



# Contextual Determinants Of Effective Curriculum Implementation In Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

Curriculum as the impetus for knowledge and skill acquisition occupies a central position in the school's academic activities. This study investigated the contextual determinants of effective curriculum implementation in Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive research design of correlational type. Five hundred and forty-one (541) participants in the Southwest geopolitical zone of Nigeria, aged  $37 \pm 24.5$  years ( $M = 48.41$ ,  $SD = 3.75$ ), were selected through a stratified random sampling technique. The research instrument employed was a standardized questionnaire consisting of the demographic section and measures of quality and quantity of teachers, and students; infrastructural facilities, teaching methods, and availability of appropriate and relevant teaching and learning materials for effective curriculum implementation in Nigeria. The instrument reliability coefficients are 0.76 for contextual variables and  $r = 0.73$  for criterion variable respectively. The study answered three research questions using statistical tools like Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Regression analysis. The research questions are: (i) what is the relationship between contextual factors and effective curriculum implementation? (ii) would there be any significant joint contribution between contextual factors and effective curriculum implementation? and (iii) would there be any significant relative contribution of the contextual factors and effective curriculum implementation? The findings revealed significant relationships between the Contextual determinants (quality and quantity of teachers, quality, and quantity of students, infrastructural facilities, teaching methods, availability of relevant textbooks on relevant subjects) and Effective Curriculum Implementation indicators (availability of infrastructural facilities ( $r = 0.390$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ), relevant textbooks ( $r = 0.258$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ), method of teaching ( $r = 0.210$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) followed by quality of teachers ( $r = 0.183$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), followed by a number of teachers ( $r = 0.196$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) followed by quality of students ( $r = 0.313$ ,  $p < 0.05$  and finally quantity of students ( $r = 0.134$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Also, there was a significant joint contribution ( $R = 0.648$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). It further revealed that 40.8% ( $Adj R^2 = 0.408$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) of the quality and quantity of teachers, quality and quantity of students, infrastructural facilities, teaching methods, and availability of relevant textbooks on relevant subjects to effective curriculum implementation among the participants used in Southwest geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The effective curriculum implementation was due to the prediction of the independent variables (availability of infrastructural facilities ( $\beta = 0.194$ ,  $t = 3.494$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ); relevant textbooks ( $\beta = 0.109$ ,  $t = 1.966$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), teaching method ( $\beta = 0.118$ ,  $t = 3.341$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), quality of teachers ( $\beta = 0.107$ ,  $t = 2.816$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), quantity teachers ( $\beta = 0.189$ ,  $t = 2.479$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) followed by quality of students ( $\beta = 0.345$ ,  $t = 5.948$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and finally followed by a quantity of students ( $\beta = 0.724$ ,  $t = 3.948$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Based on this, it is concluded that the quality and quantity of teachers, quality and quantity of students, infrastructural facilities, teaching methods, and availability of relevant textbooks on relevant subjects are the determinants of effective curriculum implementation. Therefore, the study recommended that the government should provide the infrastructural facilities needed to enable the curriculum to be imparted

easily by the teachers. Also, it recommends that trained and qualified teachers must be employed to facilitate the interpretation of the curriculum. And finally that teacher should endeavor to be student-centered in interpreting the curriculum by utilizing various teaching methods to the understanding of the learners.

**Keywords:** Availability of teachers, Effective implementation, Contextual factors, Curriculum.

## INTRODUCTION

As the impetus for knowledge and skill acquisition, curriculum occupies a central position in school's academic activities. Curriculum can further be expressed as the organization and content of education for the development of the learners. Whichever curriculum, it needs to reflect the needs of society as society is not static but, a dynamic organism that changes as innovation and diffusion occur. Therefore, a curriculum should be constantly refreshed/reviewed in order to meet the dynamic needs, yearnings and aspirations of the people it is meant to serve.

