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Progress of Teacher Education in India– A Discussion from Past to Present

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Abstract

Rabindra Nath Tagore rightly said, “A teacher can never truly teach unless he is still learning himself. A lamp can never light another lamp unless it continues to burn its own flame.” The Education Commission (1964-66) professed, “The destiny of India is now being shaped in her classrooms”. The National Policy on Education 1986 emphasize: “The status of the teacher reflects the socio-cultural ethos of the society; it is said that no people can rise above the level of its teachers”. According to an Indian prayer, “The teacher is Brahma, the Creator, He is God Vishnu, He is God Maheshwara. He is the entire universe, salutation to him”. The community establishes schools for preservation, progress and enrichment of its traditions and conventions. Teacher education programme is a must in order to have efficient and really capable teachers. Teacher education programme starts molding from the ancient education system and till the present system of education taking shape according to the global and local needs of the Indian society. History of teacher education in India can be classified into two parts. First part deals with teacher education during pre-independent India which starts from ancient education system of education till India got independent and second part deals with teacher education during post independent India that is after independence till present year. The progress of a country depends upon the quality of its teachers and for this reason teaching is the noblest among all professions. The education commission recommends the introduction of a “sound programme of professional education of teachers”. Teaching has been one of the oldest and respected professions in the world. The role, functions, competence and preparation of teachers have undergone a dramatic change from time to time but the need for teachers has been imperative for all times. The changing times as well as the requirements of the society have necessitated changes in the ways of teacher preparation. This paper elaborates the progress of teacher education in India from past to present.

Key Words: *Teacher Education, Ancient Education, Buddhist Education, Muslim Education, British Education, Monitorial System.*

Introduction: Good’s dictionary of Education defines Teacher Education as “All formal and informal activities and experiences that help to qualify to a person to assume the responsibility as a member of the educational profession or to discharge his responsibility most effectively”. The history of teacher education in India is as old as the history of Indian education itself. India has one of the largest systems of teacher education in the world. Education of teachers must have been born in India in 2500 B.C. The history of Indian teacher education may be divided into five parts: Ancient and Medieval Period (2500 B.C. to 500 B.C.)

Buddhist Period (500 B.C. to 1200 A.D.)

Muslim Period (1200 A.D. to 1700 A.D.)

British Period (1700 A.D. to 1947 A.D.)

Teacher education in independent India (1947 up to this date).

Ancient and Medieval Period (2500 B.C. to 500 B.C.): In the beginning of Hindu civilization teaching was concerned with teaching of 'Vedas'. Out of four classes of Hindu society, Brahmins served as teachers of the community devoting themselves to the work of acquisition, conservation and promotion of knowledge and its transmission to posterity. In the Vedic India, the teacher enjoyed a special status and position. He was held in high esteem by the society and this was due not only to learning and scholarship, but also to qualities of head, heart and hand. The Guru or the teacher was an embodiment of good qualities, a fountain of knowledge and an abode of spirituality. The selection and preparation of a teacher was done with much rigour. Manu remarked that the son of the teacher sometimes helped his father, by teaching in his father's place. The teacher was sometimes assisted in his work by some of the older and abler pupils who acted as monitors. This monitorial system, which was a method of inducting pupils to the position of teachers, was the contribution of the ancient education system. Teaching in the Upanishadic period was known for the personal attention paid to the student. There was an intimate relationship between the teacher and the disciple. The freedom to accept a disciple rested with the teacher, but once he accepted a disciple it became his moral duty to see that the disciple grew. Similarly, a disciple or student had the freedom to choose his teacher. Knowledge was transmitted orally (since writing developed later) and explanation was one of the important methods of teaching. The methods used by teachers were emulated and adopted by the disciples and handed over from one generation of teachers to another. The transmission of methods through initiation and repetition continued. Good teachers devised their own methods and made the matter interesting and meaningful to students by day-to-day examples. Listening to the spoken words, comprehension of meaning, reasoning leading to generalization, confirmation by a friend or a teacher and application were the five steps to realize the meaning of a religious truth practiced in ancient India.

