

The Influence of Instructional Leadership, Pedagogical Competence, and Work Motivation on The Quality of Learning in SD Negeri Tembalang District

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Abstract: This study aims to determine the influence of school principal's instructional leadership, teacher pedagogical competence, and teacher work motivation on the quality of learning, both partially and simultaneously. The research was conducted in SD Negeri in Tembalang District, Semarang City, with a sample of 186 teachers. This study utilized a quantitative correlational approach. Data were collected using the survey method, with questionnaires serving as the primary data collection tool. Responses were measured using a Likert scale. For statistical data processing and hypothesis testing, the researchers employed regression analysis, utilizing SPSS software. The findings indicate that instructional leadership, teacher pedagogical competence, and teacher work motivation individually exert a significant influence on the quality of learning, contributing 45.8%, 57%, and 60.8% to the variance, respectively. Most importantly, all three factors collectively and simultaneously influence the quality of learning, explaining 66.7% of its variance. The novelty of this research lies in its integrated framework, which simultaneously tests the combined effect of instructional leadership, teacher pedagogical competence, and work motivation on learning quality. By confirming the significant synergistic impact of these three critical factors, this study advances existing knowledge by providing a holistic empirical model.

Keywords: *Instructional Leadership, Pedagogical Competence, Teacher Work Motivation, Quality of Learning, Elementary Schools*

A. Introduction

Education plays a primary role in individual development and is the main determinant of a nation's progress. In this era of globalization, a country's excellence is no longer measured by its natural wealth but by the quality of its Human Resources (HR). Consequently, the quality of education is directly proportional to a nation's advancement. In alignment with this vision, Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System (Sisdiknas) establishes the noble objective of developing students' potential to become individuals who are faithful and devout to God Almighty, possess noble character, are knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and responsible citizens. In pursuit of this objective, the quality of learning holds a central position as the key indicator of the educational process's success. Quality learning refers to the effectiveness of instructional activities and the optimization of the resulting outputs (Samsinar, 2019: 201),

with high-quality instruction effectively positioning teachers to meet the specific needs of their students (Tanjung, et al., 2025: 257).

Prilianti (2024: 20) states that the quality of learning can be interpreted as the quality or effectiveness of the implemented learning process. Chairani (2021: 19) asserts that the quality of learning is the level or degree of success achieved through reciprocal interaction between students and teachers, as well as among peers, during the learning process. This interaction aims to create the expected behavioral changes in students after participating in learning activities, encompassing cognitive, psychomotor, and affective changes. Another perspective from Purnamaningsih & Purbangkara (2022: 21) defines the quality of learning as the level of achievement of learning objectives within educational activities. This achievement is influenced by various factors, one of which is the teacher's ability to manage learning. The attainment of these objectives is reflected in increased student activity, knowledge, skills, and attitudes, which can be observed through the improvement of learning outcomes during the instructional process. Despite this focus, achieving a continuously improving quality of learning is challenging due to various internal and external dynamics. Empirically, this challenge is clearly demonstrated in the research location. The following presents the results of the 2025 education report for Public Elementary Schools (SD Negeri) in Tembalang District:

Table 1 Education Report for Public Elementary Schools in Tembalang District, 2025

No.	School Name	Quality of Learning (2025)	Instructional Leadership (2025)	Participation in PMM (2025)
1	SD Negeri Bulusan	62%	82,18%	59,4%
2	SD Negeri Kedungmundu	63%	70,19%	72,7%
3	SD Negeri Kramas	58%	54,97%	71,4%
4	SD Negeri Mangunharjo	64%	79%	56,2%
5	SD Negeri Meteseh	81%	87,93%	65,5%
6	SD Negeri Rowosari 01	64%	60,95%	73,9%
7	SD Negeri Rowosari 02	76%	78,77%	50%
8	SD Negeri Sambiroto 01	66%	62,28%	50%
9	SD Negeri Sambiroto 02	74,43%	64,36%	66,6%
10	SD Negeri Sambiroto 03	67%	57,10%	58,8%
11	SD Negeri Sendangguwo 01	63%	69,38%	68,5%
12	SD Negeri Sendangguwo 02	65%	57,77%	45,4%
13	SD Negeri Sendangmulyo 01	70%	76,35%	66,6%
14	SD Negeri Sendangmulyo 02	78%	75,54%	59%
15	SD Negeri Sendangmulyo 03	81%	81,60%	55,1%
16	SD Negeri Sendangmulyo 04	72%	59,27%	62,2%
17	SD Negeri Tandang 01	69%	62,44%	58,6%
18	SD Negeri Tandang 02	78%	74,75%	58,6%
19	SD Negeri Tandang 03	64%	69,22%	72,2%
20	SD Negeri Tandang 04	68%	62,94%	66,6%
21	SD Negeri Tembalang	78%	77,91%	57,5%
Average		69,59%	69,77%	61,7%

