Empowering women for reducing radicalization in Indonesia

Firda Safina**, Alih Aji Nugroho**

*Public Administration, Politeknik STIA LAN Jakarta, Jakarta, Indonesia
Email: firdasafina9@gmail.com

**Politeknik STIA LAN Jakarta, Jakarta, Indonesia
Email: alihnugroho@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to investigate the possibilities of localised female empowerment as a factor supporting deradicalization in Indonesia. Researchers look into the possibilities for deradicalization through localised empowerment of women using descriptive qualitative research methods. Descriptive research means collecting all data related to incidents or situations aligned with the study's theme. That is, by reading and analysing literature sources from regional journals, international articles, and online news sources that discuss women's participation in terrorist acts, women's empowerment in preventing terrorism initiatives, and existing attempts to eradicate terrorism in Indonesia. Using the data or information that has been found, researchers may use the grounded theory technique to explain the causes of a phenomenon, identify its causes and effects, and decide what actions can be implemented in regard to the current situation. The use of localised women's empowerment is thought to have the potential to be an preventative action against the issue of terrorism. Women may be incredibly motivating role models. Women are capable of doing this in the smallest scope, which is the family. Women are able to educate their children and families, provide the concept of tolerance, and spread the love of peace. That is why it is needed to strengthen the laws that may regulate existence of efforts to create deradicalization in local level by involving women in it.

Keywords: Women empowerment; deradicalization; female role.
ABSTRAK


Kata Kunci: Pemberdayaan perempuan; pemberantasan terorisme; peran perempuan.

1. INTRODUCTION

Terrorism is still unresolved global problems (Battikh et al., 2022; Tudu, 2022). The role of women is considered to be one of the influential factors in terrorism in the world (Dumont et al., 2022; Meierrieks & Renner, 2023; Navarro-Granados & Llorent-Bedmar, 2022). Women are also one of the variables that influence the prevention of terrorism (Eteng et al., 2021). This study aims to analyze more deeply the role of women in the deradicalization process at the local level.

Women in these acts of violence appear to be increasingly active and continue to increase their involvement both regionally and globally. In Indonesia, according to Komjen Pol. Dr. Boy Rafli Amar, M.H., Head of BNPT¹ (National Counter Terrorism Agency) women's participation in terrorism activities has increased over the past decade (bnpt.go.id:

¹The National Counter Terrorism Agency (BNPT) is a non-ministerial institution formed to prevent and resolve acts of terrorism in Indonesia. BNPT has a function, namely as a deradicalization organizer, protecting objects that have the potential to become targets of terrorist attacks. Organizing international cooperation, monitoring, analysis and evaluation in the field of eradicating terrorism. As the controller of terrorist movements in Indonesia, BNPT also has the function of developing and controlling programs, administration and resources as well as cooperation between agencies related to terrorism (bnpt.go.id: 2019).
Women's contribution to terrorist activities has transformed from a supporter to a main perpetrators, said Komjen Pol. Dr. Boy Rafli Amar, M.H., Head of BNPT (National Counter Terrorism Agency) (bnpt.go.id: 2022). It can be shown that in 2019 there have been 15 young women who have taken part in acts of terrorism in Indonesia. Meanwhile, in 2022, the number has increased to 18 women (Head of BNPT in the Productive Optimistic Exemplary Women (TOP) activities to Promote Peace organized by the FKPT (Coordination Forum for The Prevention of Terrorism) North Sumatra, August 29, 2022 (bnpt.go.id: 2022).

Several things can be behind the participation of women in acts of radicalism, first, women can become high-ranking followers (Maesarotul, 2019). This is because the cultural customs that occur in Indonesia with conservative religious education teachings have shaped women into submissive individuals. Second, a woman's motherly nature and meekness are fully utilized by these groups to serve as shields or tricks in outwitting law enforcement officials. This use is carried out to make women couriers for secret mandates that will be spread by fellow radical perpetrators in prison cells, to cause perpetrators not to be immediately deterred in their sentences and commit acts of terrorism again when their prison term is over.

