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Artículos Científicos

Problematización del acoso escolar en estudiantes: una alternativa de intervención

Problematization of school bullying in students: an alternative intervention

Problematização do bullying em estudantes: uma alternativa de intervenção

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Resumen

En este artículo se presentan los resultados de una investigación que se enfocó en una estrategia de intervención para discutir el tema del acoso y la violencia en el contexto escolar. Se trata de una investigación cualitativa que incluyó grupos de discusión, así como la observación participante de 33 estudiantes de una secundaria pública de la localidad de Ciudad Obregón, Sonora, en el municipio de Cajeme. El análisis se enfocó en la manera de convivir de los jóvenes y la problematización del acoso escolar por parte de los adolescentes. Los resultados sugieren que los alumnos son capaces de identificar el acoso escolar como un problema que está presente en la convivencia con sus pares, basado en agresiones tanto físicas como verbales que evidencian un abuso de poder, intencionalidad y repetición entre los involucrados. Sus percepciones sobre la problemática demuestran que existe una convivencia hostil entre los agresores, irrespeto entre los compañeros y problemas de comunicación.

Palabras clave: adolescentes, acoso escolar, normalización de la violencia.

Abstract

The article presents the results of a research focused on an intervention strategy where bullying and violence in the school context are discussed. This is a qualitative research that included discussion groups and participant observation of 33 students from a public secondary school in the city of Ciudad Obregón, Sonora, in the municipality of Cajeme. The analysis focuses on the way young people coexist and the problematization of school bullying by teenagers. The results suggest that teenagers are capable of identifying bullying as a problem that is present in coexistence with their peers, based on both physical and verbal aggressions, where abuse of power, intentionality and repetition exist among those involved. The perception of the problem refers to the bad coexistence that occurs between the aggressors, it is mentioned that there is no respect among their peers, as well as communication problems.

Keywords: bullying, teenagers, normalization of violence, violence.

Resumo

Este artigo apresenta os resultados de uma investigação focada em uma estratégia de intervenção para discutir a questão do bullying e da violência no contexto escolar. Trata-se de uma investigação qualitativa que incluiu grupos de discussão, bem como a observação participante de 33 alunos de uma escola pública na cidade de Ciudad Obregón, Sonora, no município de Cajeme. A análise enfocou o modo de vida dos jovens e a problematização do bullying por parte dos adolescentes. Os resultados sugerem que os alunos são capazes de identificar o bullying como um problema presente na convivência com os colegas, com base em agressões físicas e verbais que mostram abuso de poder, intencionalidade e repetição entre os envolvidos. Suas percepções sobre o problema mostram que existe uma convivência hostil entre os agressores, desrespeito entre os parceiros e problemas de comunicação.

Palavras-chave: adolescentes, bullying, normalização da violência.

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Introduction

This article analyzes the manifestations of bullying and its meanings in high school students from a town in the municipality of Cajeme, Ciudad Obregón, Sonora. This city is currently one of the most conflictive and dangerous in the state of Sonora due to organized crime, acts of violence and vandalism, which has negative effects on the behaviors and attitudes of young people (Gómez and Gómez- Maqueo, 2013).

For Orue and Calvete (2012), being a witness to family violence, seeing content of that nature by some means of communication or being a victim of similar acts in its various modalities can lead to aggressiveness and acceptance of violence. In other words, a normalization of these behaviors is achieved through repeated interaction with them (Hernández, 2015).

According to data from the National Survey of Victimization and Perception on Public Security (Envipe), in 2012, in Mexico, 32.4% of households were victims of a crime, a percentage that increased in 2016 to 34.2%. During 2016, 31.1 million crimes were committed, of which 24.2 million are associated with robberies or robberies, extortion, fraud, verbal threats, injuries, among others. In fact, at the national level, 61.1% of the population over 18 consider that insecurity and crime are the most important problems in terms of public safety (National Institute of Statistics and Geography [Inegi], 2017).



This type of action, of course, can also be found at school, as episodes of peer aggression (bullying) are becoming more frequent. In this regard, the results of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in Mexico show that male students are more likely than women to be bullies of school bullying in institutions. This is a phenomenon that can be defined as that aggressive behavior that is characterized not only by its intentionality, repetition and differences in power, but also by being generated with the participation of three main actors: victim, observer and aggressor (Olweus y Limber, 2017).

