MADRASAH HEAD STRATEGY IN IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION AT MI MA'ARIF PULUTAN, SALATIGA CITY

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ABSTRAK

Pendidikan yang berkualitas merupakan salah satu dari 17 tujuan Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) yang harus dipenuhi oleh setiap negara untuk warganya. Mewujudkan pendidikan yang berkualitas harus melalui strategi yang terencana dan terakomodasi dengan baik dari kepala madrasah hingga peserta didik. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan strategi kepala madrasah di MI Pulutan Kota Salatiga dalam meningkatkan mutu pendidikan sehingga menjadi salah satu madrasah terbaik di Kota Salatiga. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data yaitu observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Untuk memeriksa keabsahan data, peneliti menggunakan teknik triangulasi sumber dan triangulasi teknik. Hasil penelitian yang diperoleh adalah Kepala MI Ma'arif Pulutan memiliki strategi khusus untuk meningkatkan mutu pendidikan di MI Ma'arif Pulutan, yaitu dengan cara menyeleksi tenaga pendidik dengan kompetensi, memberikan sesuai pengembangan bakat dan minat siswa, memberikan budaya religius yang khas, memberikan fasilitas yang merata, memberikan programprogram unggulan, dan memberikan keterbukaan di semua elemen madrasah agar seluruh proses pembelajaran berjalan dengan baik. Keberhasilan kepala madrasah dalam memimpin menjadi salah satu indikator banyaknya prestasi yang diraih oleh peserta didik

Kata kunci: Strategi, Kepala Madrasah, Mutu Pendidikan.

ABSTRACT

Quality education is one of its 17 objectives Sustainable development goals (SDGs) that every country must fulfill for its citizens. Implementing quality education must go through a planned and well-accommodated strategy from the madrasa head to the students. This research aims to describe the strategy of the madrasa head at MI Pulutan, Salatiga City, in improving the quality of education so that it becomes one of the best madrasas in Salatiga City. This research uses a qualitative approach with data collection techniques, namely observation, interviews, and documentation. To check the validity of the

data, researchers used source triangulation and technical triangulation techniques. The results obtained are that the Head of MI Ma'arif Pulutan has a special strategy to improve the quality of education at MI Ma'arif Pulutan, namely by selecting teaching staff according to competency, providing a forum for developing students' talents and interests, providing a distinctive religious culture, providing the same facilities, providing superior programs, and providing openness in all elements of the madrasa so that the entire learning process runs well. The success of the madrasa head in leading is one indicator of the many achievements achieved by students

Keywords: Strategy, Madrasah Head, Education Quality.

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a policy implemented in developing countries that aim to improve and support community welfare. This program launched by the UN has 4 pillars, 17 goals, and 169 targets that must be implemented so that the goals of the SDGs are realized. One of the 17 SDGs goals that must be realized is quality education (Setianingtias et al., 2019). According to Utami (Khaidir Fadil dkk., 2023) the quality of education in Indonesia ranks 10th out of 14 countries, which is based on reports from Global Education Mentoring (GEM)) UNESCO in 2016. Meanwhile, the results of the report from the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) the quality of education that Indonesia ranked 72 out of 78 countries where this result came out in 2018 (Nurfatimah dkk., 2022). Looking at the results that have been displayed, the quality of education in Indonesia is still far behind the countries in ASEAN.

The problems that Indonesia has related to the quality of education must be resolved immediately because quality education will create quality human resources for the progress of the nation itself. For the younger generation, education is not just for agent of change Of course, education also has meaning agent of production for them to be heirs to their homeland in carrying out transformation (Khaidir Fadil dkk., 2023). As agent of production The younger generation has a full role in determining attitudes towards the feasibility of Indonesian education in the future.

Quality education is a reflection of the country being advanced and modern. In Indonesia, the importance of quality education has been explained explicitly in the fourth paragraph of the preamble to the 1945 Law that making the nation's life intelligent is a responsibility that must be carried out by the state, so that with this the state must be ready. preparing quality education for all citizens living in it, not only general madrasas but also madrasas (Noor, 2023).

