

## AVALIAÇÃO DA QUALIDADE DE VIDA NO TRABALHO DE DOCENTES UNIVERSITÁRIOS

### EVALUATION OF THE LIFE QUALITY IN THE WORK OF UNIVERSITY DOCENTS

### EVALUACIÓN DE LA CALIDAD DE VIDA EN EL TRABAJO DE DOCENTES UNIVERSITARIOS

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#### RESUMO

**Objetivo:** Analisar a qualidade de vida no trabalho de docentes de uma universidade pública. **Métodos:** Trata-se de um estudo de caráter descritivo e transversal, de abordagem quantitativa. Realizado com n=102 docentes de uma instituição de ensino superior pública, localizada no Centro-Sul piauiense. Fez-se uso do instrumento criado por Walton, validado e adaptado à realidade do trabalho docente. Esse instrumento compreende oito dimensões referentes à qualidade de vida no trabalho, mensurando o nível de satisfação laboral com questões do tipo *Likert*. Os dados foram organizados por meio do *software Excel 8.0* e processados no programa estatístico *IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences*. **Resultados:** Foi observado que, das oito dimensões analisadas referentes à qualidade de vida no trabalho, três (Compensação Justa e Adequada; Oportunidade de Crescimento e Segurança; e Trabalho e Espaço Total de Vida) apresentaram-se com escores de insatisfação por parte dos docentes; enquanto, nas demais, observaram-se escores de indiferença. **Conclusão:** Espera-se que os resultados levantados neste estudo contribuam para a reflexão, além de nortear ações que visem à manutenção, prevenção e promoção de aspectos pertinentes à qualidade de vida no trabalho docente, colaborando com a promoção de políticas institucionais que valorizem a qualidade do trabalho desses profissionais.

**Descritores:** Qualidade de Vida; Trabalho; Docentes; Universidades; Saúde do Trabalhador.

#### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** To analyze the life quality in the work of university docents. **Methods:** This is a descriptive and cross-sectional study, with a quantitative approach. It was carried out with n = 102 docents from a public higher education institution, located in Center-South of Piauí. The instrument created by Walton was used, validated and adapted to the reality of the teaching work. This instrument comprises eight dimensions concerning Life Quality at work, measuring the level of job satisfaction with *Likert*-type questions. The data were organized using *Excel 8.0* software and processed in the statistical program *IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences*. **Results:** It was observed that of the eight dimensions analyzed concerning the life quality at work, three (Fair and Adequate Compensation, Opportunity for Growth and Safety, and Work and Total Living Space) presented with scores of professors' dissatisfaction, while, in the others, indifference scores were observed. **Conclusion:** It is expected that the results presented in this study will contribute to reflection, in addition to orient actions aimed at maintenance, prevention, and promotion of aspects pertinent to life quality in the teaching work. Collaborating with the institutional policies promotion that aims to value these professionals' work quality.

**Keywords:** Life Quality; Work; Docents; Universities; Worker's Health.

#### RESUMEN

**Objetivo:** Analizar la calidad de vida en el trabajo de profesores de una universidad pública. **Métodos:** Se trata de un estudio de carácter descriptivo y transversal, de abordaje cuantitativo. Realizado con n = 102 profesores de una Institución de Enseñanza Superior pública, ubicada en el centro-sur de Piauí. Se hizo uso del instrumento creado por Walton, validado y adaptado a la realidad del trabajo de profesores universitarios. Este instrumento comprende ocho dimensiones referentes a la Calidad de Vida en el Trabajo, midiendo el nivel de satisfacción laboral con cuestiones del tipo *Likert*. Los datos fueron organizados a través del *software Excel 8.0* y procesados en el programa estadístico de *IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences*. **Resultados:** Se fue observado que, de las ocho dimensiones analizadas referentes a la calidad de vida en el trabajo, tres (Compensación Justa y Adequada, Oportunidad de Crecimiento y Seguridad, y Trabajo y Espacio Total de Vida) se presentaron con puntuaciones de insatisfacción por parte de los profesores, mientras que, en las demás, se observaron puntuaciones de indiferencia. **Conclusión:** Se espera que los resultados levantados en este estudio contribuyan a la reflexión, además de orientar acciones que visen mantenimiento, prevención y promoción en los aspectos pertinentes a la calidad de vida en el trabajo de profesores y pueda colaborar con la promoción de políticas institucionales que apunte a la valorización y calidad del trabajo de estos profesionales.

