

# Career Changing as Perceived by Nurses and its Relation to their Job Satisfaction

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**Abstract:** Nurses have difficult working conditions that affect their job satisfaction, health, and quality of life, leading to losing competent and qualified nurses through turnover and career changing. **Aim:** The present study aimed to assess nurses' perception toward career changing and its relation to their job satisfaction. **Research Design:** Descriptive correlational design was used to conduct this study. **The study sample was:** a simple random sample of staff nurses who are working in Medical and Surgical departments at Benha University Hospital (N = 240 staff nurses). **Two instruments were used for data collection;** Nurses' perception questionnaire, **and** nurses' job satisfaction questionnaire. **The study results and conclusion** showed that, the majority of the staff nurses had a high perception level toward career changing, the majority of staff nurses had a low job satisfaction level, and there was a highly statistical negative correlation between staff nurses' perception toward career changing and their job satisfaction. **Recommendation;** there should be a clear job description for staff nurses, nurses should have an opportunity to participate in decision making, improving salary, giving rewards and incentives to nurses in case of good performance, implementing career ladder to give nurses chance for promotion, implementing in-service training programs for nurses according to their learning needs.

**Key words:** Career Changing -Nurses' Perception- Job Satisfaction

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## **Introduction:**

Nursing is honorable profession, and nurses are the heart and soul of the healthcare system. Nurses are a health care professional who are engaged in the practice of nursing. They are responsible for the treatment, safety and recovery of acutely or chronically ill or injured people, health maintenance of the healthy, and treatment of life-threatening emergencies in a wide range of health care settings along with other health care professionals. Nurses develop working collaboratively with physicians, therapists, the patient, the patient's family and other team members(*Grace, 2013*).

Career changing is the movement of a person from one group to another, the client, location, and employer are the same but the skill set is different (*Perna, 2013*). Career changing requires new primary skills or knowledge, and totally different environment, that means shifting to different field requiring different expertise (*Perry, 2014*).

Unhealthy work environment is one of the causes of career changing. As health is not merely the absence of real and perceived threats to health, but a place of physical, mental, and social well-being. Healthy work environment is to provide safe, empowering,

and satisfying. A healthy job is likely to be one where the pressures on employees are appropriate in relation to their abilities and resources, to the amount of control they have over their work, and to the support they receive from people who matter to them. A healthy working environment is one in which there is not only an absence of harmful conditions but a plenty of health-promoting ones (*Grady, 2016*).

Nurses make career changes for so many reasons as salary, personal reasons, career advancement, education, retirement, scheduling, stress, work load, poor management style, lack of empowerment and autonomy, lack of opportunity for promotion due to deficiency of supplies, job dissatisfaction, relocation, these reasons lead to negatively influence the quality of care and patient satisfaction, increasing level of turn over even between new nurses, (*Renpening, Taylor and Pickens, 2016*).

Satisfaction is defined as a pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job, an affective reaction to one's job, and an attitude towards one's job. It can be an important indicator of how employees feel about their jobs and a predictor of work's behavior such as organizational citizenship, absenteeism, and turnover. It can also partially mediate the relationship of personality variables and deviant work behaviors. A job satisfaction is correlated with life satisfaction (*Ofovwe, Ofili, Ojetu, and Okosun, 2013*).

For the success of any organization, job satisfaction has vital importance. The employees who are satisfied are the biggest assets to an organization whereas the dissatisfied employees are the biggest liabilities

(*Khadilkar, 2017*). Job satisfaction is the result of employee perception of how well the job provides those things that are viewed important. Nurses' job satisfaction is examined with variables such as empowerment, nurse staffing, autonomy, safety climate, and burn out, and these variables affect patient care outcomes (*Fitzpatrick, 2017*).

Finally, the shortage of nurses and high rates of career changing are associated with lower job satisfaction, higher probability of medical errors, increased over time hours, conflict in the unit, prolonged stay of clients, and high costs. On the other hand, lower nurses' career changing is associated with a higher proportion of full time worked hours, improved mental health, higher quality care, increased job satisfaction (*Qudrat-ullah, and Tasis, 2017*).

### **Aim of the study**

The aim of this study was to assess the staff nurses perception about career changing and its relation to their job satisfaction.