As for educational institutions, madrasas as Islamic educational institutions are prepared to support education in the future which is intended to form good morals for students, however, the public's skeptical thinking is related to the stigma that madrasas are madrasas for underprivileged groups, teachers who do not professional, located far away in rural areas, learning only focuses on religion, less professional teachers, graduates are less qualified, management is very weak and graduates cannot compete in this global era, making madrasas still less attractive (Masruri, 2019).

Based on this, to overcome the problems that exist in Islamic educational institutions, quality education can be achieved. The realization of quality education within the madrasah cannot be realized if the institutional structure does not have good management. The problems that often arise are related to poor management within the institutional structure (Munzir, 2022). The head as the brain in carrying out leadership is required to be able to provide creative ideas and effective strategies, have an innovative leadership spirit, and be able to bring about change by exploring relevant new ideas which are then applied in teaching and learning activities whose implications will be felt by all madrasah members (Abzul dkk., 2022). This is in line with the hadith narrated by Abu Dawud, namely: Rasulullah SAW once said, "If three people go out on a trip, then they should appoint one of them as leader." This hadith illustrates that an association, organization, or institution requires one person as a person leader to provide direction, thoughts, and ideas that are useful for everyone without exception so that the objectives of something being done can be achieved (Masruri, 2019).

Apart from this, a good leader can create a quality environment if the leader can integrate everything *holder* to be developed so that the whole stakeholders have competencies in their field and will have an impact on their professionalism at

work(Muttaqin, 2023). Good management and making good changes and breakthroughs in motivating educators and education staff will have a huge impact on improving the quality and quality of madrasahs, as these actions are what all elements of the madrasah community expect from their heads (Minanda, 2023).

Quality is a way that can be used to differentiate between quality and unrelated products. A product is considered good if the product can provide satisfaction for consumers by predetermined standards. Concerning education, especially Islamic education, according to Riyanti (Muttaqin, 2023) quality education is education that can implement a PAIKEM atmosphere (active, innovative, creative, and fun learning) so that the output of the learning process is a good achievement. obtained both in academic and non-academic terms. Apart from this, in creating a quality learning process, four things must be fulfilled, namely input, process, output, and outcome good and quality (Noprika dkk., 2020). In achieving these four things, the head needs to think about strategies that can be implemented effectively and continue until it becomes a Habit or culture that is rooted in the madrasah. This is because madrasa culture is a thing urgent. After all, it contains values, *beliefs*, norms, or behavior that are firmly held as the basis for all madrasah residents, so when all madrasah residents have an integrated culture of good quality, this will automatically make it easier to form quality education.

According to Timpe in Hairul Ulum, 92022) to create a good quality culture of madrasah, a transformational leader is needed who can think far ahead about an effective image of an ideal future madrasah by mobilizing all the commitment of madrasah residents to realize the vision that has been designed by the head so that it will creating an ideal madrasa according to the needs of that time.

The research we conducted in writing this journal has relevance to previous research, namely the journal by Ahmad Masruri entitled Head Strategy in Improving the Quality of Islamic Education (Case Study at MAS Jam'iyyah Islamiyyah Pondok Aren) states that by implementing a quality culture strategy at MAS Jam 'iyyah has experienced excellent quality improvement by producing extraordinary output in terms of achievement not only for students but also improvements in all elements of the madrasa so that it becomes better (Masruri, 2019).

Based on the problems above, researchers are interested in conducting a research entitled "Madrasah Head Strategy in Improving the Quality of Islamic Education at MI Ma'arif Pulutan, Salatiga City". The focus of this research is to describe the strategy of the madrasa head at MI Pulutan, Salatiga City, in improving the quality of education so that it becomes one of the best madrasas in Salatiga City.

This research is a type of qualitative research using a phenomenological approach, in which the researcher examines and explores all information and experiences of the figures involved became research subjects (Wita & Mursal, 2022). Data collection techniques in this research were observation, interviews, and documentation. Furthermore, the data that has been obtained is then analyzed descriptively through the following steps: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.

The method used in this research used descriptive research methods. The descriptive research method is a method used to understand and explain a collection of events or occurrences of an object impartially to carefully describe the quality of the problem being researched, by trying to obtain and convey the reality in the field completely to reveal and know in detail specific about what and how it could happen (Zellatifanny & Mudjiyanto, 2018).