These attacks may involve physical or verbal abuse that is carried out directly towards the victim (Ferrel, Cuan, Londoño and Ferrel Ballestas, 2015) or also indirectly causing damage to private property (Enríquez and Garzón, 2015). According to various studies, it has been established that violent behaviors of the human being can be influenced by various factors, among which environmental, family, social and personal factors stand out (Carrasco, García and Zaldívar, 2018). In the case of risk factors for bullying, evidence has been found that exposure to violence contributes to the aggressiveness of individuals (Carrasco, García, and Zaldívar, 2018; Orue and Calvete, 2012), as well as parenting styles, because growing up in a negative family climate encourages the aggressive behavior of individuals (Valdés and Carlos, 2014; Valdés, Carlos and Torres, 2012).

Teenagers who assume these behaviors tend to have lower academic performance and more discipline problems in school, unlike those who do not act that way, which have a better prosocial self-concept (Valdés, Bautista, Vera and Herrera, 2013). Likewise, the aggressors usually present problems of psychological disorders such as impulsivity, low tolerance to frustration, antisocial behaviors and school problems (Albores, Saucedo, Ruiz and Roque, 2011). Victims, on the other hand, report damage to their person, ideation and attempted suicide, school phobia, irrational fear and depression (Arroyave, 2012).

To address this complex phenomenon, interventions aimed at students of basic level have been developed, which have offered favorable results in terms of aggressive behaviors and student welfare. In fact, interventions reported in different countries have worked with variables that are not strictly psychological, such as education for peace, human rights, coexistence and prosocial values (Garaigordobil, 2010; Garaigordobil and Maganto, 2011). Other programs on bullying have focused on self-control, expression and understanding of one's feelings, assertiveness, empathy, self-esteem, problem solving for anger control and resolution of personal conflicts. (Caballo,

Caldero, Carrillo, Salazar e Irurtia, 2011; Cerezo y Sánchez, 2013; Ferreira y Reyes, 2011; Güemes, 2011; Wong, Cheng, Ngan y Stephen, 2011),

In the case of Mexico, there are intervention programs designed to reduce aggressive behavior in schools. For example, the Ministry of Public Education (SEP) has designed the National School Coexistence Program (PNCE) in order to boost self-esteem, emotion management, conflict resolution rules and family participation (Fierro , 2016). In addition to this, the qualitative studies that have been carried out in the educational centers stand out, which have provided information that serves to understand the different edges of school violence (Mayora and Castillo, 2014). In this sense, Paulín (2015) found in the stories of his participants aspects related to the normalization and justification of violence; This is evidenced in his conceptions of fighting as the only way to resolve conflicts. These results, of course, are alarming, hence the interest in studying bullying from the students' perception, because that way they can propose and implement strategies to address this problem (Orue and Calvete, 2012).

Therefore, the objective of this work was to understand the manifestations of bullying and its meanings in secondary level students in a town located in the northwest of Mexico, where acts of violence and vandalism are very latent.

Methodological process

The research was carried out from a qualitative perspective, positioned in a socio-critical paradigm to analyze social transformations and problem solving, starting with self-reflection (Alvarado and García, 2008). With this type of study, a description of the natural world is attempted from the perspective of individuals, for which their individual or group experiences, their interactions and their communications are analyzed while producing them. (Gibbs, 2012).

Participants

The participants in this research were 33 adolescents (60% female and 40% male) studying second grade at a secondary school located in Ciudad Obregón, municipality of Cajeme, Sonora. The ages of the participants ranged from 13 to 14 years. The inclusion criteria were that students had a history of aggressive behavior.

Data collection techniques

The information was collected through an analysis group to problematize about bullying, its actors and consequences. The analysis for problematization is a procedure for the production of information (speeches) through the collective reflection of a phenomenon, condition or situation that demands to be questioned, rethought and interrogated, which allows the construction of new discourses and individual and collective practices to overcome them. For this, it is important to coordinate a moderator who at the same time participates, observes and collects valuable information to account for the process and the products generated by the group.