Source: 2025 Education Report Document, updated in March 2025

Based on the 2025 Education Report for Public Elementary Schools (SD Negeri) in Tembalang District, Semarang City, updated in March 2025, the average achievement score for the Quality of Learning indicator reached only 69.59%. The data shows that 15 out of 21 schools obtained scores below 75%, a condition indicating the need for deep and

targeted intervention. This situation necessitates an in-depth analysis of its determining factors. One crucial factor for improving the quality of learning is strong leadership (Sholeh, 2023: 158). Leadership that focuses on improving the quality of students' learning through the role of teachers is known as learning leadership or can also be referred to as instructional leadership (Puspitaningtyas et al., 2019: 130).

Instructional leadership is a form of leadership that specifically emphasizes the improvement or enhancement of the quality of the learning process in schools (Gistituati, 2023: 246). Kuswari (2023: 391) states that instructional leadership, or learning leadership, is leadership that focuses on or emphasizes the learning process, encompassing components such as the curriculum, teaching and learning processes, teacher evaluation and development, assessment (evaluation of learning outcomes), excellent service in learning, and the establishment of school learning communities. Aligning with this definition, Setyowati & Miyono (2024: 727) define a principal's instructional leadership as behavior in which the principal prioritizes activities related to learning by influencing, directing, and guiding teachers in instructional activities, thereby enabling teachers to provide the best possible learning services to students.

Instructional leadership is key to fostering and encouraging the creativity of teachers who are professional, innovative, and creative in the learning process (Sukmawati & Herawan, 2016: 74). Furthermore, Suratmin et al. (2025: 269) state that there is a strong influence of 45.5% from the principal's instructional leadership on the quality of learning. Instructional leadership, or learning leadership, is defined as the attitude or behavior of a leader who provides direction or instruction to subordinates as a process or effort to achieve desired goals (Supiani et al., 2024: 840). Based on the results of the education report for SD Negeri in Tembalang District, the average achievement score for the instructional leadership indicator reached only 69.77%. This low score highlights the need for a significant improvement in instructional leadership to better support teacher creativity and professionalism.

In addition to instructional leadership, teacher pedagogical competence is the main foundation for effective learning. Teachers with high pedagogical competence are able to design, implement, and evaluate learning using diverse and innovative methods, thus motivating students to learn. Rifma (2016: 2) defines pedagogical competence as the teacher's ability to manage student learning. It is clear that teachers who master pedagogical competence can enhance their learning quality (Muhammad, et al., 2024: 5). This is supported by research results from Hastuti et al. (2024: 13379), which show a positive and significant influence of 76.4% from teacher pedagogical competence on the quality of learning.

According to Akbar (2021: 28), pedagogical competence is a proficiency that must be mastered by teachers in performing their professional duties. Another perspective asserts that pedagogical competence is an educator's ability to manage learning in accordance with their duties and roles, reflecting the teaching profession's essence regarding the art of teaching and student management (Fathurrahman et al., 2019: 845). Furthermore, pedagogical competence is defined as a teacher's ability to manage the learning process (Jannah, 2020: 66).

The results of interviews with Mr. Santoso, the school supervisor for Tembalang District, indicate several crucial areas related to teacher competence that need improvement. The main issues include: superficial teaching (only completing book chapters), difficulty adapting to policy changes, sub-optimal utilization of technology, and the need for intensive mentoring and improvement in teacher's literacy and numeracy skills. These identified weaknesses highlight the necessity of providing targeted, intensive training specifically aimed at addressing deficiencies in literacy, numeracy, technology, and curriculum adaptation.