This research aims to describe the madrasa head's strategy for improving the quality of Islamic education at MI Ma'arif Pulutan. The location used in this research is located at MI Ma'arif Pulutan, which is precisely in Pulutan Hamlet, Sidorejo District, Salatiga City, Central Java Province. The sources of data and subjects used in this research include the head of the Madrasah, teaching staff, and other madrasah staff at the MI Ma'arif Pulutan madrasah.

DISCUSSION

Theory Concept

Madrasah quality culture is one of the things that determines the quality of education in a madrasah or madrasah because the existence of good and quality education is one of the bases for the development and progress of a madrasah or madrasah. Quality in the education sector includes several things, namely input, process, output, and outcome. The success of implementing quality educational

input can be seen if the input is ready for processing. Then the educational process can be considered quality if it can create an active, innovative, creative, effective, and enjoyable learning atmosphere (Koiri & Linda, 2022). Furthermoreoutput declared quality if the student's academic and non-academic learning outcomes are high or as expected, and Outcomes are declared quality if graduates or alumni can be maximally absorbed in the world of work (Zarkasi, 2023).

The madrasa head, as the highest leader in the madrasa, is very influential in determining the quality of education in the madrasa. In this case, the head of the madrasah is required to be professional and master the job better than the average other personnel in the madrasah, have a high moral commitment, and must be able to transform his abilities through guidance, guidance, mentoring, empowerment, or advice to all madrasah residents to achieve institutional goals efficiently and effectively.

Many formulas are offered as solutions for creating quality education in Indonesia. One of the theories offered is the theory according to Professor Usman Husaini quoted from (Husni & Hasyim, 2017) who stated that there are 13 aspects of the cultural characteristics of quality education that must be possessed, namely; Performance (performance) namely matters relating to the functional aspects of the madrasah, time limits (timelines) i.e. something is carried out in accordance with what has been determined, Reliable (reability) & Consistent (frequency) which is related to skills in managing and maintaining institutional consistency, relationships (personal interface) namely a bond related to the professionalism of the institution, Beauty (Aesthetes) which is related to the neatness of all aspects of the madrasah, special form (features) namely contains certain advantages of the institution or madrasah, Easy to use (Easy of use) which contains whether the facilities and infrastructure used in the madrasah are friendly and easy or not, certain standards (conformence to specification) namely related to compliance with certain standards used, being able to serve (serviceability) namely being able to provide excellent service and carried out professionally to all elements of the madrasah, Resilience (durability) namely the resilience of the institution to overcome the problems currently being experienced, Uniformity (uniformity) i.e. without variation & not mixed. For example, madrasahs implement rules, without discrimination,

uniformity in clothing, and finally, accuracy (*accuracy*) namely accuracy in service, madrasah institutions can provide services according to what customers or users want (Husni & Hasyim, 2017). From several stages in improving the quality of education offered by Professor Usman Husaini, this research focuses on efforts to create a culture of quality in madrasas. So further from this opinion, it can be concluded that madrasah quality culture is a whole system of thinking, values, morals, norms, and beliefs, a strong system of thinking, values, morals, and norms, to provide the best service to customers (students).

Strategy Concept

Strategy is the key to success in achieving the madrasah goals that we want to achieve together. Without a strategy, programs will not run well, because strategy is a basic step and an important point when leaders intend to advance an institution or organization. Therefore, leadership does not only depend on the abilities of the leader but also the strategies offered by the leader himself (Sulistyawati, 2023).

According to David, Strategy can be defined as the art and knowledge of formulating, implementing, and evaluating cross-functional decisions that enable an organization to achieve its goals (Hajar dkk., 2022). Based on the description of the strategy concept explained above, a leader in implementing a strategy must analyze precisely the strengths possessed by the organization, the weaknesses that may be inherent in it, various opportunities that may arise and must be exploited, as well as threats that are expected to be faced, because leadership and strategy are interrelated and complementary elements. Without a strategy, it will be difficult for programs to run optimally, and without leadership, it will be difficult for strategies to be implemented.

Madrasah Head Strategy

One of the strategies of madrasah heads in improving the quality of education is to fulfill madrasah infrastructure so that this will have a good impact on teaching and learning activities. Procurement of this infrastructure is better carried out incidentally so that the implementation of teaching and learning in madrasas can achieve learning objectives and support results. student learning and setting standards for achieving grades to achieve quality education (Nur Alifah, 2021).