Process

Authorization was requested in the educational institution to carry out the intervention with the group; then the students who would be in the program were selected, who participated voluntarily. Afterwards, a structured intervention was applied in 10 sessions of 50 minutes each, which served to collect his speeches. It is important to mention that the collection of empirical information was very difficult due to the number of participants, hence not all the speeches that circulated in the group could be documented. Even so, the data collected allow us to draw the reality that students share in school.

To examine the data, the following procedure was followed: the content of the discussion group was transcribed in Word and then analyzed according to the inductive approach proposed by Thomas (2003). In this way the most representative or significant issues arose, to which a clear relationship was established between the categories or topics. Specifically, the analysis of the information was performed using the Atlas ti software (version 7).

Results

This work sought to problematize with adolescents the issue of bullying present in their school; For this, the following topics were discussed:

1. My experience in school.
2. What is bullying?
3. The meaning of the school.
4. Bullying at your school.
5. Actors in bullying.
6. The types of bullying.



7. The consequences of bullying.
8. The consequences of the actors in bullying.

From the empirical information collected, three categories were constructed: a) context of the students in the school, b) dynamics of the adolescents and c) problematization of bullying.

The context of students at school

Defined as those behaviors and attitudes that improve the interpersonal relationships of students (Fernández-Batanero, 2015), school coexistence is one of the most important elements to promote adolescent interaction. In the specific case of the participants of this research, the way to socialize is based on abrupt games. The members, in fact, comment that their coexistence is based on violence, which includes beatings, rudeness, criticism, teasing based on physical characteristics, social exclusion and harassment in social networks.

The men in my room are somewhat violent with each other (1:57).

I and my friends from other classrooms get hit a little (1:23).

We make fun of others for being funny or for something else, but the bad thing is that you have to come with black, white and blue sneakers and I don't like that and other people (1:52).

It's like very bad because some of my classmates attack a partner who goes with us; they tell him things, they hit him and so on until they make him cry: they are very fierce (1:29).

He wanted to hit me and things like that in the breaks, he told me he was very stupid, things like that, I got indirect on Facebook (1:71).

These discourses show that the way to interact between peers is through violent behaviors, which are common in the school context. The aggressions, likewise, are one of the main ways to socialize because they seem to know no other way to interact with their partners. Simply put, these situations are conceived as normal. "For there are lawsuits, but they are harmless" (23: 1); "It is game, since ... without bullying there is no friendship!" (2:93). These comments are clear evidence that adolescents live with violence, which is not usually perceived as a negative aspect (Paulín, 2015).

However, it is worth mentioning that for some young people this environment makes them feel uncomfortable and wanting to run away from it (Barquero, 2014):

Sometimes I want to change schools because many make fun of what you do. With my companions who join me, they often go unbearable, they make fun of what they say, because if you said it wrong or something (1:71).
You can't enjoy or pay attention because your classmates bother you, where there are unfair teachers and bad friendships (3:26).

As you can see, the environment in this institution is causing students not to feel comfortable in their group, which can cause different problems, among which absenteeism, school dropouts, as well as academic and behavioral problems can be highlighted. (Arroyave, 2012).

These findings contradict the ideal set by any school, a space where students should develop in a social and academic way, and where peaceful behaviors should be promoted, as well as positive behaviors and attitudes that influence the good school climate, academic performance and interpersonal relations (Córdoba, Del Rey, Casas and Ortega, 2016; Ossa, Figueroa and Rodríguez, 2016; Viquer and Solé, 2015). In the group of participants, however, a negative socialization environment is perceived that materializes in physical and verbal aggressions that seek to cause harm to peers (Barquero, 2014).

Teenagers dynamics

The scenario of teenagers is raised as a set of conflicts in coexistence. Specifically, physical harassment is linked to abrupt games, shoves, kicks, fights and daily blows.

Well, sometimes they insult each other, they say things, but after a while we are doing well; they say nicknames and then they misbehave (4:87).
Very rough some, but others good; they are very good with their friends, but others are very bad: they insult, tease, aggravate and don't care (4:63).
They hit each other, they aggregate, they insult each other, etc. (4:38)
Well, sometimes a little bad and we hit a little (4:25).

In these stories, it can be observed that they themselves do not identify themselves as aggressors or as participants of the phenomenon, but rather move away from the problem verbally

by impersonally: "They are beaten, shouted, kicked" (4:50). This shows a certain indifference towards such actions. They also refer to verbal aggressions that arise with nicknames, rudeness, insults, teasing, shouting and "cheek" as part of the coexistence between their classmates.