**Descritores:** Calidad de Vida; Trabajo; Profesores universitarios; Universidades; Salud Laboral.

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## INTRODUCTION

Quality of Life (QL) is widespread in the contemporary world and represents a multidisciplinary and polysemic concept<sup>(1)</sup>. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), QL is “the perception of individuals that their needs are met<sup>(2)</sup>, transcending the physical and mental aspects”. The QL enters the individual and collective aspects of the people at work, highlighting the Quality of Life at Work (QLW).

QLW is related to intrinsic and extrinsic aspects, to living conditions in the workplace, involving well-being, health, physical, mental, social security and training to perform tasks safely and good use of personal energy. It also deals with the promotion of health and prevention of work-related diseases, as well as having an economic impact by promoting favorable conditions for work, reducing work incapacity and early retirement<sup>(3-4)</sup>.

Walton (1973) was the first to conceptualize QLW, proposing a model with eight dimensions, conceptualizing it as a process by which the organization responds to the needs of the employees, promoting mechanisms that contribute to the people taking part in the decision making that protect their lives at work<sup>(5-6)</sup>. The levels of the QLW increase in the presence of psychological well-being, absence of psychological distress, commitment to the organization, responsibility for work and balance between work and personal life<sup>(7-8)</sup>.

From the concepts of QL and QLW, it is often possible to highlight the university environment as a generator of stressful factors, since university professors have intense routines, with preparation and performance of classes, besides meeting other demands from the function, regardless of the type of organization in which they are inserted.

There is a need to generate an integration work environment, with worker well-being and organizational effectiveness<sup>(9-10)</sup>, as there are requirements to deal with new teaching-learning technologies, to meet the growing demand for academic productivity, to meet the demands of intellectual and quality improvement in education and to contribute to the construction of scientific knowledge<sup>(11)</sup>.

However, the health of university professors is the concern focus of diverse segments of society, since this worker has great social pressure for the need to demonstrate good development in his work. Thus, the teacher wears

psychologically, physically and emotionally, which can lead to stress, depression, and feelings of professional dissatisfaction due to the effort to be a good professor<sup>(12-13)</sup>. Thus, there is a need for interventions in the work environment to alleviate difficulties linked to work activities and promote health in the teaching area. To overcome these obstacles, university managers can use several alternatives, inserting a healthy and stimulating work environment, which favors the psychosocial balance of the professionals, improving QLW.

This study aimed to analyze the Quality of Life at Work (QLW) of professors from a public university in the Center-South of Piauí.

## METHODS

This is a cross-sectional quantitative study carried out at a Public Higher Education Institution located in the municipality of Picos - PI.

The research was carried out with the effective professors of the HEI, composed of 153 professors of both genders, who were active during the period of data collection. The inclusion criteria were: to act as an effective professor of HEI; and the exclusion criteria were: a teaching time of less than one year, only professors of the Distance Education modality - DE and postgraduate, and be away for some reason. The sample totaled 102 participating professors.

The variables of this study were grouped in Quality of Life at Work and socioeconomic characteristics related to QLW. In the first group, work conditions, fair and adequate compensation, use and capacity development, the opportunity for growth and safety, social integration in the organization, rights, and duties, work and total living space, and social relevance of work life were investigated. In the second group, gender, age, income, number of children, with whom they live, area, time of teaching, degree and weekly workload were investigated.

The instrument created by Walton validated and adapted to the reality of the teaching work was used to evaluate the QLW<sup>(14-15)</sup>. This instrument has eight dimensions related to QLW, and it is possible to measure the level of job satisfaction with closed Likert-type questions, composed of variables from one to six, in the following distribution: Very Unsatisfied, Unsatisfied, Indifferent, Satisfied,

Very Satisfied, and does not apply. The eight dimensions are related to Working Conditions; Fair and Adequate Compensation; Use and Capacity Development; Opportunity for Growth and Security; Social Integration in the Organization; Rights and duties; Work and Total Living Space; and Social Relevance of Life at Work, respectively.