The quality of education has a dynamic nature, making madrasas require a strategy to improve the quality of education that leads to the development of skills that are relevant, real, and meaningful for society. This strategy can be designed and pursued by the madrasa head as the holder of great control over the institution he leads, which can be done through activities that build madrasa culture and a culture of quality (Saputro & Hadi, 2022).

From the explanation above, we can understand together that the quality of education can be measured by the results obtained both in the academic and non-academic fields, which can be in the form of providing direction to teachers and students. For example, madrasah heads always try to keep teachers abreast of developments in technology and information, which can be in the form of education and training for teachers, educational seminars, *workshops*, or comparative studies. Then for students, for example, the head of the madrasah coordinates students based on the field of study that the student is studying depending on whether they are competent according to their field of study so that students always receive direction or guidance from the supervisor so that students can always improve their achievements.

Madrasah Head's Strategy for Improving Functional Aspects at MI Ma'arif Pulutan, Salatiga City

Based on the results of research conducted at MI Ma'arif Pulutan in improving the functional aspects of all elements of madrasa head education using the PDCA strategy (*Plan, Do, Check, Action*) which was coined by Edward Demang, which was initially implemented in the realm of company management (Istanto & Pertiwi, 2022). However, the strategy initiated by Edward Demang was adopted by the head of the madrasa to support the quality of education in the madrasa so that MI Ma'arif Pulutan, Salatiga City, became one of the references basic madrasas in Salatiga City.

The results of the explanation of the PDCA strategy and cultural indicators of educational quality adopted by the madrasa head are written as follows:

a. Plan

1) Conformance To Specification

Conformance to specification namely a minimum standard that has been set by the head of the madrasah in managing the institution so that the institution will run optimally according to what is expected. The minimum standards referred to here are standards for providing the best service for students.

Based on the answers obtained from the analysis above, the strategy implemented by the head of MI Ma'arif Pulutan, Salatiga City is in line with this theory. This can be proven by adjusting subject teachers according to linear departments so that in the teaching and learning process, teachers will understand the material will be fully discussed and can be developed in such a way that student competency reaches the predetermined targets.

2) Personal Interface and Serviceability

The next planning stage is Personal Interface and serviceability where the two are related, namely that madrasas as educational institutions must provide excellent service and uphold professionalism in their work so that the combination of the two will create a cool, safe, and peaceful learning environment that will support student achievement at the madrasa.

The implementation carried out by the head of MI Ma'arif Pulutan to create this can be seen through the holding of services *one day one stuParent's* without any differentiation in dealing with problems that students have so that students will feel helped when they are experiencing problems, whether it is a problem with learning material or something else.

3) Features

Features are an advantage possessed by a madrasa which allows this advantage not to be possessed by other madrasas, so that the advantages possessed by that madrasa make it a special attraction for the community to enroll their children in that madrasa.

In the planning stage, This madrasa head has come up with a design where the design is focused on certain excellence programs at MI Ma'arif Pulutan, Salatiga City. The superior programs designed by the head of this madrasah are different from programs in other madrasahs in the area.

4) Durability & Frequency

Durability and frequency This is something that a madrasa head must have in carrying out his leadership mandate. The head of the madrasah must understand and understand what planning will be carried out while the head of the madrasah is in office so that a good understanding of the planning that will be implemented can make it easier for the head of the madrasah to overcome all problems that are likely to occur.

So, with proper handling by the head of the madrasah and all elements within it, the madrasah will remain stable even though it is experiencing a crisis, both in monetary terms and a decline in the quality of education.

5) *Uniformity*

Uniformity is the uniformity that must be given to students in terms of rules, services, and others without regard to ethnicity, race, religion, and culture. So in the planning stage, the madrasa head has thought carefully about what rules will be implemented to build good quality education at MI Ma'arif Pulutan, Salatiga City.

b. Do (Implementation)

1) Conformance To Specification

MI Ma'arif Pulutan in determining educational standards has its standards compared to other madrasas. This can be seen from several standards set by MI Ma'arif Pulutan, such as in accepting new students, where they must go through a test first before the students are accepted as students at MI Ma'arif Pulutan, then the standards set next when Choosing a subject teacher must be by the major you took during your undergraduate degree, for example, when MI Ma'arif Pulutan needs a mathematics subject teacher, you must look for a teacher who is aligned with that major

plus you must have certification, the aim of which is to improve and maintain the quality of the madrasah itself.