Buddhist Period (500 B.C. to 1200 A.D.): The formal system of teacher's training emerged during this period. As the importance of teacher education was recognized it got an expansion. The monastic system which was an important feature of Buddhism required that every novice on his admission should place himself under the supervision and guidance of a preceptor (Upajjhaya). The disciple would choose an upajjhaya with much care and showed him the utmost respect. The upajjhaya, on his part, had much responsibility to the novice, the Saddhiviharika. He was to offer spiritual help and promote learning through religion among the disciples by teaching, by putting question to him, by exhortation, by instruction. The teacher was to look after the disciple fully. The teachers employed other methods besides oral recitation such as exposition, debate, discussion, question-answer, use of stories and parables. In Vihars and monastic schools, Hetu-Vidya or the inductive method was adopted and the intellect of the disciple was trained through it. The subject Logic was introduced which helped in sharpening the intellect of the learner.

Muslim Period (1200 A.D. to 1700 A.D.): During this period there was no formal system of teacher training. In the holy Koran, education is urged as a duty and in Muslim countries, education was held in high esteem. Education was public affair. The Mohammedan rulers in India founded schools (Maktabs), Colleges (Madrassahs) and libraries in their dominions. In the Maktab, often attached to a mosque, the students received instruction in the Koran which they had to recite, and reading, writing and simple arithmetic was also taught. The medium of "instruction was Persian but

the study of Arabic was compulsory. In Madrassahs the course included grammar, logic, theology, metaphysics, literature, jurisprudence and sciences. The teachers teaching in the Makhtabs were mostly moulvis, but in the Madrassahs scholarly persons were employed. The method of teacher preparation was mostly initiation of what the old teachers practiced. Good and experienced teachers with a discerning eye identified able students and appointed them tutors to look after and teach the junior students in their absence. Thus the monitorial system was in vogue during the medieval times too and was the method of preparing the future teachers. The teachers were held in high esteem and were respected by the society and their students. Cramming and memorising were prevalent during this period. The method of teaching was oral. The teachers adopted the lecture method. Students were encouraged to consult books. Practicals were also conducted in practical subjects like medicine. Analytical and inductive methods were also used to each subject like religion, logic, philosophy and politics.

British Period (1700 A.D. to 1947 A.D.): The Britishers changed the above educational system according to their own system, their need and philosophy. Advanced system of education was incorporated. Before the arrival of the Britishers in India the European Missionaries first started scholars and later initiated teacher training institutions. The Danish Missionaries established a normal school for the training of teachers at Serampur near Calcutta. In Madras Dr. Andrew Bell started the experiment of Monitorial System which formed the basis of teacher training programme for the time being. It was used in England and known as Bell-Lancaster system. Mr. Campbell, Collector of Bellary, in his Minute dated 17th August 1823, commended this system by which the more advanced scholars are asked to teach the less advanced and this was well received in England. Sir Munro, in his Minute dated 13 December 1823, gave some ideas for the improvement of the education of teachers. He suggested an increase in their allowance and different types of syllabi for Hindu and Muslim teachers. In June 1826, the first normal school was started in Madras under the management and with the finances of the British government. Initially it prepared teachers for the district schools. Later, this normal school developed into the Presidency College. In 1847, in Bombay a normal school was started in the Elphinstone Institution and in 1849, Calcutta too had a normal school.

Teacher Education in Pre Independent India:

Monitorial System (1880)—In India, the idea of formal teacher training originated out of an indigenous technique, called ‘Monitorial System’. It was based on the principle of mutual instruction. The whole class was splitted into a number of small groups and by placing each group under the charge of a brilliant pupil, called monitor.

Teacher’s Training Schools—The first formal teacher’s training School in India was set up at Serampur in Bengal in the name of “Normal School” by Carey, Marshman and Ward in 1793. In Bombay, the Native Education Society trained a number of teachers for the improvement of teaching in primary schools. In Bengal the Calcutta School Society did pioneering work for the training of teachers for indigenous schools. The Ladies Society of Calcutta started a training class for training women teachers in the Calcutta Central School for girls. A number of government training schools were also set up in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Wood’s Despatch (1854) – The Wood’s Despatch (popularly known as Magna Charta of English Education in India), an important educational document was released on 19 July, 1854. It was rightly been called the most important document on English education in India. It gave some very valuable suggestions for the improvement of the education of teachers. It suggested that allowances

be given to persons who possess and aptness for teaching and who are willing to devote themselves to the profession of school master. The Despatch urged the establishment of training schools in India. The Despatch suggested the introduction of pupil teacher system (as prevailed in England) in India and an award/ stipend to the pupil teachers and a small payment to the masters of the school to which they were attached. On successful completion of the training programme they were to be given certificates and employment. So the Despatch introduced sufficient incentive for the would-be teachers. Lord Dalhousie, Governor-General of India also suggested implementation of Wood's Despatch which brought into existence a number of normal schools.