Curriculum implementation entails putting into practice the officially prescribed courses of study, syllabuses, and subjects (Moris, 2002). The process involves helping the learner acquire knowledge or experience. It is vital to note that curriculum implementation cannot take place as the learner acquires the planned or intended experiences, knowledge, skills, ideas, and attitudes that are aimed at enabling the same learner to function effectively in a society (Ackerman, 2008). The curriculum is the way content is designed and developed. The process includes the structure, organization, and balance of the materials (Onyeache, 2008). According to Esu, Eukoha and Umoren (2004), curriculum implementation refers to how the planned or officially designed course of study is translated by the teacher into syllabuses, schemes of work and lessons to be delivered to learners. Its procedures for designing learning programmes were complex and sophisticated (Afangideh, 2009). This was partly due to the poor and over-hasty introduction of the new curriculum into schools, without teachers being sufficiently prepared for outcomes-based pedagogy, including continuous assessment. Teachers underwent in-service training to equip them, but this was even inadequate. Because of the lack of capacity in the zones in most schools to implement major changes as proposed. Because of these flaws and inadequacies, a review committee was established to look at the possibilities of refining the curriculum in 2005, and this led to the introduction of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), which was a refined version of outcomes-based education (Dehghani, 2009)). Implementing the new curriculum did not merely involve the direct application of plans. It was a dynamic organizational process shaped over time by interactions between projects, goals, methods, and the institutional setting (Gultig, Suarez-Orozco, & Oin-Hilliard, 2002). However, this author observes that teachers still use the traditional teaching method. Teachers must be willing to apply the new approach and must be able to articulate their ideas to make a meaningful contribution to the new curriculum implementation. Morris (2002) indicates that for educators to be self-motivated and committed to their objectives, the mutual relationship between teachers should be promoted, all stakeholders should be involved in planning the curriculum, and there should be opportunities for growth and more innovative and effective teaching methods. What becomes clear is the need for teacher education and for educators to grasp the challenges and opportunities to assert their power over shaping the curriculum process that will produce competent and confident teachers.

Curriculum experts have argued that curriculum making either at the development, design, implementation, or reformation level needs the input of critical stakeholders to be relevant, meaningful, and adequate to meet the needs of the people for whom it has been put together. The curriculum is being construed as learning activities that make up a particular education system. Ackerman (2008) in his examination of cognitive development theory explained in detail how the curriculum is sequenced in schools. In Nigeria, for instance, the secondary school curriculum is designed to encourage all students to achieve their spiritual, intellectual and social potential and to understand the relevance of learning in their daily lives. It is important to note that it is one thing to develop/design a curriculum. It is another thing to implement it effectively. Objectives of any level of education cannot be achieved if the planned program for such a level of education is not well implemented. Onyeachu (2008) observed that implementation is important no matter how well a curriculum of any subject is planned, designed and documented.

The issues of policy clarity, content gap, and resource constraints are a cause for concern to the effective implementation of the curriculum. According to Mahomed (2004), “the more you know, the more you can be specific about what else you need training on.” If there is a content gap, it would be difficult for a teacher to identify an area in which he/she needs development. Other teachers prefer more structure and guidance; some are even more rigid in their approach and thus need greater support (Smit, 2001).

Many researchers (Smit, 2001; Mahomed, 2004; Onyeachu, 2008; Okebukola, 2004; and Afangideh, 2009) have worked on problems confronting the implementation of the curriculum in our various educational settings without consideration for the combined predictive effects of teachers' quality, teachers' quantity, availability of infrastructural facilities, students' quality, students' quantity, availability of relevant textbooks and teachers' teaching methods. Therefore, this study intends to look at these factors' effectiveness as determinants of Nigeria's curriculum implementation.

Due to contextual challenges experienced by educators (such as teachers' quality, teachers' quantity, students' quality, students' quantity, lack of infrastructural facilities, lack of relevant textbooks and method of teaching) on curriculum implementation has proved problematic to the Culture of teaching and learning in schools in Nigeria. If left unaddressed, these matters will have far-reaching consequences not only for our education system but also for the human resource development and national development as well. Currently, some of our schools' teachers are not trained or oriented in terms of the national curriculum studies nor oriented on the implementation of the national curriculum studies. No matter how beautifully planned it may be, any curriculum will be of no relevance if it is not implemented. It is, therefore, important that the curriculum be duly implemented. An implementation process will begin with a critical consideration of all means of making it work. Therefore, the education curriculum in Nigeria has been far from realization because of some of the implementation challenges it is faced with. Therefore, this study is interested in determining the challenges faced while implementing the Nigeria curriculum.