Apart from this, because they are under the auspices of Ma'arif, the teacher qualification standards set by the head of the madrasah and the institution must also have a background from Ahli Sunnah Wal Jama'ah (Nahdhlatul Ulama) and must have taken part in driving cadre education (PKP), and if not If you participate in these activities, you will have to be ready to take part in the PKP when you start teaching at this madrasah. The purpose of these requirements is to foster the spirit of ownership and advancement of the institution as well as to continue the charitable character of Nahdhlatul Ulama itself.

2) Personal Interface and Serviceability

In terms of personal *interface* At MI Ma'arif Pulutan, the head of the madrasah has one idea concept which is given the term *One Day - One StuParent's*, which means one day, one student, one parent, and one class teacher. This idea aims to foster more intensive relationships between students, parents, and madrasas. The aim of holding parenting is to foster emotional closeness between these three elements so that it will create openness regarding the problems experienced, whether from parents or students and will create a solution to solve these problems.

Then from *serviceability* At MI Ma'arif Pulutan, the head of the madrasah takes action, namely by holding meetings every 2 months with parents from each 2 class levels. For example, the first 2 months are for parents of students in grades 1 and 2, then the next 2 months are for parents of grades 3 and 4, and so on. This activity aims to accommodate all aspirations so that later it becomes a consideration for the institution to prioritize which input is the main one so that later the aspirations of parents can be realized by the institution to improve the quality of education in this madrasah.

3) Features

The superior programs offered by MI Ma'arif Pulutan as the implementation of indicators features What is different from other

madrasas is that there is a tahfiz program where the teaching teachers have clear sanad. It is very rare to find tahfiz teachers who have clear sanad. So that with clarity the sanad possessed by the tahfiz teacher taught to students is not haphazard and can be accounted for.

Apart from implementing the Tahfiz program at MI Ma'arif Pulutan, namely congregational dhuha prayers which are held every Tuesday and Thursday, a program for memorizing juz 30 before graduation, getting used to reading tahlil by visiting the maqbarah of the founder and waqif of the madrasa to cultivate ties to the ancestors who contributed to the founding of the madrasa, getting used to reading the Koran, and also getting used to 5S towards others, namely (smile, greeting, greet, be polite and courteous).

4) Durabilty & Frequency

In terms of durability At MI Ma'arif Pulutan, when experiencing a monetary crisis, the head of the madrasa had a policy not to rely on subsidies from the government alone, because this madrasa has a private status, the institution's finances must be independent and managed in such a way so that it can survive and continue running. One thing that differentiates this madrasa from other madrasas is in terms of maintenance *durability* namely the absence of building fees and tuition fees that are set in size, in the sense of paying sincerely according to the economic capabilities of the student's family. In this case, there is no benchmark range lowest, highest, or average, so any amount is accepted. Apart from money, this madrasah receives building donations with various kinds of construction raw materials such as paving, sand, cement, or even light steel to progress the construction of facilities and infrastructure in this madrasah.

This policy implemented by madrasah heads and madrasah institutions has had an impact on a more open relationship between the institution and the parents so that the trust and cooperation of the various elements is well established with mutual trust in each other. Then, with a policy like this, some parents may also have a feeling of competing in

building this madrasa to support the quality of education for their children who study at this institution.

5) *Uniformity*

Implementation uniformity at MI Ma'arif Pulutan has been running very well, which can be seen from the equal service provided to all students regardless of background, ethnicity, religion, race, economic conditions, and so on. Apart from that, this implementation is considered good, there is also uniformity regarding the absence of canteens or traders so that they will bring provisions from home, so that students will not bring money except on Fridays, which is used to fill Friday charity.