Lord Stanley's Despatch (1859)—In 1859, Lord Stanley, Secretary of State for India, greatly emphasized on teacher training. The Despatch very emphatically stated that the administration should desist from procuring teachers from England and that teachers for vernacular schools should be made available locally. In 1859, the new grant-in-aid rules provided that salary grants to schools be given to those teachers who had obtained a certificate of teacher training. In 1882 there existed 106 Normal Schools, including 15 institutions meant exclusively for women. About the training of secondary teachers, training classes were added to the following schools:

- (i) Government Normal School, Madras (1856)
- (ii) Central Training School, Lahore (1877)

In 1886, the first training college to prepare secondary school teachers was set up at Saidapet in Madras followed by the opening of a Secondary Department in the Nagpur Training School in 1889. Towards the end of nineteenth century, there were only six training colleges in India.

Government of India Resolution on Education Policy (1904)—This is one of the most important educational documents which laid down the policies for the future educational system. Lord Curzon, the-then Viceroy of India felt the need of the training of teachers. It made some very vital suggestions for the improvement of the teacher-training Programme. These were:

(a) Training Colleges: The Resolution enunciated that if Secondary Education was to be improved then the teachers should be trained in the art of teaching. There were five teacher training colleges in all at places like Madras, Kurseong, Allahabad, Lahore and Jubbulpur. Intermediates or Graduates could seek admission to these Colleges. The general principles upon which the training institutions were to be developed, were:

- (i) To enlist more men of ability and experience in the work of higher training,
- (ii) To equip the training colleges well,
- (iii) To make the duration of the training programmes two years and for graduates, one year.

The course would comprise knowledge of the principles which underlie the art of teaching and some degree of technical skill in the practice of the art,

- (iv) The course would culminate in a university degree or diploma,
- (v) There should be a close link between theory and practice and practicing schools should be attached to each college. There should be a close link between the training colleges and the school, so that the students do not neglect the methods learnt in the college.

(b) Training Schools: The Resolution recommended opening of more training schools, particularly in Bengal. The normal schools were mostly boarding schools where students with vernacular education came for training and were given stipends. They received general education combined with the instruction in the methods of teaching and practice in teaching. The Resolution recommended a minimum course of two years. It mentioned courses of training especially suited for teachers of rural schools. Thus, it can be observed that the recommendations and suggestions of the

Resolution were of far reaching importance. Universities instituted B.T. degree for graduate teachers.

The Government of India Resolution on Education Policy (1913)—The second resolution on educational policy suggested many useful measures with regard to improvement of Primary education. The resolution suggested that teachers should be drawn from the class of the boys whom they will teach and they should have passed the middle vernacular examination and undergone a year's training. It suggested periodical repetition and improvement courses for teachers. The resolution emphasized that no teacher should be allowed to teach without a certificate and that there should be a constant exchange of ideas amongst the training college staff members and that they should visit different colleges.

Calcutta University Commission (1917-19)—This Commission, known as the Sadler Commission suggested opening of post graduate department of education in Universities, each department with a Professor, a Reader and a number of assistants and institute a post-graduate degree in Education. It recommended the introduction of Education as an optional subject at the Graduation and P.G. level. The recommendations of the Sadler Commission had salutary effect on the teacher training Programme in India. Mysore University started a faculty of Education in 1925.