We can see this in the suicide bombing case that just occurred at the end of 2022, namely Agus Sujatno or Agus Muslim, a suicide bomber in Astanaanyar who is a former "High Risk" prisoner and is languishing in the Super Maximum Prison in Pasir Putih Prison, Nusakambangan. Agus Muslim has been breathing free air for almost 2 years since March 14, 2021, and ultimately decided to end his life through an act of radicalism that left two police officers dead (Kompas.com: 7 Desember 2022). Third, women in their main duties become a supporting system in the logistics department. So, women prepare and provide a variety of logistical needs for perpetrators of terrorist acts, including the main one in terms of food (Musyafak et al., 2020).

Fourth, the presence of idealism towards the promise and hope of having a much better future becomes a self-impetus desire for them to do so. Thus, such a view is often the reason for the justification for the act of suicide bombing terrorism. “For example, inducements offered to potential female martyrs may include calls for gender equity in martyrdom for a cause, offers of salvation for women who have violated gender norms and been shunned by the community, revenge for the death of a relative in a terrorist act, and religious benefits. The organization Hamas, for instance, promises women they will be reunited in paradise with their husbands as a reward for their commitment, or with an arranged marriage to a Hamas member if they were unmarried when alive” (Margolin, 2016, pp. 919–920; Banks., 2019).

Some of the motivations or reasons for women above are only part of it. Of course, there are many more reasons a woman is part of an extremist act of terrorism. The character of feminism that a woman has is not an obstacle to them taking a role in extreme terrorist activity. Most people or societies have instilled an understanding that women are fragile and far from violence. However, in reality, women do not rule out the possibility of becoming
followers of extremist acts. The involvement of women as followers is not only a supporting system, but women are also martyred in every act of terror, both in the form of doctrinalization of fellow women and as perpetrators of suicide bombings, family bombings, and so on.

This can be seen from one of the cases of female perpetrators of terrorism that occurred in 2021, a woman named Zakiah Aini shocked the people of the capital city of Jakarta because she attacked the South Jakarta Police Headquarters, on March 31, 2021 (Kompas.com: 1 April 2021). Zakiah Aini carried out his attack by opening fire from an airsoft gun he had purchased about 1.5 months earlier from Aceh. Zakiah Aini ended up dead on the spot because he was knocked out with police hot lead.

Women in this case, whether acting as perpetrators or as victims alike have the same negative impact of a myriad of acts of terrorism, of course women are the ones who are very disadvantaged. So great is the domino effect that women find in their involvement with this act of terrorism or radicalism, ranging from social, economic, and mental health shocks, to being able to have an impact on the quality of the nation's future generations. For this reason, behind all the previously described concerns regarding the involvement of women in acts of terrorism and radicalism, it is stated that terrorism and radicalism are of great urgency that must be resolved even though they cannot be perfect. Therefore, putting women in their care is also very important. Because, the involvement of women to contribute in improving their people, namely women, and the social situation of society has developed since time immemorial.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on women's involvement in acts of terrorism and radicalism has been widely carried out at the national and global levels, as well as the contribution of women in deradicalization efforts. For example, the first research conducted by Parvez and Hastings (2021) in their article on “Understanding the role of digital media in female participation in terrorism: the case of Bangladesh” shows that women are more likely to use digital media than men in the member recruitment cycle. Social networking, family, and friend factors usually play a huge role in an individual's decision to engage further in terrorism. In particular, digital media allows women to expand their social interactions beyond what can be done in person. Thus, it creates a huge virtual path to terrorism. This statement is in line with research (Affianty, 2017; Bloom, 2013; Spencer, 2016; UNODC, 2019; Gegaryani, 2021), it can be seen that terror groups provide a variety of roles for women, the role of women is emphasized on them as a role of recruiters for women.

Many research studies related to deradicalization efforts have also been carried out, one of which is deradicalization efforts involving women. Cultural Feminism and the Role of Women in Deradicalization in Indonesia (Rajagukguk, 2018). The research focused on BNPT's efforts to include Women in the deradicalization process, particularly through the women's. BNPT uses a cultural feminism approach in involving women in the deradicalization process. The program is tried to relieve a person of extreme measures or in
other words tactics without resorting to violence. The Deradicalization phase includes identification, rehabilitation, education, resocialization monitoring, and evaluation. The BNPT results reported that female feminism is necessary when dealing with inmates. Women are considered more convincing, and therefore women are included in the deradicalization strategy.

