 2013 and the number of editions for each newspaper 1250 for Vanguard and 410 for Punch. From every of these 1660 editions of the newspapers making up our sample frame we sought for articles or referential issues in forms of editorials, news coverage and features pertaining to our case study.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

There is a relationship between poverty, corruption and bad governance and Boko Haram insurgency in northern Nigeria. Also, since the calculated X^2 (17.1108) is greater than the critical values X^2 (9.925), it therefore means that there is a relationship between poverty, corruption and bad governance in Nigeria. These stated variables are causal factors for Boko Haram's insurgency in Northern Nigeria.

Three factors are identified as major causes of Boko Haram insurgency in northern Nigeria in this hypothesis: (I) poverty (II) political corruption (III) bad governance. From the sample collected in the Vanguard newspaper, poverty had 77.27% corruption 80.40%, while bad governance had 70.42% with accumulative percentage of 75.30%. While the Punch newspaper had 22.73% for poverty 19.60% for corruption and 29.58% for bad governance with accumulation percentage of 24.70%

Hypothesis Two

There is a relationship between Boko Haram insurgency and religious extremism. Here, the calculated X^2 (2.8234) is greater than the critical values X^2 (1.886). Therefore, we accept the fact there is a relationship between Boko Haram, insurgency and religious extremism in northern Nigeria.

For religious extremism as a major factor influencing insurgency in northern Nigeria, accumulative percentage of 59.09 on full implementation of Sharia Laws and abolition of Western values; abolition of secular state for Vanguard while Punch has accumulative percentage of 42.9%.

Hypothesis 3

There is a relationship between economically and politically motivated goals and Boko Haram insurgency in northern Nigeria.

Insurgency in northern Nigeria is politically and economically motivated, accumulative percentage of 75.24% for Vanguard and the Punch 24.76% of the sampled. In terms of relationship, the calculated X^2 (1144.0061) is greater than the critical values X^2 (31.598). This means that there is a relationship between economically and politically motivated goals and Boko Haram insurgency in northern Nigeria.

Conclusion

Content analysis can be used to effectively examine the content of communication between parties or objects being studied because data collected could be replicated. It could also be used to study conflict situation, especially where it is impossible to collect data through questionnaires and interviews.

This study reveals that all the factors identified in the hypotheses have a relationship with the insurgency in Northern Nigeria. The inability of government at all levels to address the socio-economic and political conditions in the country that gave rise to Boko Haram insurgency. The Nigerian government has failed in terms of providing good governance to its citizens, despite the huge resources that the country has accumulated over the years. Religion is becoming an increasing central factor as much of the violence results from the misuse of faith to foster political, economic and ethnic discord, thereby elevating religious identifications and transforming violence in Nigeria's North and Middle Belt into religious conflicts.

The federal and state governments should formulate and effectively implement policies and programmes capable of addressing the root-cause of the insecurity in Nigeria. These include poverty, unemployment, dearth of infrastructural facilities and mass illiteracy in the region. The political class must therefore demonstrate strong commitment and willingness in pursuing genuine democracy and good governance and close ranks in resolving their differences rather than relying on unconventional or unconstitutional means to achieving their personal interest.

Government should moderate the activities of foreign religious organizations especially those that are providing scholarship and funds to Nigerians to study abroad. They should monitor sermons preached in places of worship by religious leaders. Government must as a matter of fact collaborate with members of international community in taming the influence of Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria and not underestimate the capabilities of the group.

Section A: Style of Data Presentation

Subject matter	Boko haram and insurgency in northern nigeria
Authority	Federal government versus islamist militant.
Standard of subject matter	Insecurity, militancy, militarization, hostage taking, bombing and killings.
Actors of subject matter	Boko haram members, or sect members, federal government and state governments.
Location	Borno, yobe, gombie, kano, kaduna, bauchi, zanfara states.
Values of subject matter	Regional development, improving the qualities of life of the people of the northern nigeria
Subject of conflict	Full implementation of sharia laws in nigeria and the rejection of secular state
Level of conflict	Bombing, hostage taking, killings, and destruction of (properties private and public)
Time of action	2009-2013.
Direction of subject matter	Unfavourable
Traits of the people	Tenacity and drive to succeed

Section B

Forms of communication	Daily newspapers, electronic media, interviews, materials posted in the internet
Forms of statement of problem	Insecurity in northern nigeria
Device	Hostage takings, bombings, armed robberies.