Well, sometimes they insult each other, they say things, but after a while we are doing well, they say nicknames and then they misbehave (4:87). Well, sometimes they behave abruptly and make fun of each other, but this is how we live together (4:68). They hit each other, they shout, they kick each other (4:50).

These behaviors are carried out by conflicting groups that cause victims to exclude themselves from others and cannot communicate the aggressions they receive: "More or less, they do not speak. They do not live very well. They don't even talk "(4:77).

As can be inferred from these discourses, there is a "normalization of violence", since the aggressions are ignored, they are denied and even participate in violent acts: "Talking and playing with them, running, etc. We get rough, but fine "(4:18). In other words, their dynamics are based on aggression, although they are not able to identify them as negative behaviors.

To what I know well, they get along, although sometimes there may be conflicts, but then it is fixed (4:99).

Well, we get along, some problems, but well, sometimes heavy, but we fix it, we get nicknames of love and we get along (4:61).

Very brusque some, but others well, are very good with their friends (4:62).

Within the contextualization of the problem in the school, the participants talk about a negative coexistence and make reference to the aggressions with which the members of the group coexist, since they mention that they made physical and verbal aggressions. These findings are consistent with research that explains that violent behavior in schools is part of the interaction of young people (Maschio *et al.*, 2015; Vega y González, 2016).

Problem bullying

In this work we sought to problematize with teenagers the issue of bullying and acts of violence. With this strategy the participants are questioned, reflected and questioned on a topic that they conceive as normal. Specifically, and through open-ended questions, their knowledge about bullying, bullying behaviors and attitudes, as well as their participation and the consequences that this generates were questioned. At the same time, it was questioned about the effects that these actions have for the victims.

In the stories, participants mentioned that the different actors of bullying share characteristics; for example, the aggressor and the observer have in common the monitoring of the victims and the participation in both physical and psychological aggressions. On the other hand, the victim shares with the observer the fear of being attacked and the silence about the problem. The students spoke of the aggressor as an individual who abuses his power, which materializes with shoves, insults, blows, teasing and kicking.

He beats and abuses or tells him things (5: 1), aggravates people physically and psychologically (5: 8), assaults others (5:25), hurts the victim, hurts her (5:71), He is the one who hits the victim, physically and psychologically assaulting him (5:74). Who hits someone else for nothing, because the aggressor may receive the same treatment he gives to his teammates (5:92).

The students mentioned that this person is the one who watches over the victim and is able to torture and threaten him:

Follow the person he is followed to and hit him to harm him (5:38). Torture the victim physically and morally with insults or blows (5:89). It is the one that they hit and that they have threatened so that they do not tell the teachers or their parents (5:93).

For teenagers, an aggressor is an individual who provokes fights with the aim of venting, expressing hatred or gaining power:

He is the one who assaults his person for pleasure or to vent his personal problems (5:59). It causes fights physically and verbally (5:21). Attack others, to those who are weak (5:29).

These speeches show a coexistence full of abrupt games, fights and heavy jokes. Participants recognized that many of their classmates act or have acted as aggressors of other students.

With regard to the identification of the victim, adolescents identify her as an individual who receives physical and verbal aggressions and is monitored by her aggressor or aggressors. This actor, according to the participants, is humiliated and usually afraid, which causes him to be unable to defend himself. Another feature that stands out is silence, because the victims do not talk about the problem.

He remains silent and hurts him (5:48).

To those who attack, he often remains silent for fear and sometimes accuses him (5: 101).

He is beaten, attacked, insulted, kicked, mocked, pushed (5:66).

It is the one they follow and attack in school or so (5:39).

He says nothing out of fear and is the one who suffers and who is beaten (5:87).

Regarding the observer, the participants described him as an individual who contemplates the event of harassment and is not able to act before the event:

See how they hit and attack him (5: 3). He who sees without saying anything (5:10).

He is the one who looks, but says nothing and, well, just looks and does nothing (5:88).