#### **Purpose of the study**

This study aims to establish the contextual determinants of effective curriculum implementation in Nigeria. These contextual determinants were observed by the researcher as a result of accumulated experiences at curriculum delivery at work. The specific objectives of the study are to:

- i) Establish the pattern of relationships between the contextual factors and effective curriculum implementation in Nigeria.
- ii) Determine the composite contribution of the contextual factors on effective curriculum implementation in Nigeria.
- iii) Determine the contextual factors' relative contribution to effective curriculum implementation in Nigeria.

#### **Research questions**

- 1:** What is the relationship between contextual factors and effective curriculum implementation?
- 2:** Would there be any significant joint contribution between contextual factors and effective curriculum implementation?
- 3:** Would there be any significant relative contribution of the contextual factors and effective curriculum implementation?

#### **METHODS**

**Research design:** The study utilizes a descriptive research design of the correlational type to investigate the contextual factors as determinants of effective curriculum implementation among education stakeholders in Nigeria. The design is suitable for this study since the researcher need not manipulate any variable in the study but observe the variables in their naturalness.

**Population:** The population of the study comprised all teachers in various categories from primary schools, secondary schools, colleges of education, polytechnics, and universities across Nigeria.

**Sample and sampling technique:** A stratified random sampling technique was used for the selection of the participants for the study. This is because of the heterogeneity of their place of primary assignment and the type of students they come across in their chosen professions. Based on this, an inference was drawn, and a generalization was made on the study population. The participants of this study are teachers

across the country, Nigeria. In all, five hundred and forty-one participants (541) were selected for the study. The sample size was determined by using the sample size determination formula of Samog. The sample consists of male and female teachers in the ratio of 1:3 and ratio of 2:1 for the elementary and tertiary institutions, respectively. The ratio occurred as results that in Nigeria there are more female teachers than the male teachers in the elementary school and vice-versa.

### **Instrumentation**

The researcher designed the instruments used to collect data: The quality and quantity of teachers' Scale (QOTS): It has 22 items, 12 were measured the quality of teachers, while the remaining ten items measured the number of teachers. The Psychometric properties of the instruments were determined, and the reliability and content validity coefficient was 0.78. The response format was 4- a point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The quality and quantity of students Scale (QQSS): It was also constructed by the researcher to measure the students' quality and quantity and was found relevant for this study. It has a reliability coefficient of 0.86. The response format was 4 - a point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). This scale has 13 items, but seven were used to measure the quality of the students, and the rest six were used to measure the students' quantity. The items have internal validity of 0.76 and a reliability coefficient of 0.73. The Availability of infrastructural amenities Scale (AIAS): The researcher developed this scale to assess the availability of teaching materials in various disciplines across the school. It has ten items. It has a reliability coefficient of 0.79, and a 4-point response format of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). On methods of teaching, the scale used is the Method of Teaching Scale (MTS): This was developed for this study by the researcher on various methods that the teachers perceived could be used to impart knowledge. It has eight items and it was used for this study. The reliability coefficient of MTS is 0.72 using the test-retest method. It has 4 point response format of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly disagree (SD). Section 'E' tapped information on the availability of relevant textbooks, and (ARTBS) was used to measure this factor with a checklist of 15 items and has a reliability coefficient of 0.81. Finally, an instrument on Curriculum Implementation Problem Scale (CIPS) was used to measure the challenges faced in implementing curriculum in schools (which is the criterion variable). Apart from section A, each section of the scale adopted 4-point response formats ranging from strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), and strongly disagree (SD). The reliability coefficient of the instrument was determined and found to be 0.79 using Cronbach alpha.