The Hartog Committee (1929) – The work initiated by the Sadler Commission was further carried on by the Hartog Committee. The Committee was primarily concerned with primary education but it made far-reaching recommendations for teacher training as well. It suggested that teachers for rural areas should be inducted from persons who were close to rural society. It also suggested that journals for teacher in the vernacular, refresher courses, conferences and meetings of teacher associations can do much to brighten the lives of the teachers and improve their work. For the secondary school teachers too, the committee had the same suggestions. Working on the recommendations of the Sadler Commission, 13 out of 18 universities set-up faculties of education. The Lady Irwin College was setup in New Delhi. Andhra University started a new degree the B.Ed. in 1932. Bombay launched a post-graduate degree the M.Ed. in 1936. Some other important changes in the field of education also took place in the thirties. The Central Advisory Board of Education was revived. Basic Education was started by Mahatma Gandhi in 1937, leading to the training of teachers for basic schools. In 1938, a Basic Training College was set-up at Allahabad and the Vidyamandir Training School was started at Wardha in 1938.

The Abbott - Wood Report (1937)—This report submitted in 1937 is again a landmark in the field of education. It primarily analyzed the position of vocational education but also made valuable suggestions about teacher education. According to the report the duration of training should be 3 years to enable the pupil to continue with general education along with professional training. It further suggested a refresher course for the teacher so that he could get a wider experience. Although there was improvement in the percentage of trained teachers from 56.8% in 1937 to 61.3% in 1942, yet there was much still to be done for achieving qualitative improvement. In 1941, there were 612 normal schools out of which 376 were for men and 236 for women. These schools provided one or two years' training. There were 25 training colleges for graduates which were inadequate to meet the needs of the time. In 1941, the Vidya Bhawan teacher's College was started in Rajasthan and the Tilak College of Education in Poona. Bombay took the lead in starting a doctorate degree in education in the same year.

The Sargent Report (1944)—The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) in 1944 presented a scheme of education "Post-war Educational Development in India", popularly known as the "Sergeant Plan" recommended that suitable boys and girls should be picked out into the teaching profession after high school; practical training should be provided, refresher courses be planned and research facilities be provided. It suggested a two year course for preprimary and junior basic schools (after high school) and a three year course for the senior basic schools. The non-graduate teachers in high schools were to go for two year training and the graduates for one-year training. The first year of the two years training should be devoted to the study of the general and professional subjects. It should be supported by school visits, discussions and other experiences to kindle the trainee's interest in education. It proposed revised pay scales for all categories of teachers, to attract better teachers.

In 1947, the number of secondary teachers training colleges in the country had risen to 41.

Teacher Education in Independent India:

University Education Commission (1948-49)—The first commission in free India, University Education Commission, in 1948 critically scanned the existing courses in teacher training programme and suggested that the courses must be flexible and adaptable to local circumstances. In this context, the commission recommended that the courses should be remodeled, suitable schools to be used for practical training and more time to be given to school practice. In 1950, the First Conference of Training Colleges in India was held at Baroda to discuss programmes and functions of training colleges. In this commission, 'teacher training' was given a new nomenclature and it became 'teacher education'.

Secondary Education Commission (1952-53)—This commission suggested reforming of secondary education. It recommended that during one year of training graduate teacher should be trained in methods of teaching in at least two subjects. The practical training should not consist only of practice in teaching, observation, demonstration and criticism of lessons, but should include such subjects as construction and administration of scholastic tests, organization of supervised study and students' societies, conducting library periods and maintenance of cumulative records.

Ford Foundation Term (1954)—Government of India in collaboration with Ford Foundation appointed an International team of eight experts in 1954 that studied in greater detail the major recommendations of Secondary Education Commission and recommended that the training institutions should organize and conduct demonstration or laboratory schools where experiments are made in curriculum construction and progressive methods of teaching are used.

Pires Committee (1956)—This committee recommended that practical work should be given as much weightage as the theory portion. The examination papers should be reduced to four as stated below-

1. Principles of Education and School Organisation
2. Educational Psychology and Health Education
3. Methods of Teaching Two School Subjects
4. Current Problems in Indian Education.

Education Commission (1964-66)—The Education Commission (1964-66) also known as Kothari Commission showed keen interest in teacher education. It observed that a sound programme of professional education for teachers was essential for the qualitative improvement in education at all levels of teacher education to meet the requirements of the national system of education.