Beyond competence issues, teachers are often found to lack enthusiasm, which prevents the achievement of learning objectives. This can be caused by various factors, including low teacher work motivation. According to Ritonga et al. (2023: 53), work motivation is a teacher's drive—stemming from both internal and external sources—to consistently perform at their best to achieve their professional goals. Meanwhile, MZ et al. (2024: 11) state that teacher work motivation is an inherent impulse within a teacher that encourages them to perform teaching tasks in order to fulfill their needs as an educator. Ristianey et al. (2021: 38) define teacher work motivation as a condition that fosters a willingness or a need in teachers to achieve specific objectives through the execution of tasks. Work motivation is a decisive factor that determines the level of satisfaction, commitment, and performance of teachers in fulfilling their responsibilities (Aisyah & Isma, 2022: 75).

Regarding work motivation, Mr. Santoso stated that teacher work motivation in Tembalang District, particularly in self-development, still needs to be enhanced. Teachers require motivation to cultivate interest in conducting self-development through various activities such as coaching, mentoring, and training. This is supported by the 2025 Education Report data for SD Negeri Tembalang District, where participation in PMM (Platform Merdeka Mengajar) is still sub-optimal, with an average score of only 61.7%. This low motivation hinders teacher initiative in utilizing PMM and other self-learning opportunities, ultimately impacting the improvement of learning quality. The low PMM participation directly validates the need to increase teacher engagement in PMM and other self-development activities, thereby encouraging learning initiatives. Research conducted by Suratmin et al. (2025: 269-270) states that there is a significant influence of 36.8% from teacher work motivation on the quality of learning. This aligns with Suroso's (2023: 740) research, which showed a significant influence between teacher work motivation and the quality of instruction. Highly motivated teachers work not only to fulfill their duties and responsibilities but also possess high dedication to educating students and self-motivation to advance their careers and perform duties sincerely (Kastawi, et al., 2021: 81).

Based on the existing data, the sub-optimal quality of learning is influenced by three main factors: sub-optimal school principal's instructional leadership, teacher pedagogical competence, and teacher work motivation. Each factor plays an important role: instructional leadership creates a conducive learning environment, pedagogical competence supports quality instructional procedures, and work motivation drives teacher dedication and performance. Therefore, this research is crucial for analyzing the influence of these three factors on the quality of learning in Public Elementary Schools in Tembalang District, Semarang, the results of which are expected to serve as valuable consideration for educational policymakers.

The main research gap is that although previous studies have confirmed the partial influence of each variable, there is a lack of analysis that simultaneously and integrally tests the interaction and collective influence of these three determining factors on the quality of learning within the context of Public Elementary Schools in this specific region. Therefore, this research aims to analyze the influence of school principal's instructional leadership, teacher pedagogical competence, and teacher work motivation on the quality of learning, both partially and simultaneously, to provide a cohesive and targeted policy foundation by using simultaneous findings as a basis for formulating integrated policies that focus on the three variables.

B. Methods

This study utilized a quantitative correlational approach. Data were collected using the survey method, with questionnaires serving as the primary data collection tool. Responses were measured using a Likert scale with options: always, often, sometimes, rarely, and never. The research instrument consisted of four questionnaires, namely: instructional leadership, teacher pedagogical competence, teacher work motivation, and quality of learning. Before use, the instruments were tested for validity using factor analysis and reliability using Cronbach's Alpha. For statistical data processing and hypothesis testing, the researchers employed regression analysis, utilizing SPSS software. The population in this study comprises all 348 teachers across the 21 Public Elementary Schools (SD Negeri) in Tembalang District. The sample size for this research is 186 teachers out of the total 348. The sampling technique utilized in this study is probability sampling, specifically the Probability Proportionate to Size (PPS) sampling technique, which is a procedure where the probability of a sampling unit being selected is proportional to its size (Maidina, 2021: 25). The sample from each school was determined proportionally based on the total number of teachers in the respective schools.