Students express themselves as an observer as someone who does not support their assaulted classmates because they do not want to become another victim:

He sees what is happening, but says nothing, for fear of becoming a victim (5:43). He is the one who only sees the aggression and says nothing for fear of being done the same (5:46). Look and say nothing for fear of being harmed (5:49). The observer looks at how they hit the victim and does not go and says, because he is afraid that the same thing will happen to him, that the aggressor will hit him (5:54).

For the participants, the types of bullying are psychological, physical and cyberbullying. According to his speeches, psychological harassment is one that does not imply blows, but has to do with humiliating, devaluing and excluding peers. They also mentioned that school bullying is verbally assaulted through criticism, nicknames, rudeness, teasing, insults and offenses.

It's when they tell you things, but they don't hit you (6: 1). It is when they add or offend with words (6: 4). He says hurtful things to the child there at school (6:21). When they make a person feel less and he feels bad (6:29). You get away from it all, they avoid you, you stay alone or alone (6:56). When they tell you rudeness or tell you something offensive with words and that you don't respect (6:69).

As for physical harassment, they refer to direct contact between those involved; This occurs in the form of fights, pushes, scratches, pulls, punches, punches and kicks:

It is when the aggression occurs through physical contact either by means of blows, pushes, etc. (6:35) It is when they strike without reason, they attack by hitting the body (6:39). He is the one who reacts with physical blows with kicks and punches to attack (6:68). It is one that is with bumps, shoves, fists, scratches, etc. (6:64).

In relation to cyberbullying, they argued that the aggressions occur through social networks, sending photos or making memes to the victims to ridicule them, display them or offend them:

He is offended through social networks (6:23). The one that offends by the social networks (6:30). When they tell you many things through social networks (6:78). It's when they make memes or photos just to be disturbed because it's embarrassing (6:7).

Students recognized that both being a victim and an offender of bullying or violence in school has strong consequences. In the case of the perpetrator, he has social problems (with his classmates as a group) and also individually (with his friends and with the school authorities). Regarding school problems, participants mentioned that the aggressors usually have reports for their behavior towards peers:

Having many problems at school and with family members (7:18). To be reported by teachers for ignoring (7:45).

With regard to victims, it is very common to see wounds in the body (eg, scars, bruises, spiders, bites and cuts). In addition, they delved into the consequences of a psychic order, about the possibilities of generating “traumas” such as depression and the desire to hide from others or become silent. They argued that body wounds can heal, but psychological trauma is difficult to resolve.

With the work of reflection of the different themes, the adolescents were able to identify that the bullying and violence behaviors that appeared as normal and natural in the daily life of the school were perceived as problematic actions that harm everyone:

Bullying is very ugly, but unfortunately it is normal (9:73).

I know that bullying is a very bad thing, because we can harm people (9:30).

What I consider is that it is not right at all, that children aggravate other classmates, but those problems are well known to come from home (9:86).

Well, it's bad, I don't have to do it or allow it to be done to me and, well, it's not fair to do it (9:92).

The stalker on the victim causes several traumas, but he can avoid them by notifying the authorities to end the harassment and not continue to bother (9:21).

Adolescents identify bullying as a problem that is present in the coexistence between their peers, and that this is manifested in both physical and verbal aggressions, with abuse of power, intentionality and repetitively:

There are types of bullying and we represent some (9: 103).

Bullying is something that is lived day by day more in schools (9: 9).

I could say that this issue is of the utmost importance because many people suffer from it (9:85).

Well, I learned that in bullying there is a victim, stalker and observer, it is repetitive and intentional (9:27).

Bullying is when someone is consecutively attacked, either psychologically or physically (9:53).

In this sense, the students of the intervention program managed to identify bullying as a problem.

It is bad, I must not do it or allow it to be done to me and, therefore, it is not fair for them to do it (9:92).

It is necessary to improve this type of behavior given the consequences that exist: they hurt some part of your body and leave you bruises (9:99), actions that lead the victim to depression; that's why it's so serious because they take him to suicide or to kill the whole school (9:97).

In his stories, finally, a positive perception of the workshop can be distinguished: "I had a good experience and, therefore, I learned too much about bullying" (9: 9). In his speeches, in fact, he changed his assessment of the problem posed, as some considered that "bullying is very ugly, but unfortunately it is 'normal'" (9:73).