According to **National Policy Statement on Education (1968)**, of all the factors which determine the quality of education and its contribution to national development, teacher is undoubtedly the most important. Teacher, must therefore, be accorded an honoured place in society. Their

emoluments and other service conditions should be adequate and satisfactory with respect to their qualifications and responsibilities.

First Asian Conference on Teacher Education—This conference, jointly sponsored by Association of Teacher Educators (IATE) and the International Council on Education for Teaching (ICET) was held from 14th to 19th June 1971 at Bangalore. The conference recommended that the programs of school education and teacher education in each country should be modified to meet the new challenges.

‘ITEP’ Plan of National Council of Educational Research and Training—The teacher education Department of National Council of Educational Research and Training, launched a plan for the comprehensive improvement of teacher training under the name ‘Intensive Teacher Education Programme’ (ITEP) to work cooperatively with the training colleges to bring about desirable changes and improvement in teacher education.

Efforts of Indian Association of Teacher Educators (IATE)—The Indian Association of Teacher Educators, formerly known as All India Association of Training Colleges, the only national organization of teachers of training institutions, have been organizing annual conferences beginning with their first meet at Baroda in 1950. IATE constituted a study group popularly known as Baroda Study Group to revitalize the B. Ed. Programme.

National Commission on Teachers—I (1983-85)—In National Commission on Teachers – I (for school teachers), a four year training course after senior secondary, or preferably a 5 year course leading to graduation and training is recommended. For elementary teachers it is desirable to have a two year training course after Class XII. The integrated four year curriculum for a degree in education should consist of general education and professional preparation. Training curriculum for elementary teachers should emphasize on mastering of language and communication skills. The teacher educators in colleges of education should be drawn from disciplines of various school subjects and educational disciplines like psychology, sociology, philosophy etc. The minimum qualification for a teacher educator should be post-graduate degree in the subject and a B.Ed., preferably a M.Ed. degree. The minimum qualification for a teacher educator for the elementary training institutes should be a post graduate degree with B.Ed. training. This commission also suggested that the practice teaching should be replaced by the word ‘Internship’.

The National Policy of Education (NPE) in 1986 recommended that teacher education is a continuous process and its pre-service and inservice components are inseparable. The National Policy of Education (NPE), in 1986 and its Programme of Action made a strong case for improving the quality of teacher education because it was the prerequisite to improve the quality of school education. Some training schools were upgraded to District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETS) and some training colleges were upgraded to Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs) and Institutes of Advanced Studies in Education (IASSES).

The Acharya Ramamurti Committee (1990) in its review of the NPE 1986 observed that an internship model for teacher training should be adopted because “...the internship model is firmly based on the primary value of actual field experience in a realistic situation, on the development of teaching skills by practice over a period of time.”

Yashpal Committee (1993) noted that inadequate programme of teacher preparation leads to unsatisfactory quality of learning in school. Therefore, the B.Ed. programme should offer the possibility of specialization in secondary or elementary or nursery education. The duration of the

programme should either be one year after graduation or four years after higher secondary. The contents of the programme should be restructured to ensure its relevance to the changing need of school education. The emphasis in these programmes should be on enabling the trainees to acquire the ability for self-learning and independent thinking. By the year 1998-99 there were 45 District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETS), 76 Colleges of Teacher Education (CTEs) and 34 Institutes of Advanced Studies in Education (IASSES). The statutory NCTE further came out with a Curriculum Framework (1998) to provide guidelines in respect of the content and methodology of teacher education. As a result of this, many universities and state governments revised the courses of teacher education. The statutory NCTE further came out with a Curriculum Framework (1998) to provide guidelines in respect of the content and methodology of teacher education. As a result of this, many universities and state governments revised the courses of teacher education.

The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 for school education places different demands and expectations on the teacher, which need to be addressed by both initial and continuing teacher education. Teacher quality is a function of several factors: teacher's status, remuneration and conditions of work, teacher's academic and professional education.

National Knowledge Commission (2007) has made considerable progress in school education since independence with reference to overall literacy, infrastructure and universal access and enrolment in schools.