Table 1. Sampling Procedure, Description of Sampling Concepts and Terminologies, Their Elements and Components as Used in This Study

s/n	Sampling concepts and Terminologies.	Description of concepts and Terminologies.	Elements (or components) of concepts and Terminologies used in this study.
1	Universe	The theoretical and hypothetical aggregation of all elements as identified for a given survey.	The mass media (print and electronic).
2	Population	The theoretically specified Aggregation of survey elements.	The print media (newspapers and magazines-88 publications.)
3	Survey population	The aggregation of elements from which survey sample is actually selected.	Newspapers (daily and weekly publication -71 publications.)
4	Sample/sampling unit	The actual list of the elements considered for selection in some stage of sampling.	Vanguard and The punch (2 newspapers)
5	Sampling frame	The actual list of the elements composing the survey population.	Daily publications of the two newspapers in the sample and were available for this study. They include the daily editions of these newspapers from 2009-october 2013.a total 1660.

Source: Ojieh (2009:97)

Table 2. Selected Nigerian Dailies Testing for Popularity

s/n	Title	Ownership	Circulation rate	Appendages
1	Daily Times	Federal government press.	Distributed nationally but focusing on the south.	One of the fore most Nigerian newspapers “launched in 1926” Maringues(2001:187) was increasingly forced “to publish editorials faxed from the president’s office selling copies dropped from 350,000 in1993 to 20,000 in mid 1996 Maringues (2001:198-199).
2	Nigeria Observe	Edo state Government.	Benin-city region	State own newspaper like their federally owned counterparts are convenient vectors for peddling the government versions of events.Maringues 2001(:199)
3	New Nigeria	Federal Government press.	Now distributed almost solely to the north.became his master’s voice its editor Yakubu Abdulazeez,resigned in protest against presidential interference.Maringues(2001:198).
4	Nigeria Chronicle	Cross River state government press	Calabar Southern Delta region	State own newspaper like their federally owned counterparts are convenient vectors for peddling the governments version of events.Maringues(2001:198).
5	The punch	Privately owned chief Olu Aboderin	National prides itself as the most widely read news paper in Nigeria.	Critical that it was once banned by government in 1994-1996.
6	The Guardian	Privately own mr Alex Ibru a businessman	National .Reputed for daily circulation figure of 100,000 the leading of all(Maringues 2001:214)	Independent and suffered government ban 1994-1996.
7	Vanguard.	Privately owned mr Sam Amuka a journalist.	National and independent	Independent and often critical of authorities.

Source: Ojieh (2009:100)

Newspaper	Poverty	Percentage %	Corruption	Percentage%	Bad governance	Percentage %	Total	Total percentage %
Vanguard	340	77.27%	410	80.40	500	70.42	1250	75.30
Punch	100	22.73%	100	19.60%	210	29.58%	410	24.70%
Total	440	100	500	100	710	100	1660	100

Source: Field Work (2013).

Newspaper	Full Implementation of Sharia Laws		Abolition of Western values	Percentage %	Abolition Secular state	Percentage %	Total	Total percentage%.
Vanguard	300	54.55%	206	57.90%	246	59.85%	752	57.09%
Punch	250	45.45%	150	42.10%	165	40.15%	565	42.91%
Total	550	100	356	100	411	100	1317	100

Source: Field Work (2013).

News paper	Politically motivated	Percentage %	Economically motivated	Percentage %	Total	Total percentage %
Vanguard	400	72.73	390	78	790	75.24
The punch	150	27.77	110	22	260	24.76
Total	550	100	500	100	1050	100.00

Source: Field Work (2013).

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