### **Procedure for the administration of instruments**

The researcher visited the schools and distributed the questionnaire on factors considered to impede effective curriculum delivery in schools in Nigeria. This was done after the researcher explained the study's purpose to the participants in selected schools to get permission for data collection. The instrument was administered with the assistance of trained research assistants. This ensured that adequate information was passed across to the teachers on its purpose, while confidentiality was also assured.

**Method of Data Analysis:** The data collected for this study were analyzed using inferential statistics of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Multiple Regression analysis. The data were analyzed using SPSS Version 21 Statistical Software package. The research questions were answered taken  $\alpha = 0.05$  level of significance.

**RESULTS**

**Research Question One:** *What is the pattern of relationships among the independent variables (quality and quantity of teachers, quality and quantity of students, infrastructural facilities, teaching methods, availability of relevant textbooks on relevant subjects) on effective curriculum implementation in Nigeria?*

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Correlations among the variables**

S/N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Mean	SD
Infrastructure	1								29.85	7.10
T Books	.010	1							30.77	5.62
T Method	.160**	-.080	1						33.91	6.93
Qty Trs	.220**	-.108	.086	1					35.30	6.24
Qty Trs	.301**	-.110**	.104	.447**	1				43.48	10.47
Qty Lnrs	.050	.413**	.095	.042	.019	1			20.54	2.50
Qty Lnrs	.200**	.174**	.127**	.071	.036	.395**	1		23.68	3.04
Qty Lnrs/Curr	.390**	.258**	.196**	.183**	.210**	.313**	.134**	1	67.02	3.25

1- Infrastructure, 2 – relevant textbook, 3 – method of teaching 4 – the quality of teacher, 5 – quantity of teachers 6 – the quality of students, 7 – quantity of students and Curriculum implementation

Table 1 shows the variables' mean, Standard Deviation, and zero-order correlation. It was observed that there was significant relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable (curriculum implementation). All the variables are significantly correlated with effective curriculum implementation in this study an indication that they are potent determinants of effective curriculum implementation.

**Research Question Two:** *What is the joint contribution of teachers' quality, teachers' quantity, students' quality, students' quantity, infrastructural facilities, teaching methods, availability of relevant textbooks on relevant subjects on effective curriculum implementation in Nigeria?*

**Table 4.2: Joint contribution of the independent variables**

R = 0.439	R – Square = 0.192	Adj. R Square = 0.176	Std. Error of the Estimate = 4.50979		
Regression ANOVA Table					
Variables	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	1433.476	7	204.782	18.164	0.000
Residual	6020.115	534	11.274		
Total	7453.591	541			

- a. Predictors: (Constant), quality and quantity of teachers, quality and quantity of students, infrastructural facilities, teaching methods, availability of relevant textbooks on relevant subjects
- b. Dependent Variable: Curriculum implementation

Table 2 shows that there was the joint contribution of the independent variables (quality and quantity of teachers, quality and quantity of students, infrastructural facilities, teaching methods, availability of relevant textbooks on relevant subjects) of curriculum implementation among school teachers in Nigeria;  $R = 0.439, p < .05$ . The table further reveals 17.6% ( $Adj. R^2 = 0.176$ ) of the variance in the curriculum implementation among teachers in Nigeria were accountable for by the linear combination of the independent variables. The ANOVA results from the regression analysis show a significant contribution of the independent variables on the dependent variables;  $F(7, 534) = 18.164, p < 0.05$ . It implies a joint contribution of the independent variables on curriculum implementation among teachers in Nigeria.