Table 1 Population and Research Sample

No.	School Name	Population	Proportion	Sample
1	SD Negeri Bulusan	19	10,2	10
2	SD Negeri Kedungmundu	15	8,0	8
3	SD Negeri Kramas	8	4,3	4
4	SD Negeri Mangunharjo	8	4,3	4
5	SD Negeri Meteseh	16	8,6	9
6	SD Negeri Rowosari 01	15	8,0	8
7	SD Negeri Rowosari 02	8	4,3	4
8	SD Negeri Sambiroto 01	14	7,5	7
9	SD Negeri Sambiroto 02	18	9,6	10
10	SD Negeri Sambiroto 03	8	4,3	4
11	SD Negeri Sendangguwo 01	19	10,2	10
12	SD Negeri Sendangguwo 02	8	4,3	4
13	SD Negeri Sendangmulyo 01	25	13,4	13
14	SD Negeri Sendangmulyo 02	22	11,8	12
15	SD Negeri Sendangmulyo 03	25	13,4	13
16	SD Negeri Sendangmulyo 04	29	15,5	16

17	SD Negeri Tandang 01	22	11,8	12
18	SD Negeri Tandang 02	16	8,6	9
19	SD Negeri Tandang 03	21	11,2	11
20	SD Negeri Tandang 04	16	8,6	9
21	SD Negeri Tembalang	16	8,6	9
Jumlah		348		186

C. Results and Discussion

The Influence of School Principal's Instructional Leadership on the Quality of Learning in Public Elementary Schools (SD Negeri) in Tembalang District, Semarang City.

The partial influence of instructional leadership on the quality of learning was analyzed using simple regression with the aid of SPSS (Version 26). It was found that the correlation coefficient (*r*) of 0.677 indicates a strong and positive relationship: an increase in instructional leadership will lead to an increase in the quality of learning. This relationship is statistically significant, evidenced by the t-test value ($t = 12.481$) which is far greater than the t-table value ($\alpha = 0.05, df=182$) of 1.653. The results of the t-test based on the SPSS computer program output are following below:

Table 2 Results of the t-test for the Influence of Instructional Leadership on the Quality of Learning Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	45,116	8,707		5,181	0,000
Principal's Instructional Leadership (X_1)	0,639	0,051	0,677	12,481	0,000

a. Dependent Variable: Y

Based on the output above, a regression coefficient of 0.639 and a constant of 45.116 were obtained. The relationship between the principal's instructional leadership variable and the quality of learning can thus be described by the regression equation: $Y = 45.116 + 0.639X_1$. This means that if instructional leadership increases by 1 point, the quality of learning will increase by 0.639 points at the constant of 45.116. In other words, the better the principal's instructional leadership, the higher the quality of learning will be. The relationship between the two variables is linear, which is confirmed by the F-test results via the SPSS computer program output with a significance value (sig) of $0.000 < 0.05$. This result indicates that the regression model is a valid model for estimating the quality of learning, demonstrating a positive and significant influence. The magnitude of the influence of school principal's instructional leadership on the quality of learning can be seen in the following table:

Table 3 Coefficient of Determination for the Influence of School Principal's Instructional Leadership on the Quality of Learning Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.677 ^a	0,458	0,456	9,634

a. Predictors: (Constant), Principal's Instructional Leadership (X₁)

Based on the results of the coefficient of determination (R^2) test above, the R Square value shown is 0.458, or 45.8%. This indicates that school principal's instructional leadership influences the quality of learning by 45.8%, while the remaining 54.2% is influenced by other independent variables not examined in this study. This finding indicates that strengthening the instructional leadership role of the school principal is a significant and important factor in efforts to improve the quality of learning. This research finding is consistent with the study by Hastuti (2024), which showed that instructional leadership has a positive influence of 72.1% on the quality of learning.

The Influence of Teacher Pedagogical Competence on the Quality of Learning in Public Elementary Schools (SD Negeri) in Tembalang District, Semarang City.