The involvement of women as community actors fighting acts of terrorism has been recognized for its urgency in the 12th Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF) in New York (Kemlu.go.id: 12/09/2022). Foreign Minister Retno in the GCTF emphasized, "the need for better management of the threat of acts of terrorism, namely by involving the government and society through one of the main approaches of the "Whole Society". In addition, in his capacity, Minister Retno also explained three priority suggestions for the GCTF in the future in dealing with the threat of global Terrorism:

a. Strengthening cooperation with experts in the field of technology, to strengthen efforts to prevent the use of information technology in acts of terrorism.

b. Strengthening the strategy of breaking the chain of financing acts of terrorism, which also responds to the latest approaches used such as the use of virtual currencies. Thus, cooperation between the Financial Intelligence Unit and the banking sector, and other financial institutions is needed.

c. Strengthening women's actions or involvement in the face of extremism and tackling them. (Kemlu.go.id: 2022)

The third statement from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Mrs. Retno, showed that the existence of the need to strengthen women's involvement in responding to acts of terrorism has been conveyed to the international arena. For this reason, in its application in Indonesia based on previous research, the implementation of strategies is only through the macro women's community. However, solving problems to the root requires the involvement of efforts micro or on the smallest scale. This can be assessed as a gap that can be an interesting area or vehicle for further discussion regarding the involvement of women in combating acts of terrorism at the micro/local level.

The purpose of this study is to increase awareness of all stakeholders regarding the great potential of women in terms of radicalization and deradicalization which can be started at the local level or basic to reach the global level. So that, be able to revive the enthusiasm of all stakeholders and provide reinforcement in terms of regulations and deradicalization programs through women's empowerment from any stakeholders. In addition, this article or paper can revive a heated discussion about the involvement of women in acts of terrorism and the empowerment of women at the local level in terms of deradicalization.

3. METHOD

In writing this study, researchers used a qualitative descriptive approach method. Descriptive is meant to collect all information related to events or situations according to the research topic. That is, by analyzing reference sources on the internet network that discuss the
involvement of women in acts of terrorism, women's empowerment in deradicalization efforts, and efforts to eradicate terrorism in Indonesia today which are then continued to be analyzed and narrated into writing.

Data sources are obtained by compiling a research topic framework and carrying out type classification for all data obtained through inter-networking or books. The data sources used in this study are secondary data derived from various books, journals, articles, previous research, news on the internet, laws, and related documents. These data sources are collected, then analyzed and triangulated with the literature that has been found. Triangulation is a technique of checking the accuracy of data which by utilizing other components that are outside the data, can be done as a checker and comparison between the data owned (Moleong, 2017).

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Combating Terrorism in Indonesia

The development of terrorism crimes globally has shown a very significant increase in quality, quantity, and mode used. Likewise with Indonesia, it has been revealed that there is a connection between local militant networks with international networks. In addition to the threat of terrorism other non-traditions also emerge through the various doors of the nation's life (Setkab.go.id: 2022).

With the development of very modern technology, extremists are very capable of easily destroying targeted targets that are annullled remotely, such as the suicide bombings that often occur shortly in Bandung. The current condition of terrorism prevention and counter-terrorism in Indonesia, namely the existence of a series of terrorism events that show the link between local groups and networks of outside countries. Thus, from the series of cases in Indonesia, it is included in the international terrorist network which to detect its existence and activities cannot be done easily or cannot be detected early, to the point that it is very difficult to prevent and deter.

Various efforts have been made by the government, especially on the security system and the disclosure of the perpetrators of extremist acts. However, in its efforts, the government often gets a variety of responses from the public, especially from religious groups that are considered sensitive to the issue of terrorism because it is often associated with the Muslim religion. In addition, the strengthening of pro and con attitudes is appropriate regardless of national interests, resulting in mutual suspicion in the community environment and the presence of distrust of government officials, especially for security forces in tackling acts of terrorism in Indonesia.