### **Research Question**

1. What is the nurses' perception toward career changing?
2. What is the level of job satisfaction among staff nurses?
3. Is there any relation between nurses' perception toward career changing and their job satisfaction?

### **Methods**

The methodology of the current study will be portrayed according to the following four designs:

**I. Technical Design:-**

The technical design includes study design, study setting, subjects and methods and tools that used in data collection.

**Research Design:-**

Descriptive correlational research study was utilized to conduct this study.

**Setting:-**

This study was conducted at inpatient units of Medical and Surgical departments at Benha University Hospital. The total number of bed at this hospital is (880).The hospital composed of three separated buildings; Medical building (478 beds), Surgical building (384 beds) and Ophthalmology building (18 beds). There was nine Critical Care units (Intensive care unit (ICU), Medium ICU, Emergency ICU, Hepatic ICU, Coronary care unit (CCU), Chest ICU, Chest and Heart ICU, Pediatric ICU and incubator unit).The total numbers of the studied units were 27 units.

**The study sample**

A simple random sample was used to choose staff nurses, who are working in the above mentioned study setting by writing the name of the staff nurses on bits of paper, put them in a box, mixed up thoroughly and picked up the specified number (n) from this box according to the sample size.

The sample size was 240 female staff nurses, according the following equation:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

(n) = is the sample size

(N) = is the total number of staff nurses who are working in the above mentioned study setting

(e) = is co efficient factor = 0.05

**Instruments of data collection:** To collect data for this study the following tools were used:

**The first tool: Nurses` Perception Questionnaire.** It consists of two parts;

**Part (1):** Personal characteristics of staff nurses; concerned with (age, marital status, educational qualification, and years of experience, Place of work).

**Part (2): Perception questionnaire.**

This questionnaire was developed by the researcher based on reviewing the literature (*Wilkes, Cowin, and Johnson, 2013; Catalano, 2015; Black, 2016 and Mark, 2016*). It was used to assess perception of staff nurses toward career changing. It was consisted of (61) items divided into three categories:

**Table (c):** Perception categories.

No	Perception categories	No of Items
1	Causes of choosing nursing as a career items	6
2	Career changing from your point of view items	11
3	Causes of career changing, which divided into three subcategory	44
	◆ Properties and policy of work place items.	16
	◆ Personal and social factors items.	21
	◆ Financial factors items.	7

- Responses of the applicants were measured on three point Likert scale as follow, 2 (agree), 1 (uncertain) and 0 (disagree).

**Table (a):** Scoring system of total perception It was determined based on *Hoff (2016)*, as the following:-

**Low perception;** means <60% of total perception score = < 109 score, while **moderate perception** from 60<75% of total

perception score =  $109 < 137$  score, and **high perception** if  $\geq 75\%$  of total perception score =  $\geq 137$  score.

**The second tool: Nurses` job satisfaction questionnaire:** this questionnaire was developed by (*Hamouda, 2016*) and modified by researcher based on reviewing the related literature; *Ofovwe Ofili, Ojetu, and Okosun (2013), Pender (2014), El Shahat (2014), Pablos Particia, Tennysons, and Robert (2016) and Altio, Mills, and Mills (2017)*. It was used to assess staff nurses` job satisfaction level, it was consisted of (71) items divided into seven categories as the following:-

**Table (a):** Nurses` job satisfaction categories.

No	Nurses` job satisfaction categories	No. of items
1	Hospital policy items.	5
2	Work environment items.	15
3	Psychiatric state items.	5
4	Work relation items.	18
5	Achievement at work items.	18
6	Safety at work items.	5
7	Salaries and incentive items.	5

- Responses of the applicants were measured on three point Likert scale as follow, 2 (yes), 1 (sometimes) and 0 (no).

**Table (b):** Scoring system of total job satisfaction: it was determined based on *Hamouda (2016)*, as the following:-

<60% of total job satisfaction score = <128 score	Low level
60<75% of total job satisfaction score = 128<160 score	Moderate level
$\geq 75\%$ of total job satisfaction score = $\geq 160$ score	High level

## II. Official approval

An official permission was issued from Dean of the Faculty of Nursing to the Director of Benha University Hospital to obtain the approval for data collection, the objectives and the nature of the study were explained and then it was possible to carry out the study with minimum resistance.