The partial influence of teacher pedagogical competence on the quality of learning was analyzed using simple regression with SPSS (Version 26). The correlation coefficient (r) of 0.755 indicates a strong and positive relationship; an increase in pedagogical competence will lead to an increase in the quality of learning. This relationship is statistically significant, shown by the t-test value ($t = 15.613$) which exceeds the t-table value ($\alpha = 0.05$, $df=182$) of 1.653, thus confirming that it can estimate the quality of learning. The results of the t-test based on the SPSS computer program output can be seen in the following table:

Table 4 Results of the t-test for the Influence of Teacher Pedagogical Competence on the Quality of Learning

		Coefficients ^a				
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	33,197	7,727		4,296	0,000
	Teacher Pedagogical Competence	0,750	0,048	0,755	15,613	0,000

a. Dependent Variable: Y

Based on the output above, a regression coefficient of 0.750 and a constant of 33.197 were obtained. The relationship between the teacher pedagogical competence variable and the quality of learning can thus be described by the regression equation: $Y = 33.197 + 0.750X_2$. This means that if pedagogical competence increases by 1 point, the quality of learning will increase by 0.75 points at the constant of 33.197. In other words, the higher the teacher's pedagogical competence, the higher the quality of learning will be. The relationship between the two variables is linear, which is confirmed by the F-test results via the SPSS computer program output with a significance value (sig) of $0.000 < 0.05$. This result

indicates that the regression model is a valid model for estimating the quality of learning, demonstrating a positive and significant influence. The magnitude of the influence of teacher pedagogical competence on the quality of learning can be seen in the following table:

Table 5 Coefficient of Determination for the Influence of Pedagogical Competence on the Quality of Learning

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.755 ^a	0,570	0,568	8,586

a. Predictors: (Constant), Teacher Pedagogical Competence

Based on the results of the coefficient of determination (R^2) test above, the R Square value shown is 0.570, or 57%. This indicates that teacher pedagogical competence influences the quality of learning by 57%, while the remaining 43% is influenced by variables not examined in this study. The high percentage of influence affirms that pedagogical competence is a fundamental and major determinant in the learning process.

The Influence of Teacher Work Motivation on the Quality of Learning in Public Elementary Schools (SD Negeri) in Tembalang District, Semarang City.

The partial influence of teacher work motivation on the quality of learning was tested using simple regression with SPSS (Version 26). The correlation coefficient (r) of 0.780 indicates a strong and positive relationship: an increase in teacher work motivation will lead to an increase in the quality of learning. This relationship is statistically significant, as the t -test value ($t = 16.895$) far exceeds the t -table value ($\alpha = 0.05, df=182$) of 1.653, confirming that teacher work motivation can estimate the quality of learning. The results of the t -test based on the SPSS computer program output can be seen below:

Table 6 Results of the t -test for the Influence of Teacher Work Motivation on the Quality of Learning Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	49,619	6,174		8,037	0,000
	Teacher Work Motivation	0,895	0,053	0,780	16,895	0,000

a. Dependent Variable: Y

Based on the output above, a regression coefficient of 0.895 and a constant of 49.619 were obtained. The relationship between the teacher work motivation variable and the quality of learning can thus be described by the regression equation: $Y = 49.619 + 0.895X_3$. This means that if teacher work motivation increases by 1 point, the quality of learning will increase by 0.895 points at the constant of 49.619. In other words, the higher the teacher's work motivation, the higher the quality of learning will be. The relationship between the two variables is linear, which is confirmed by the F -test results via the SPSS computer program output with a significance value (sig) of 0.000

< 0.05. This result indicates that the regression model is a valid model for estimating the quality of learning, demonstrating a positive and significant influence. The magnitude of the influence of teacher work motivation on the quality of learning can be seen in the table below:

Table 7 Coefficient of Determination for the Influence of Teacher Work Motivation on Quality Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.780 ^a	0,608	0,606	8,196

a. Predictors: (Constant), Teacher Work Motivation (X₃)

Based on the results of the coefficient of determination (R^2) test above, the R Square value shown is 0.608, or 60.8%. This indicates that teacher work motivation influences the quality of learning by 60.8%, while the remaining 39.2% is influenced by other independent variables not included in this study. This result highlights that teacher work motivation is the single strongest contributor among the three variables studied, making it a crucial area for intervention and support. This research finding is consistent with the study by Jumali et al. (2023), which showed that teacher work motivation has a significant influence on the quality of elementary schools.