**Research Question Three:** *What is the relative contribution of teachers' quality, teachers' quantity, students' quality, students' quantity, infrastructural facilities, teaching methods, and availability of relevant textbooks on relevant subjects on effective curriculum implementation in Nigeria?*

**Table 3:** Relative Contribution of the Independent Variables on the Dependent Variable

Model	Unstandardized	Coefficients	Standardized	t	Sig
	B	Std Error	Beta		
Constant	13.326	2.369		5.625	0.000
Infrastructure	0.185	0.053	0.194	3.494	0.001
Textbooks	0.136	0.023	0.109	1.561	0.120
Teaching methods	0.123	0.068	0.118	3.341	0.033
Quality of teachers	0.107	0.059	0.107	2.966	0.045
Quantity of teachers	0.184	0.057	0.089	1.479	0.140
Quality of students	0.115	0.019	0.345	5.948	0.000
Quantity of students	0.531	0.071	0.274	3.924	0.000

a Dependent Variable: curriculum implementation

Table 3 above shows that all seven independent variables significantly contribute to curriculum implementation among the teachers or participants used for the study in Nigeria. The variables include the following: availability of infrastructural facilities ( $\beta = 0.194$ ,  $t = 3.494$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ); relevant textbooks ( $\beta = 0.109$ ,  $t = 1.966$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), teaching method ( $\beta = 0.118$ ,  $t = 3.341$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), quality of teachers ( $\beta = 0.107$ ,  $t = 2.816$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), quantity teachers ( $\beta = 0.189$ ,  $t = 2.479$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) followed by quality of students ( $\beta = 0.345$ ,  $t = 5.948$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and finally followed by a quantity of students ( $\beta = 0.724$ ,  $t = 3.948$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). It was observed that the availability of infrastructural facilities was the most potent contributor to curriculum implementation among the selected teachers for the study in Nigeria, while the number of students was the least. It implies a relative contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable.

## DISCUSSION

This study aimed to determine the challenges of curriculum implementation among the major education stakeholder viewpoints in primary school, secondary school, colleges of education, polytechnics, monotechnics, and universities in Nigeria. Seven factors were considered: teachers' quality, quality, quantity, quality, quantity, infrastructure facilities, teaching methods, and availability of relevant textbooks on relevant subjects on curriculum implementation were estimated by the participants. Based on the study results, the major problem is the unavailability of infrastructural facilities to teach the curriculum at various levels of education and the lack of teachers' quality and quantity.

This study's findings reveal a significant relationship between the Contextual Determinants (effective curriculum implementation of the teachers teaching in various school settings in Nigeria). Thus, it could be said that teachers' quality, teachers' quantity, students' quality, students' quantity, infrastructural facilities, teaching methods, and availability of relevant textbooks on relevant subjects are crucial to effective curriculum implementation in Nigeria. The finding supports Garba (2004), which noted that before the curriculum implementation can be successful and accomplish the required objectives, the education stakeholders would have to see to the challenges that are facing the effective curriculum. He also noted that effective curriculum implementation depends on teachers' quality, quantity, content mastery, and teaching methods. It requires that teachers believe in their ability to solve problems and use modern-day equipment to teach the learners. This is in line with NTI (2000), which stated that a teacher's ability to use infrastructural amenities such as machine tools, computers, etc is a way to eliminate challenges of curriculum implementation and the subjective norm.

Afangideh (2009) found a similar result. According to Afangideh (2009), it can be said that when teachers are asked to implement a curriculum, they select the topics or parts of the curriculum based on their

content knowledge, preferences, and personal views. This results in some personally preferred and non-qualified assignments, which are the origin of serious problems, especially frequent unexpected curriculum changes. While the assigned teachers may have expected competencies, their assignment for a position requiring other competencies than the current teachers has worsened the status. Previous research showed that incorrect and personal preferences in recruiting teachers (Alade, 2011), together with frequent and tremendous changes of teachers due to poor remuneration (Morris, 2002), have caused inefficacy of teaching in Nigerian education. Singh (2012) found that correct teaching skill background and previous experience have main roles in selecting and recruiting competent teachers.

Also, this finding corroborates the finding of Gultig, Suarez-Orozco and Oin-Hilliard (2002) who discovered that curriculum implementation involves the daily classroom activities that the teacher is involved in, that monitor students' progress and evaluate the performance of the students. Teachers are responsible for implementing the newly introduced curriculum and deciding if it has the desired effect on student learning. According to Gultig, Suarez-Orozco, and Oin-Hilliard (2002), to perform the assigned tasks, teachers rely upon the curriculum materials, the teaching methodology, content knowledge of the curriculum and their experiences.