## III. Methods

### Preparatory phase

- ◆ A review of the past, current Arabic and English related literature covering various aspects of the problem was done, using available books, articles, periodicals, and magazines to get acquainted with the research problem and develop the study tools.
- ◆ **Validity of the study tools** (face and content) were tested by a panel of five experts on field of Nursing Administration and Community Nursing (three Assist Professors in Nursing Administration at Tanta University, one Assist Professors in Nursing Administration at Menoufia University, and one Assist Professor in Community department at Benha University).

#### ◆ Reliability of tool

Reliability of nurses perception toward career changing questionnaire was measured by using **Cronbach`s alpha** and the value was ( $\alpha=0.86$ ), and staff nurses job satisfaction questionnaire was measured by using **Cronbach`s alpha** and the value was ( $\alpha=0.93$ ).

- ◆ **Pilot study;** was conducted to assess tools clarity and applicability. It has also served in estimating the time needed for filling the form .The study was tested on 10 % of total subjects, it was done on 25staff nurses from Benha University Hospital. These nurses were included in the main subjects. The necessary clarification for some statements related to their translation to Arabic was done.

### **Implementation phase**

Each nurse was interviewed after explaining the purpose of the study and getting agreement of staff nurses to participate in the research.

- Data had been collected from staff nurses in the above mentioned study at Benha University Hospital.
- Collection of data took two months at Benha University Hospital from beginning of March / 2017 to the end of April /2017, the researcher applied interview for study sample for three days peer a week.
- The time needed to complete questionnaire sheet was (15:20) minute.
- The appropriate time of data collection was according to type of work and work load of each department, sometimes it was in the middle of the shift and other time before the end of the shift.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The study was conducted with careful attention to ethical standards of research and rights of the participants:-

### ▪ **Informed consent:**

The respondent rights will be protected by ensuring voluntary participation, so the informed consent will be obtained by explaining purpose, nature time of conducting the study , potential benefits of the study, how data will be collected, any invasive procedure ,expected outcomes and the respondent rights to withdrawing from the research study at any time in case of violation of his rights.

### ▪ **Anonymity and confidentiality:**

The respondent was assured that the data will be treated as strictly confidential; furthermore, the respondent anonymity will be maintained as they will not require mentioning their names.

### ▪ **Scientific honesty:**

To ensure scientific honesty, the researcher uses bucketing and intuiting to avoid bias.