Discussion

The context of this study is one of the most conflictive and dangerous in Mexico due to the presence of organized crime, acts of violence and vandalism that proliferate in Ciudad Obregón, Sonora. Because of this, the members of society are exposed to events of that nature, which has negative effects on the behaviors and attitudes of young people, since they grow up in violent environments where vandalism, robberies, assaults and others Similar acts are recurring favors the manifestation of aggressive behaviors at an early age (Gómez and Gómez-Maqueo, 2013).

Explained this, the testimonies collected in this research can be understood because coexistence in schools today is immersed in a wider context where violent behavior proliferates (Barquero, 2014).

The participants, in fact, recognize that they themselves participate in physical and verbal aggressions, which are conceived as rituals to “get along in school”. These data agree with other investigations in which violent behaviors are reported in the different educational centers (Maschio et al., 2015; Vega and González, 2016).

The acts of violence reported by the participants of this work include beatings, rudeness, criticism, teasing based on physical characteristics, social exclusion and harassment in social networks, which coincides with what was reported by Enriquez and Garzón (2015).

Victims, on the other hand, are excluded from the group without communicating the aggressions received by their peers, a situation that is documented by Betancourt, Arreguín, Aguilar and Dorantes (2015). These authors argue that students perform psychological harassment because they seek to harm victims through exclusion and isolation, which affects their interaction with the group.

For students the violent attitudes of people are linked to the education and parenting styles, since if they are aggressive with their children, similar behaviors will be stimulated and then reproduced. In fact, and according to the literature consulted, the low self-control of individuals is a factor associated with aggressive behaviors because people are not able to react effectively to certain situations. (Gómez, Muñoz, Benavidez, Luna y Ortiz, 2013).

Likewise, one of the most important psychological consequences of harassment reported by students has to do with the depression of the victims, information that is consistent with the reports by Albores, Saucedo, Ruiz and Roque (2011) and Arroyave (2012). Due to the complexity of the issue of violence in school, it is necessary to promote permanent interventions with a multidisciplinary team and with the participation of teachers, school authorities and parents.

Finally, it is worrying that these types of actions are conceived as "normal" and institutionalized as a constitutive part of coexistence in the peer group. Therefore, it is recommended to carry out activities that address these aggressive behaviors, which are not usually modified in the short term. You must also work in a controlled environment with a small number of participants to be able to follow up on everyone.

Conclusions

The work described in the previous pages tried to problematize the aggressive behaviors in the school, which served to identify their manifestations, as well as the meanings granted by the students. Specifically, the study stories show the ways in which students structure their dynamics of living with their peers, which was achieved by exploring their experiences in everyday student life.

The participants point out that in daily life, conflict groups are common, as well as dynamics based on abrupt games by those involved. They also indicate that the school context became violent due to the aggressions that are part of their interactions and the ways in which adolescents socialize.

As for the dynamics of those involved, this materializes through violent acts, such as beatings, rudeness, criticism, teasing based on the physical characteristics of the like, social exclusion and harassment in social networks.

Participants, on the other hand, argue that school life is characterized by a negative coexistence; This coincides with what has been referred to in other research, which indicates that behaviors of this nature are often part of the daily life of schools. They also mention that these attitudes are carried out through conflicting groups, which cause victims to isolate themselves from others and not communicate their experiences.

Likewise, it is striking that some students express their disapproval of their classmates' behavior, as they disagree with the violent manner in which their peers coexist. However, it also stands out that for others the aggressions are not only perceived as "normal" events, but also tend to participate in them.

Regarding the identification of the actors, the participants argue that the different roles present in the bullying share some similarities. The aggressor and the observer, for example, have in common the monitoring of the victims and the participation in both physical and psychological aggressions. On the other hand, both the victim and the observer share the idea they feel afraid of being attacked, so they usually hide the problem. Regarding the psychological consequences of bullying, participants are aware of the depression that this can cause.

In summary, at the end of the sessions, adolescents were able to perceive bullying as a problem that is present in the coexistence between their classmates, which manifests itself in both physical and verbal aggressions. With this problematization work, a change was also achieved in the normalized perception that adolescents had about acts of violence and bullying in school, a situation evidenced in the participants' accounts and in the negative assessments they commented

on at the end. The students, in short, had a positive perception of the program developed, since they commented that they had lessons on that subject.

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