The data collection was carried out by the researcher in charge and by the members of the Tutorial Education Program (TEP), previously trained, from September to October 2017. The invitation to participate in the research was via email, in the classroom and/or by the HEI. On that occasion, the objectives, method and ethical aspects of the study were explained. Those individuals who expressed their desire to participate responded to the instruments in a reserved room and individually at the institution, preceding the signing of the Informed Consent Form in two copies.

The data were organized using Excel 8.0 software and processed in the statistical program IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0, resulting in a database and arranged in tables with the descriptive presentation of the absolute and relative frequencies. Also, Anova and Chi-Square statistical tests were performed between the variables of the QLW, applying  $p < 0.05$  as the reference value for the statistical significance.

The project was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Federal University of Piauí - UFPI, under an opinion number 2.269.341, with Certificate of Presentation for Ethical Assessment (CAAE) 68708617.9.0000.8057, respecting all the ethical aspects recommended by the norms of the Resolution 466/12<sup>(16)</sup>.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

All the 102 (100%) professors surveyed were from eleven institution courses. Of them, 56 (54.9%) were female. Most of them were in the age group of 34 to 45 years old (51.0%). The predominant self-reported skin color was brown (47.1%). Most of the participants only worked (57.8%); 42.2% studied and worked. Their family income was concentrated in a

range equal or higher than six monthly minimum wages (46.1%), averaging R\$ 8,000.00 + R\$ 3,480.25. The predominant economic class was B2 (46.1%). Regarding the marital situation, 56.9% of the professors stated that they were married and had no children (52.9%), with natural professors from other localities (85.3%) living with their partner, 44.1% %.

Regarding the institutional variables, professors who taught 1 to 3 years (44.1%) predominated (17); with most of them having Ph.D. (40.2%). However, this result diverged from research (18) in which professors from five health courses had a higher degree of master's degree. Most of them affirmed that they worked 40 hours a week on an exclusive dedication (92.2%), with morning and afternoon shifts 50.0%, providing 3 to 4 hours for extracurricular activities, and for bureaucratic activities, with a percentage of 55.9 % and 48.0%, respectively. A considerable percentage of professors (39.2%) stated that they performed the extra activity within the institution, however, most of this percentage (21.6%) stressed that they were not remunerated for it.

The research participants were asked about aspects related to the availability and access to services to better understand how the structure of the professors' work environment interferes with the QLW. When asked if the institution had air conditioning in classrooms, 97.1% said yes. Regarding the equipment provided by the institution, 73.5% answered that the agency has a multimedia projector and a notebook. When asked which one they used most frequently, 97.1% answered that they used the multimedia device.

In line with technological developments, the professors were asked if the institution had access to the internet via wireless or cable network to facilitate the teaching work and 94.1% reported using this tool. In the institution having leisure spaces, 52.9% answered that the institution did not have these places; in contrast, 36.3% answered that the university has squares and outdoor living areas. Of the participants who answered that the university has leisure spaces, 31.4% do not use these spaces.

Table 1 - Characterization of the Quality of Life at Work profile - QLW. Peaks-PI, 2017. (n = 102).