The Influence of School Principal's Instructional Leadership, Teacher Pedagogical Competence, and Teacher Work Motivation on the Quality of Learning in Public Elementary Schools (SD Negeri) in Tembalang District, Semarang City.

The simultaneous influence of school principal's instructional leadership, teacher pedagogical competence, and teacher work motivation on the quality of learning can be determined using multiple linear regression analysis. The results of the multiple linear regression test performed using the SPSS program are presented in the following table:

Table 8 Results of the t-test for the Simultaneous Influence on the Quality of Learning Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	22,712	7,426		3,058	0,003
	Principal's Instructional Leadership	0,192	0,059	0,204	3,266	0,001
	Teacher Pedagogical Competence	0,254	0,080	0,256	3,167	0,002
	Teacher Work Motivation	0,495	0,089	0,431	5,568	0,000

a. Dependent Variable: Quality of Learning

Based on the table above, the regression equation was obtained with a constant of 22.712, a coefficient for school principal's instructional leadership (X₁) of 0.192, a

coefficient for teacher pedagogical competence (X_2) of 0.254, and a coefficient for teacher work motivation (X_3) of 0.495. Thus, the regression equation is: $Y = 22.712 + 0.192X_1 + 0.254X_2 + 0.495X_3$. This positive regression equation indicates that the better or higher the school principal's instructional leadership, teacher pedagogical competence, and teacher work motivation, the greater the increase in the quality of learning. The relationship among these three variables is linear, as explained by the F-test result via the SPSS computer program output with a significance value (sig) of $0.000 < 0.05$. This result indicates that the regression model is valid for estimating the quality of learning, showing a positive and significant influence. The magnitude of the simultaneous influence of school principal's instructional leadership, teacher pedagogical competence, and teacher work motivation on the quality of learning can be seen in the following table:

Table 9 Coefficient of Determination for the Simultaneous Influence on the Quality of Learning

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.817 ^a	0,667	0,662	7,594

a. Predictors: (Constant), Teacher Work Motivation (X_3), Principal's Instructional Leadership (X_1), Teacher Pedagogical Competence (X_2)

Based on the results of the coefficient of determination (R^2) test above, the R Square value is 0.667, or 66.7%. This indicates that school principal's instructional leadership, teacher pedagogical competence, and teacher work motivation collectively influence the quality of learning by 66.7%, while the remaining 33.3% is influenced by other independent variables not included in this study. This strong finding of simultaneous influence implies that optimal improvement in learning quality will be achieved if the developed policies are integrated and holistic, targeting all three factors (Leadership, Competence, and Motivation) concurrently.

D. Conclusions

This study successfully accomplished its objectives by analyzing the influence of school principal's instructional leadership, teacher pedagogical competence, and teacher work motivation on the quality of learning among teachers in Tembalang District, Semarang City. The analysis established that all three variables (X_1 , X_2 , and X_3) have a statistically significant and positive partial influence on the quality of learning (Y), with teacher work motivation showing the strongest individual contribution (60.8%). Crucially, when tested simultaneously, the study found that these three factors collectively and significantly influence the quality of learning, accounting for 66.7% of its variance. This powerful simultaneous finding confirms that optimizing these three areas is critical for achieving higher educational quality. Based on the strong simultaneous influence found, the study necessitates a shift from isolated actions to a synergistic policy framework to address the suboptimal learning quality (69.59%). Policymakers are urged to implement an integrated strategy that concurrently strengthens instructional leadership (currently 69.77%) by mandating principal support programs, provides continuous, targeted training to close pedagogical deficits (especially in literacy and numeracy), and establishes performance-based incentive systems to significantly boost teacher work motivation (given the low

61.7% PMM participation). By focusing on the integrated impact of these three pillars leadership, competence, and motivation—educational stakeholders can establish the robust framework required for optimal and sustainable quality improvement in Tembalang District.

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