So, parents or guardians of students whose sons and daughters have been accepted into this madrasa are previously informed about whether they are willing and ready to provide supplies for their sons and daughters every day by the agreement at the beginning of the year. The aim of the madrasa head in designing this policy is to avoid unhealthy and dangerous snacks.

c. Check

The Head of MI Ma'arif Pulutan, Salatiga City has his way of evaluating the performance of teaching teachers. The way the head of MI Ma'arif Pultan evaluates teachers is by monitoring the performance of the teachers, the methods are as follows:

- 1) Head Madrasa holds meetings at the beginning of the year on the curriculum development program and regular meetings which are held every two weeks on Saturdays, these meetings discuss the implementation of activities that will take place. The discussion discussed is related to how it is implemented, where the shortcomings are, and what steps must be taken to improve everything. After that, the head of the madrasah continued to provide his evaluation regarding the implementation of activities that had been running so that in the future they would run better.
- Carrying out checks on attendance and journals that have been filled in by teachers every day, attendance must not be late so that teachers must arrive

on time and fill in journals containing the material taught by the teacher every day.

d. Action

As a leader, of course, a madrasa head has follow-up actions related to problems experienced during the year, as does the head of MI Ma'arif Pulutan after holding monthly meetings as a follow-up regarding problems that have accumulated, namely by holding a grand deliberation that took place. at the end of the semester which serves to evaluate all activities that have taken place during one year of leadership. After the evaluation is held, there will also be discussions regarding what steps must be taken to overcome existing problems so that they do not occur in the following year.

Achievement of the Head's Strategy in Improving the Quality of Education at MI Ma'arif Pulutan, Salatiga City

The madrasa head as a leader is a vital tool for the continuity of education. Without a madrasa head, the managerial system will be less than optimal and will have an impact on the quality of education produced. Because of its important existence, the head of the madrasah is required to understand the strategies that will be implemented during his leadership, not only that but also be able to face the possibilities that he will encounter. Apart from that, as a leader, the head of a madrasah must have a high level of responsibility regarding what is being developed for him. The responsibility given to the head of the madrasah is not only limited to managing the personnel in the madrasah, but is also responsible for creating human resources who are professional, and responsible to parents, the community, and all related elements therein so that good management will have a positive impact. It is also good for developing the quality of education in the madrasah (Hairul Ulum, 2022).

The good performance of madrasah heads can be seen, one of them at MI Ma'arif Pulutan, as a private Islamic-based madrasah, MI Ma'arif Pulutan can compete with other madrasas in Salatiga City to provide the best service so that this madrasah students have an output which is also good whether in the academic or non-academic fields. The success of MI Ma'arif Pulutan in creating a culture of

quality education cannot be separated from the role of the madrasa head who can implement his strategy appropriately and efficiently.

The accuracy of targets in implementing strategies and making wise decisions from the head of the madrasah at MI Ma'arif Plutan can be seen from the success of students in participating in competitions which end in winners at the city, provincial, and national levels. The champions won by students at MI Ma'arif Pulutan each year always increased from previous years. One example of the achievements obtained by students at MI Ma'arif Pulutan is 1st Place in Mathematics and English in *competition Bright Olympiad Competition* won by Apik Swastika, 2nd Place in Kempo, Pencak Silat, and 3rd Place in the badminton event POPDA Salatiga City and 1st place in the national karate championship for the achievement of the AFE IYOS Festival Kemenpora trophy which was won by Shofiyya Siti Khadija.

CONCLUSION

In improving the quality of education, the head of MI Ma'arif Pulutan, Salatiga City, adopted Edward Deming's strategy, Plan, *Do, Check, Action* (PDCA), including the following: a) *Plan* (Planning), the head of the madrasa carries out planning to improve the quality of education, b) *Do* (Implementation), after the head of the madrasah has prepared a predetermined plan, then the head of the madrasah implements the program that has been planned to the maximum, c) *Check* (Evaluation), the head of the madrasah carries out an evaluation by holding annual meetings and regular meetings to find out whether the program is running well or whether there are still problems, d) *Action* (Follow-up), after the madrasah head holds a meeting with the teacher, it will be known what still needs to be improved from the program that has been implemented. That way, the madrasah head will follow up on obstacles found during the meeting.

Then, the results or achievements of the strategies carried out by the madrasa head can be seen from the achievements achieved by students at the city, provincial, and national levels as well as academic and non-academic achievements.

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