Indonesia has also cooperated at the ASEAN level and implemented a cautious attitude for the Indonesian government in preventing and tackling acts of terrorism which can be seen from various policies and anticipatory measures. Namely: First, the intelligence apparatus coordinated by BIN\(^2\) (Indonesian State Intelligence Agency) based on Presidential Regulations No. 6 of 2003, which has carried out intelligence activities and coordination and formed a JAT (Joint Analysist Terrorist) effort to reveal a network of extremism activities in

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\(^2\)BIN (State Intelligence Agency) is a state instrument that carries out functions of domestic and foreign intelligence and coordination State Intelligence in Indonesia (State Intelligence Agency Regulations Number 03 of 2022).
Indonesia. Second, the government has collaborated with Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Australia, and even countries such as the United States and other countries. Third, BNPT has distributed the provision of support personnel and regional facilities in showing the implementation of synergistic activities. Fourth, the government has formed a Synergy Team to carry out coordination activities between ministry or institution in implementing the Counterterrorism Action Program through Ministerial Decree Political, Legal and Security Affairs in Indonesia Number 22 of 2022, namely by building an Integrated Nusantara Area which is expected to be able to prevent acts of terrorism through mindset transformation by creating economic stagnation (Kemenkopmk.go.id: 2022).

4.2. Women's Awareness and Potential for Deterrence of Radicalism Issues

The role of women in terms of awareness of radicalism is very important because, in addition to the potential to become members of radicalism, women also have great potential in preventing radicalism. This is because women already have a level of awareness in the state and awareness of the importance of maintaining the integrity of the Republic of Indonesia. In addition, awareness of the issue of radicalism has become a humanitarian consciousness that does not look at gender, namely whether male or female.

Women in their instincts certainly have their understanding of judging someone. For this reason, women can be used as a means of increasing security, detecting, and preventing radicalism from an early age. Because the maternal nature possessed by women sociologically has created women to have social skills that men may not have. This ability can be interpreted as the cognitive traits that women have when detecting deviant behavior. Although, in gender studies, the femininity perspective leads more to the justification of the existence of a more patriarchal culture (Men's physical strength is superior but inferior to feelings). As well as the recognition that women's physical limitations and feelings are superior. However, in deradicalization against violence, negative views of femininity can be used, since women are seen as having a softer approach and as complementary complements of male actions.

In addition, the involvement of women in deradicalization efforts is closely related to the position of women who are often used as the first madrasa or teachers for a family and children in general. Which, in a family, women have a very vital role in influencing all existing decisions. Because education itself is a process of intellectual change and knowledge. Especially in terms of children's education, namely character education that has no boundaries in the formal or informal world (family). Thus, that way the decision-making carried out in the female family must have a hand. Not only that, but the role of women in the family also regulates and is obliged to control children's formal and informal education. This is done, to be able to detect the acts of radicalism in advance, or in other words the presence of radical action interventions in the world of education.

The use of the digital world now as a forum for recruiting extremists has been rampant. So, prevention efforts through a digital world approach must also be tightened by many parties. Especially in Indonesia, the majority of users of one of Instagram's biggest social media users have been dominated by women. Based on Napoleon Cat's report in
databoks.katadata, the majority of Instagram users in Indonesia are women at 52.6% in May 2021. This figure is also dominated by women with a young age group of 18-24 years. Thus, the influence of women's empowerment at the local level and through social networks is very much an opportunity.

Based on studies or research on the number of women involved in terrorist networks in Poso, by Azca and Putri (2021). That, a woman or mother can fortify herself from the surge in propaganda that sticks out and circulates very widely at the point of conflict, so that children become more tolerant and moderate to the problem. What these women do is open up conversations with the child intensively and bring them into a much more inclusive relationship.

Although in reality, women are not the only actors who can determine the activities of spreading radical ideas or acts of terrorism. However, women have a major role to play in building positive narratives and inclusive thinking as neutralizers of hateful narratives that aim to break the chain of extremism in the smallest environments.