National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE) 2010 highlighted that the education and training of a prospective teacher will be effective to the extent that it has been delivered by teacher educators who are competent and professionally equipped for the job. To improve the quality of teacher education program, the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) took up a number of initiatives during the last decade. It joined hands with the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) to foster quality assurance and sustenance. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, which became operational from 1st April, 2010, has important implications for teacher education in the country. To enhance quality of school education Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) for Teachers and Principal Eligibility Test (PET) are conducted at both level at state and at central level. For teacher education UGC conducts National Eligibility Test (NET) at national level and State Level Eligibility Test (SLET/SET) at state level.

Teacher Education in Five Year Plans—In five year plans teacher education got 10% share of the total education, resulting into an increased output in training schools and training colleges. Output of training schools doubled during 1951 to 1961. It increased three times in 1966. There were 29 institutions in 1966 providing M.Ed. and PhD courses. NCERT was set up in September 1961. NCERT started teacher education programme in 1964. Establishment of SIE (State Institutes of Education) and SIScE (State Institutes of Science Education) took place in 1964 to upgrade science education at high school level. Science Institutes were opened. During 1969 to 1979 priority was given to expansion of elementary education with special emphasis on backward sections and girls. Correspondence and inservice programmes were emphasized. Fourth and Fifth plans provided correspondence courses to about 1, 40,000 elementary teachers, 17,600 secondary teachers. With the assistance of NCERT and UGC an organized correspondence and inservice programmes, B.Ed. course was started by Himachal University and later by Jaipur University and several universities in South India. There are training colleges which are exclusively run by Government. Regional Colleges are being run by NCERT – Ajmer, Mysore, Bhuvaneshwar and Bhopal. In Uttar Pradesh

there are two types of training colleges – JTC and JBCT. Teachers trained by these JBCT colleges work in Junior High School. JTC works in primary school. Regional Colleges carried out programme for primary teachers (B.Ed. Primary); training of teachers for pre-primary level and for students like mentally retarded children, physically handicapped children. NCTE Act was passed in 1993 by the Parliament by which it is the responsibility of NCTE to look after the Teacher Education of the country.

The Eleventh plan is quality plan in respect of the education sector. The following specific programmes are proposed to be taken up in teacher education during the Eleventh Plan.

- Strengthening Teacher Education by
 - (i) Developing teacher education Information Base in Public Domain, (ii) creating additional support systems in the field, and (iii) strengthening academic capacity. Augmenting teacher education capacity in SC/ST and minority areas.
- Professional development of teacher through training programmes.
- Professional development of teacher educators through Refresher Courses and Fellowship programmes.
- Support to NGOs.
- Technology in teacher education.
- Integrating elementary teacher education with higher education.

In the Twelfth FYP, an important thrust area would be to introduce technology in teacher education in order to promote openness for adaptability to new technology for developing professionalism. The Teacher Education Scheme should be implemented in partnership with states.

Conclusion: Teaching is a highly professional activity which demands specialized knowledge, skill and behaviour. Teacher professionalism comprises competence, performance and behaviour which reflect on teacher's personality in school and society. Professional competence is fundamental in teaching profession which includes preparation of teacher for classroom processes, acquisition of knowledge of subject and facilitates personality development of children. Competencies of an effective teacher include interpersonal communication, pedagogical empowerment and organizational leadership. Professional competence results in performance of teacher in terms of overall development of children. The competent teacher is supposed to perform better in the interest of the children and society as well. It has been aptly remarked, "If you educate a boy, you educate one individual but if you educate a girl, you educate the whole family and if you educate a teacher, you educate the whole family and if you educate a teacher, you educate the whole community". Teacher education is not teaching the teachers how to teach. It is to kindle his initiative, to keep it alive, to minimize the evils of the "hit and miss" process and to save time, energy, money and trouble of the teacher and taught. Teacher education is needed for developing a purpose and for formation of a positive attitude for the profession. The success of the educational process depends to a rigid extent on the characteristics and ability of the teacher who is the corner stone of the arch of education. The expansion of teacher education was observed in terms of quantitative and qualitative aspects. All the above described commissions and report emphasis on the quality of teachers in general and teacher educator in specific. At present teachers are not the mere transmitters of information but facilitators in the path of students urge for more knowledge. The existing teacher training institutions of the state has yet lot to do for teachers in order to articulate innovations in terms of approach, pedagogy for qualitative improvement of school education so that they can response to the various demands of the student community.

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