The study further reveals that there was a joint contribution of the independent variables (teachers' quality, teachers' quantity, students' quality, students' quantity, infrastructural facilities, teaching methods, and availability of relevant textbooks on relevant subjects) on effective curriculum implementation among teachers and education stakeholders. The finding is in tandem with Esu, Eukoha, and Umoren (2004), who discovered that the challenges of curriculum implementation could shape the Nation's development. The Nation's development will be further facilitated by his/her ability to effectively provide logistics in implementing curriculum implementation. This could enhance human accomplishment and well-being in numerous ways. Also, Cardno (2003) stressed further that the challenges of curriculum implementation would provide the foundation for human motivation, well-being, and personal accomplishment. It is also supported by Kyahurwa (2013), who posited that Nation progresses when curriculum implementation challenges are reduced or completely eliminated.

This study revealed that teachers' quality, quantity, students' quality, quantity, infrastructural facilities, teaching methods, and availability of relevant textbooks on relevant subjects significantly contribute to effective curriculum implementation among teachers and education stakeholders. It was observed that the availability of relevant textbooks was the most potent contributor, followed by teaching methods and availability of teaching infrastructural facilities to effective curriculum implementation among teachers teaching in our national education sector, while self-quantity of the students was the least. The findings from research question three showed that the relative contribution of the independent variables on the dependent variable was significant. The availability of relevant textbooks and teaching methods has been found to influence teachers' effective curriculum implementation. The findings of this study were in line with that of Gultig, Suarez-Orozco, and Oin-Hilliard (2002), who posited that improved teaching methods and availability of relevant textbooks are factors serving as challenges to effective curriculum implementation among teachers in Nigeria.

#### **Implication of the study**

This study established the contextual determinants of effective curriculum implementation in Nigeria educational system and successfully added to the body of knowledge by developing a statistical tool that is useful for measuring impediments to effective curriculum implementation in Nigeria. Therefore, the implication is that curriculum developers need to take cognizance of effective curriculum implementation in Nigeria educational system. Poor implementation of curriculum will not allow the Nigeria graduates to compete favourably with their counterparts elsewhere.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The major problems confronting curriculum implementation in this country are of three types: the problem of infrastructural facilities, the quality and quantity of teachers, and students. If a curriculum meets the yearning and aspiration of a country and there is no infrastructure to back it up, then there is no curriculum. Also, if there is the availability of infrastructural facilities and there are not enough quality

and quantity teachers to interpret it, there is no curriculum. Finally, suppose there is the availability of infrastructure and quality and quantity. In that case, teachers are also available, but there are no quality and quantity students to be taught there is no good curriculum. The reason is that the effect and impact of the curriculum cannot be felt without the interaction of the triune. Therefore, for effective curriculum implementation, the availability of infrastructural facilities, the quality and quantity of teachers and the quality and quantity of students are under must.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it was clear that the teachers who participated in the study were fully aware of the challenges confronting curriculum implementation in Nigeria. I, therefore, provide the following recommendations to serve as means of awareness to education stakeholders to work upon that:

- 1) The government should provide the infrastructural facilities needed to enable the curriculum to be imparted easily by the teachers.
- 2) Trained and qualified teachers must be employed to facilitate the interpretation of the curriculum.
- 3) Teachers should endeavor to be student-centered in interpreting the curriculum by utilizing various teaching methods to understand the learners.
- 4) Enough qualified teachers must be employed to lower the burden and overloaded on the parts of few available teachers.
- 5) Admission into schools must be based on merit, not other factors, to be educable students.
- 6) The government must provide relevant textbooks relevant to the curriculum in use in schools.

### Limitations

The sample consisted randomly of selected teachers from primary school to university level in Nigeria which may limit the generalization of the results. In the sense that some of the participants are not ready to disclose the challenges they are facing in the course of implementing curriculum for fear of being witch-hunted by the government.

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