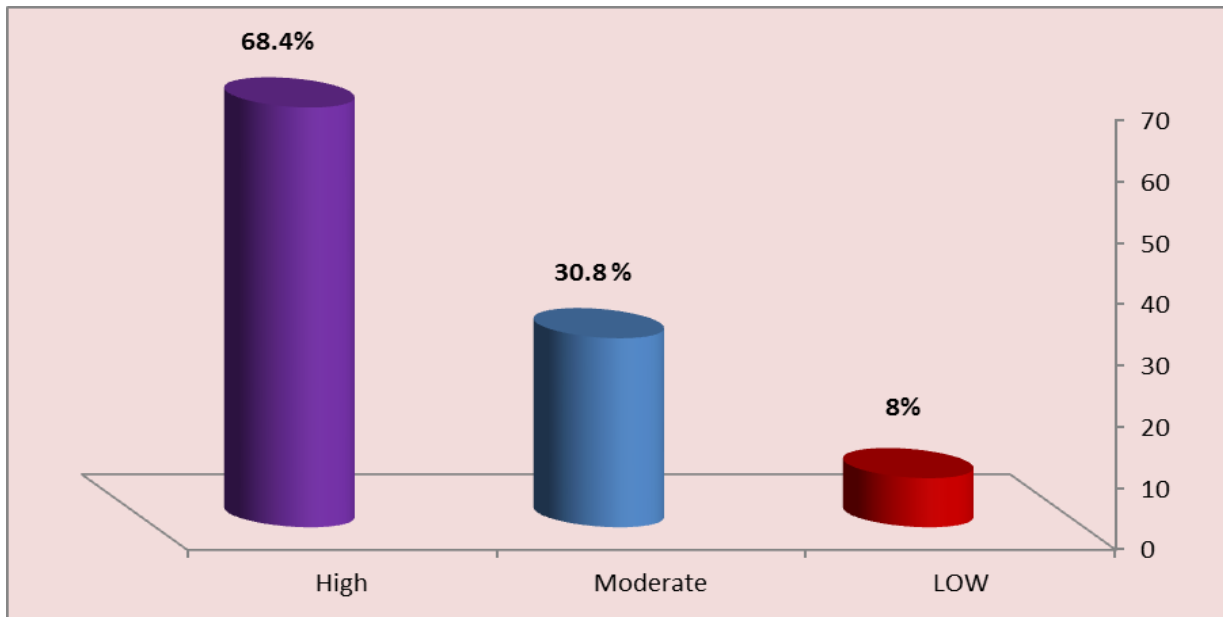
## **IV. Statistical Design**

Data were verified prior to entry into the computer. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS, Version twenty) was used for that purpose, followed by data analysis and tabulation. Descriptive statistics were applied quantitative data (e.g., means, stander deviation, frequency and percentages). A significant level value was considered when  $p\text{-value} \leq 0.05$  and a highly significance level was considered when  $p\text{-value} \leq 0.001$

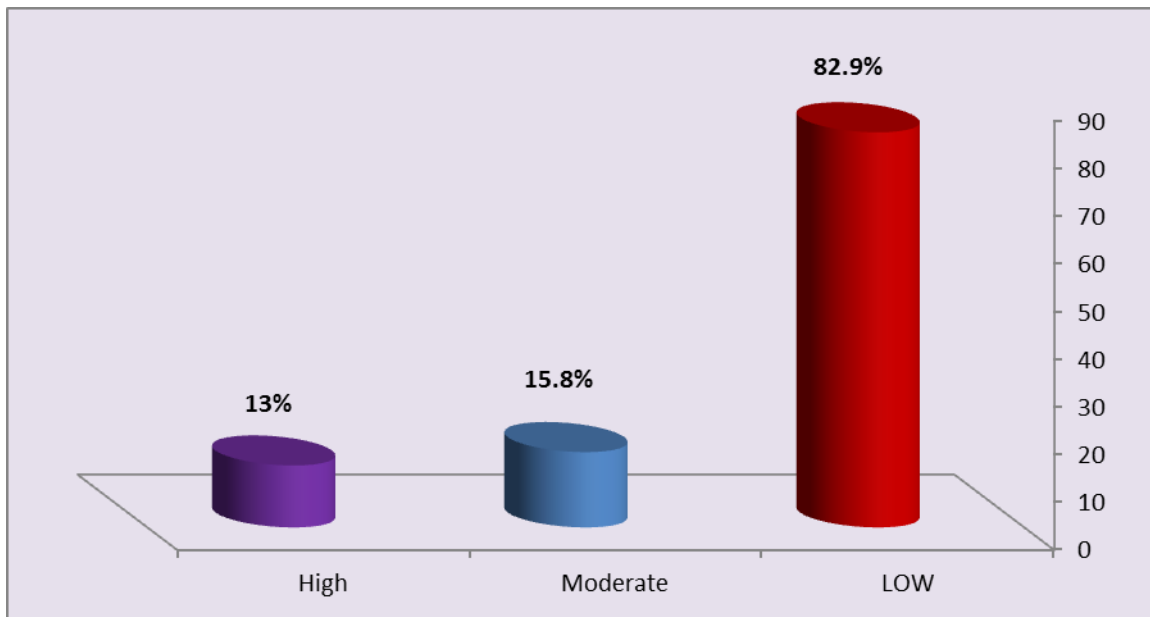
## **Results**

**Table (1): Percentage Distribution of Staff Nurses According to their Personal Characteristics (N= 240).**

<b>Personal characteristics</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Age</b>		
<b>20 to &lt;30</b>	98	40.8
<b>30 to &lt;40</b>	111	46.3
<b>≥40</b>	31	12.9
$X \pm SD = 32.47 \pm 6.26$		
<b>Marital status</b>		
Married	226	94.2
Single	14	5.8
<b>Qualification</b>		
Diploma in nursing	134	55.8
Associated degree in nursing	83	34.6
Bachelor degree of nursing	23	9.6
<b>Years of experience</b>		
From <b>1</b> to <b>&lt;5</b> years	26	10.8
From <b>5</b> to <b>&lt;10</b> years	60	25.0
From <b>10</b> to <b>&lt;15</b> years	71	29.6
From <b>15</b> years and more	83	34.6
$X \pm SD = 13.17 \pm 6.9$		