	VD*	D†	N‡	S §	VS	NA¶
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>WORK CONDITIONS</b>						
Workload for activities as a professor	6.9	19.6	6.9	56.9	9.8	-
Workload of extraclass activities	9.8	31.4	15.7	37.3	4.9	1.0
Equipment and materials available	6.9	33.3	10.8	43.1	5.9	-
Quality of equipment and materials	7.8	28.4	12.7	42.2	7.8	1.0
Comfort of the physical environment	4.9	19.6	11.8	53.9	9.8	-
Cleaning of the physical environment	2.0	4.9	5.9	64.7	22.5	-
Infrastructure of the physical environment for the activities of the professor	8.8	30.4	7.8	42.2	10.8	-
Safety and health conditions for carrying out activities of the professor	3.9	19.6	20.6	48.0	7.8	-
<b>FAIR AND APPROPRIATE COMPENSATION</b>						
Wage paid for professor activities	16.7	44.1	8.8	25.5	4.9	-
Benefit plan offered by the university	21.6	43.1	14.7	17.6	2.9	-
Internal wage equity	13.7	23.5	24.5	30.4	5.9	2.0
External Wage equity	23.5	36.3	20.6	11.8	3.9	3.9
Payment of extra-class activities (preparation of exams and classes, etc.)	25.5	28.4	23.5	2.9	1.0	18.6
<b>USE AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT</b>						
Feedback from students about professors' work	4.9	19.6	13.7	49.0	11.8	1.0
Feedback from superiors about professors' work	7.8	22.5	27.5	38.2	1.0	2.9
Autonomy of professor's work	2.0	13.7	8.8	55.9	19.6	-
Use of professional knowledge as a professor	1.0	9.8	6.9	55.9	25.5	1.0
Use of scientific knowledge as a professor	1.0	8.8	5.9	58.8	25.5	-
Applying creativity as a professor	1.0	5.9	14.7	58.8	19.6	-
Influence the activity of the professor on the professional life of the students	-	5.9	9.8	65.7	17.6	1.0
Influence of the activity of the professor on the personal life of the students	1.0	4.9	25.5	52.0	9.8	6.9
<b>GROWTH AND SECURITY OPPORTUNITY</b>						
Stability at university	2.9	8.8	6.9	66.7	14.7	-
University incentive for master's degree	2.0	11.8	24.5	39.2	4.9	17.6
University incentive for doctoral studies	5.9	14.7	23.5	43.1	6.9	5.9
University incentive to carry out research activities	11.8	40.2	20.6	23.5	2.0	2.0
University incentive to carry out administrative activities	8.8	30.4	39.2	15.7	2.0	3.9
University incentive to carry out consultancy activities	14.7	26.5	37.3	7.8	-	13.7
Career plan offered by the university	14.7	40.2	13.7	30.4	1.0	-
Possibility of ascension in the university	8.8	37.3	17.6	32.4	3.9	-
Training and recycling of new technologies and teaching methodology	23.5	36.3	24.5	10.8	1.0	3.9
Financial incentives for updating teachers (seminars, congresses)	36.3	36.3	12.7	12.7	-	2.0
<b>SOCIAL INTEGRATION IN THE ORGANIZATION</b>						
Equal treatment and opportunities	11.8	22.5	13.7	45.1	4.9	2.0
Relationship between the professors in university	5.9	14.7	14.7	59.8	3.9	1.0
Relationship with the students	1.0	1.0	9.8	66.7	20.6	1.0
Relationship between superiors and professors	-	6.9	15.7	65.7	10.8	1.0
<b>RIGHTS AND DUTIES</b>						
Compliance with obligations	2.0	6.9	9.8	73.5	6.9	1.0
Freedom of expression at university	3.9	7.8	11.8	63.7	11.8	1.0
Freedom of speech in the classroom	3.9	7.8	11.8	63.7	11.8	1.0
Respect for personal privacy at university	-	2.0	5.9	74.5	16.7	1.0
<b>WORK AND TOTAL LIFE SPACE</b>						
Balance between time spent on professor work and personal life	17.6	33.3	9.8	35.3	3.9	-
Time for family life	12.7	41.2	8.8	32.4	4.9	-
Time for leisure	18.6	39.2	8.8	28.4	4.9	-
<b>SOCIAL RELEVANCE OF LIFE AT WORK</b>						
The fact that the university seeks to provide good services to customers (students)	2.9	9.8	15.7	68.6	2.9	-
Image of the university in the community	2.0	11.8	5.9	64.7	14.7	1.0
Concept of the university in the public bodies	2.0	8.8	10.8	61.8	16.7	-
University caring about the community	1.0	21.6	23.5	49.0	3.9	1.0
Social responsibility by the professors	2.9	22.5	26.5	41.2	4.9	2.0
HR management adopted by the university	4.9	18.6	28.4	42.2	3.9	2.0

Source: Search Data VD\*: Very dissatisfied; I†: Dissatisfied; N‡: Indifferent; S§: Satisfied; MS| |: Very satisfied; NA¶: Does not apply.

In the data related to the compilation by dimension, in relation to the QLW, graph 1 show that three dimensions were evaluated by the professors as Dissatisfied (Fair and Adequate Compensation, Opportunity for Growth and Safety, and Work and Total Living Space), while the others were on the level of indifference.

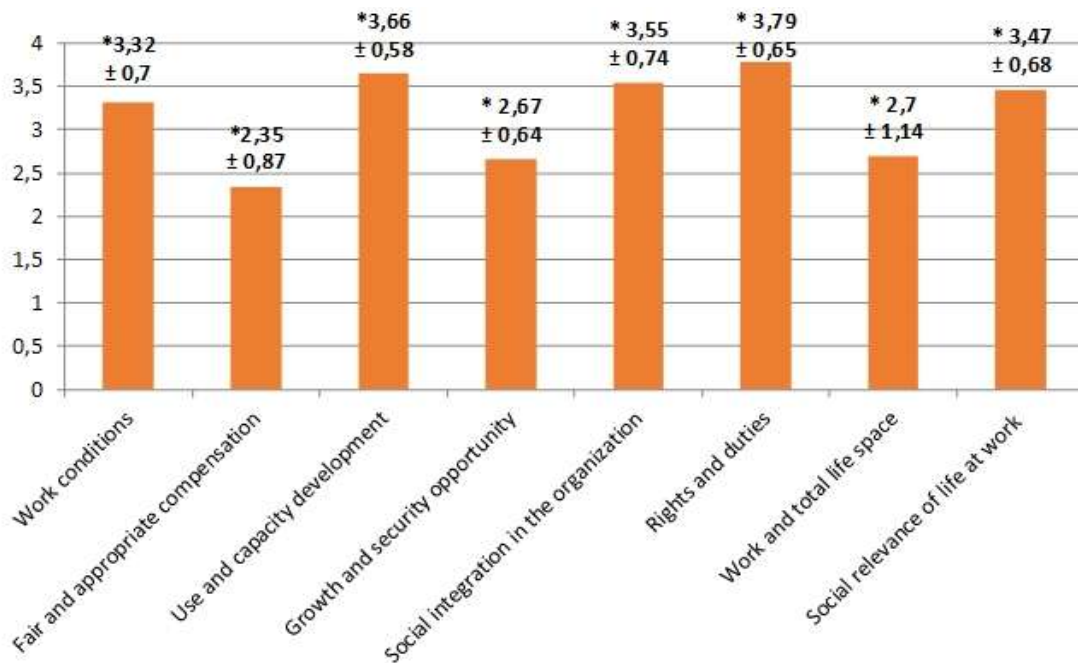
The dimension Fair and Adequate Compensation was the one with the greatest degree of dissatisfaction by the professors. In a comparative study with professors from two universities, one public and one private, it was found that the professors of the public institution were more dissatisfied about this category<sup>(19)</sup>.

In the Opportunity for Growth and Security dimension, the professors were dissatisfied, especially in the university's lack of

incentive to carry out research activities, administrative activities, career plans and opportunities for professional advancement. In a comparative study<sup>(20)</sup> on QLW with university professors in Canada and Brazil, Canadian professors had greater autonomy at work, more opportunities for professional development, and greater professional recognition for their activities when compared to Brazilian professors.

When analyzing the Work and Total Living Space dimension, the professors were dissatisfied, mainly, regarding the little disposition of time for the family and leisure<sup>(21-22)</sup>. Therefore, the work of university professors can be seen as fundamental and influential in the style and QLW of these professionals, since most of the hours of the day are dedicated to working activities<sup>(23)</sup>

Graph 1 - General averages and standard deviation of the QLW of the sample, by category. Picos - PI, 2017.



Source: Search Data. \* Mean and standard deviation.

In Table 2, the QLW means, according to the socio-demographic variables, showed that the gender directly influenced QLW, since males presented higher QLW, with a mean of 3.36, and statistically significant  $p = 0.001$ . The professors without children or with up to one child were the

categories that obtained a better average of the QLW, being statistically significant  $p = 0.015$ .

The variable with whom the person lived also obtained a statistically significant relation ( $p = 0.025$ ), showing that the professors who lived with the friends had a better QLW, with an average of 3.92.

Table 2 – Analysis of averages of QWL dimensions in relation to the variables gender, age, and professional profile. Picos - PI, 2017.