**Figure (1): Distribution of Staff Nurses According to Total Perception Level toward Career Changing (N=240).**



**Figure (2): Distribution of Staff Nurses According to Total Job Satisfaction levels (N=240).**

**Table (2): Correlation between total Perception Score and total Job Satisfaction Score of the Staff Nurses (N =240).**

Variable	Total perception score	
	r	p-value
Total Job Satisfaction score	-0.56	0.000**

\*\*A highly statistical significance

**Table (1):** Showed that there was nearly half of staff nurses (46.3%) had age from 30 to less than 40 with a mean score (32.47±6.26). According to marital status, the majority of staff nurses (94.2%) were married. As regarding to qualification more than half of staff nurses (55.8%) had diplomat in nursing, and more than one third of staff nurses (34.6%) had from 15 years and more with mean years of experience (13.17±6.9).

**Figure (1):** Illustrated that more than two third of staff nurses (68.4%) had high perception level toward career changing, while less than one third of staff nurses (30.8%) had moderate perception level toward career changing, and the minority of staff nurses (0.8%) had low perception level toward career changing.

**Figure (2):** Presented that the most of staff nurses (82.9%) had a low job satisfaction level, followed by (15.8%) of them had a moderate job satisfaction level while, the minority of staff nurses (1.3%) had a high job satisfaction level.

**Table (2):** Showed that there was a highly statistical negative correlation between staff nurses` perception toward career changing and their job satisfaction. When

staff nurses` job satisfaction decrease, their perception toward career changing increase.

**Discussion:**

Moreover, nurses who make career changing might have a number of reasons as they feel that they are no longer emotionally or physically up to the demands of hospital work and patient needs. They want shorter workdays, they want to spend more time at home with family on weekends and holidays. They may be frustrated by caring for patients who are ill because of poor lifestyle choices, interested in preventing disease and accidents, ready to work independently (*Loschiavo, 2015*). The other main causes to make nursing career changing is nurses` job satisfaction, satisfaction and dissatisfaction are driven by different factors, motivation and hygiene factors. An employee`s motivation to work is continually related to job satisfaction of a subordinate (*Morris, 2014*).

The results of the present study indicated that the highest percentage of staff nurses had age ranged from 30 to less than 40 years old. According to their gender, all studied staff nurses were female. In relation to marital status, the majority of study sample



were married. As regarding to educational qualification the highest percentage of them had diploma in nursing. According to years of experience, the highest percentage of them had years of experience from 15 years and more.

This finding is consistent with *Trivellas, Reklitis and Platis (2013)* who conducted a study about the effect of job related stress on employees` job satisfaction, and reported that ,the highest percentage of the participants were female staff nurses in age group 30 - 40 years old . Also, the highest percentage of the subjects had diploma in nursing education.

This finding is also consistent with *Jagadale and Chinchpure (2016)* who conducted a study about "a descriptive study to assess the job satisfaction among the nursing staff of selected hospital of Pune City", he indicated that staff nurses' ages ranged between 30 years and 40 years. High percentage of the subjects` gender were female and had diploma in nursing education. The highest percentage of the subjects were married.

The finding of the current study revealed that more than two thirds of staff nurses had high perception level toward career changing. From the researcher opinion, this might be due to staff nurses are suffering (personally, socially, physically, and financially) in that job, staff nurses with critical work conditions who have family and kids had high level of career changing, they have hard physical work, and different shifts, they have not time to spend with their kids and families, so, they have so many personal conflicts and, no increasing in salary fit with daily expensive life so, most of them want to

change their career.

This result was supported by *Flinkman, Bouret, and Salantera, (2013)* who conducted a study about "Yong Registered Nurses Intention to Leave The Profession and Professional Turn Over in Early Career; A Qualitative Case Study" reported that the work content of nursing was demanding, and the nursing practice environment was not ideal in terms of nurse-patient ratios, rush, shift hours, and general appreciation. Nurses felt tired because they could not provide as adequate nursing care as they were willing.. Not being able to do one's best and not being able to influence working conditions were in contradiction with the talent and ambitions of these nurses.