Variables	Quality of life at work	p-value
<b>Gender</b>		0.001†
Female	3.04 ± 0.47*	
Male	3.36 ± 0.48*	
<b>Age</b>		0.389‡
Up to 24 years old	3.46*	
25 – 33 years old	3.30 ± 0.46*	
34 – 44 years old	3.12 ± 0.54*	
≥ 45 years old	3.13 ± 0.42*	
<b>Income</b>		0.387‡
4 wages	3.56 ± 0.22*	
5 wages	3.05 ± 0.30*	
≥ 6 wages	3.19 ± 0.519*	
<b>Number of children</b>		0.015‡
Zero	3.21 ± 0.47*	
One	3.37 ± 0.33*	
Two	2.92 ± 0.60*	
Three or more	2.88*	
<b>Living with</b>		0.025‡
Parents	3.15 ± 0.21*	
Family members	3.30 ± 0.40*	
Friends	3.92 ± 0.69*	
Partner	3.03 ± 0.39*	
Alone	3.30 ± 0.68	
<b>Area</b>		0.861‡
Humanities	3.22 ± 0.43*	
Biological Sciences/Health	3.16 ± 0.55*	
Exact science	3.17 ± 0.49*	0.922‡
<b>Time teaching</b>		
1 – 3 years	3.22 ± 0.43*	
4 – 6 years	3.13 ± 0.70*	
7 – 9 years	3.16 ± 0.39*	
≥ 10 years	3.16 ± 0.63*	
<b>Titration</b>		0.638‡
Specialist	3.26 ± 0.48*	
Master's degree	3.23 ± 0.44*	
Ph.D.	3.11 ± 0.57*	
Post-doctorate	3.11 ± 0.41*	
<b>Weekly workload</b>		0.997‡
40h	3.21 ± 0.17*	
20h	3.18 ± 0.48*	
40h exclusive dedication	3.18 ± 0.51*	

SOURCE: Search Data. \* Mean and standard deviation.

† Student's t-test for independent samples. ‡ ANNOVA One-Way.

The research enabled to identify the QLW of 102 university professors in the eight dimensions proposed by Walton and adapted to the reality of university professors, demonstrating the aspects that directly and indirectly influence in the life of these professionals, contributing to the importance of assertive interventions in the environment labor market.

The influence of the organization of the labor area on the health and the performance of the professionals diverges according to the perception of each individual and their personal characteristics. In this study, the results demonstrate that in the dimensions related to

Fair and Adequate Compensation; Opportunity for Growth and Security; and Work and Total Living Space that the degree of dissatisfaction was analyzed in a remarkable way in comparison to the other dimensions that the professors were indifferent.

These results showed that, although the professors were largely indifferent, it was not possible to observe the presence of levels of satisfaction in the surveyed dimensions, which characterizes the neutrality by the public investigated about their QLW. These factors cause an organizational problem, which may interfere in the growth of the institution and in

the QLW since it offers little aspiration of growth, both personal and collective.

Also, teaching work can often culminate in intense cognitive attrition, as professionals face 40-hour work hours a week, in addition to having time to participate in extracurricular activities, bureaucratic activities, and being inserted in research.

On the other hand, it is imperative that universities broaden their organizational perspectives on QLW through programs and guidelines that concern with social security, labor relationship, career planning, remuneration, and the size of the workforce since with these implementations it will be possible to minimize psychological, physical and emotional wear and tear.

## CONCLUSION

The analysis of the QLW of professors of an HEI showed that a significant percentage of professors were dissatisfied with the QLW in three important dimensions (Fair and Adequate Compensation, Growth and Safety Opportunity, and Work and Total Living Space). In the other dimensions evaluated, there was a higher percentage of indifference, which is a concern, considering that they maintained neutrality around the problems raised.

Thus, the adoption of strategies aimed at the promotion of QLW is suggested, working mainly in the dimensions where the public was more dissatisfied, as well as seeking to build effective solutions in the organizational context, and allowing greater personal and professional satisfaction in the teaching area.

It is expected that the results raised in this study will contribute to the reflection, besides orienting actions that aim at the maintenance, prevention, and promotion in aspects pertinent to the teaching QLW, besides raising the awareness of government agencies and higher education institutions regarding care to this phenomenon and to the appreciation of professors.

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