This finding is congruent with *Mason, Leavitt, and Chaffee (2013)* who conducted a study about "Policy and Politics in Nursing and Healthcare" found that more than half of the outgoing nurses want to change the profession. In the same line, *Sherwood and Barnsteiner, (2016)* who conducted a study about "quality and safety in nursing: A competency approach to improving outcomes", found that the majority of staff nurses had high perception level toward career changing.

On the other hand, this is in contrast with findings of *Fensch (2015)* who conducted a study about "Associated Press Coverage of a Major Disaster" where the majority of nurses are not interested to change the nursing profession.

The present study revealed that the most of studied nurses had low level of job satisfaction. From the researcher point of view, this might be due to there is no private

residence for nurses to spend their leisure, there is no nursery for nurses' children, weak sense of security and stability in the work, there is no increasing in salary to be fit with continuous expensive living and life demands all these factors lead to dissatisfaction among nurses.

In the same way, *Potocan, Mustafa, and Nedelko (2016)* who conducted a study about "Handbook of Research on Managerial Solutions in Non-Profit Organizations Advances in Public Policy and Administration" identified generally nurses' job satisfaction is at a low level in Turkey and in the same respect *Hoff (2016)* who conducted a study about "The Healthcare Professional Workforce: Understanding Human Capital in a Changing Industry" and found that the nurses' job satisfaction was to be the lowest among the health professional groups.

In addition, *Cortese (2012)* who conducted a study about "Predictors of Critical Care Nurses' Intention to Leave The unit, the Hospital, and the Nursing Profession" showed that critical care nurses in Northern Italy had low job satisfaction and higher intention to leave which was associated with hospital policy

In the contradictory with the previous findings, *Gabrani, Hoxha, Simaku, and Gabrani (2015)* who conducted a study about "Application of the Safety Attitudes Questionnaire (SAQ) in Albanian hospitals" and concluded that nurses in public hospital in Albania experienced high level of overall job satisfaction. Also, *Kabene, and Stefane(2010)* who conducted a study about "Human Resources in Healthcare,

Health Informatics and Healthcare System" revealed that nurses were satisfied with organization and administrative policies, in their study at hospital in England.

The findings of the current study revealed that there was a highly statistical negative correlation between staff nurses' perception toward career changing and their job satisfaction. From the researcher point of view, nurses plan to stay or to leave was based on their job satisfaction, nurses with high levels of job satisfaction are unlikely to intend to career changing because they feel valued in their job and enjoy their work tasks. In contrast, employees with low levels of job satisfaction are more likely to intent to change their career because leaving their job is consistent with their unfavorable job-related attitude and because they may believe that retirement better allows them to pursue activities that they value.

This finding is inconsistent with *Medina (2012)* who conducted a study about "Job satisfaction and employee turnover intention: What does organizational culture have to do with it? Columbia" and found that job satisfaction was strongly inversely correlated with turnover intention. And in the same line *Eimeren, Engelbrecht and Flagle, (2012)* who conducted a study about "Third International Conference on System Science in Health Care" and stated that nurses had higher turnover rate due to their low level of satisfaction.

### **Conclusions:**

The present study was conducted to assess nurses' perception toward career changing and its relation to job satisfaction. It

is concluded that the staff nurses had a high perception level toward career changing, and had a low job satisfaction level. There was a highly statistical negative correlation between staff nurses` perception toward career changing and their job satisfaction.

## **Recommendation**

### **Nursing level:**

- 1- Hospital should consider nurses` personal and social factors as providing nursery school for nurses` children.
- 2- Nurses should have an opportunity to participate in decision making.
- 3- Hospital should improve work environment for safety and security of nurses as (alarm installation, good light and ventilation, vaccinations for infectious diseases)
- 4- Improving salary, giving rewards and incentives to nurses in case of good performance.
- 5- Implementing career ladder to give nurses chance for promotion.

### **Educational level:**

- 1- Implementing in-service training programs for nurses according to their learning needs.
- 2- Providing the continual educational opportunity for all nurses.
- 3- Giving nurses free special courses about development and update in nursing as an incentive order.

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