In research (Gegaryani, 2021) describing the position of women in terrorism in identity theory is seen from how women place themselves, whether as mothers, wives, or children. From how women place themselves, whether as mothers, wives, terror fighters, recruiters, or as facilitators have identities that are present from roles in terrorist groups, but among the many roles and identities they have, there is one identity that stands out (salience identity). Women's involvement through the roles that have different portions, as their identities have shown that women play a role according to their most salience identity. Salience identity is the key to the division of women's roles in terrorism groups, providing the strength of commitment for women to carry out their roles in their jihad groups. Therefore, being able to prevent acts of terrorism itself can be seen by analysing the salience identity owned by a woman, which becomes the basis of strength in what kind of role women can play in deradicalization efforts.

4.3. Empowering Women in Deradicalization Efforts

Paryanto, a lecturer of Pancasila and Civic Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Cokroaminoto University Yogyakarta, views poverty as one of the factors in the presence of extremism committed by women. Or in other words "Terrorism is present due to the presence of factors of helpless living conditions, blockage of channels of expression and self-actualization caused by poverty, economic, social, political injustice, and poor public management".

It needs to be emphasized and ensured that women must have independence both socially and economically. With the aim, so as not to be easily involved in the vortex of radicalism. This is what can be a motivation for all stakeholders to continue to educate and ensure that women continue to be involved in actions to prevent radicalism. As is the case throughout 2022, BNPT RI has developed a counterterrorism program by inaugurating economic welfare-based deradicalization areas in 5 provinces. The programs are the Nusantara Integrated Area (KTN) and Warung NKRI. It can be briefly described that in the
most populous KTN, a variety of training programs are beneficial to the community, one of which is livestock and agricultural training. In addition, within the KTN area, there are welfare-based deradicalization efforts with the revival of dialogical activities in the form of planting national values with the Wadah Akur Rukun Usaha Nurani Gelorakan NKRI (Warung NKRI).

Based on this, KTN and Warung NKRI itself have become soft components that prioritize welfare aspects by creating facilities for deradicalization partners including women to maximize the potential of natural resources owned by the region so that they can produce economic products. That way, women at the local (regional) level can develop their economic productivity and make it a means of social reintegration for deradicalization partners to achieve economic independence. So that the presence of KTN and Warung NKRI can realize a transformation of mindset for local level communities from radicals and extremists to moderates, full of love for Indonesia and upholding tolerance.

In addition, women can be at the forefront of realizing the nation's peace agents. Which, can become an inspirational figure to protect other groups from acts of terrorism/radicalism, especially in conflict areas. This can be done by women in the smallest scope, namely the family. Women can play a role in providing education, instilling the value of tolerance, and spreading peace to children and their families. This is because the family has a very important role in providing an understanding of the concept and dangers of radicalism toward children. As the smallest unit in society, the family can become a stronghold or a great wall for the next generation of the nation to limit themselves to radicalism. So, the figure of a woman who plays the role of a mother is needed.

A woman's instincts can be used to early detect the slightest radical presence in her family and be able to guide true diversity with the inner emotional bond of a mother and her child. Because, it is appropriate for the family environment to be a very strategic place to instill basic thoughts that are tolerant, peaceful, and child-friendly. In addition, the family is also the first social environment that will shape the disposition, mentality, and character that a child will have. For this reason, counseling related to the importance of preventing radicalization in the family must continue to be encouraged in regional areas. Order, it can increase the understanding of the role of a good mother in her family to create a stronghold for children and relatives from radicalism and extremism.

Last but not least, creating harmony and peace among others is very important in deradicalization. For this reason, the creation of women's communities based on religious strengthening and the practice of Pancasila ideological values must be enlivened. In order, it becomes a place for women to channel their pent-up expression and creativity into positive things. Establishing good relationships between each other is also the key to strengthening deradicalization at the local level, which can be illustrated by the nature of cooperation. In this community, it can be filled with calls for understanding harmony and peace in the nation and society to narrow/reduce the gap in the opportunity for exposure that has the potential to understand radicalism to women in society. This is because the data has proven that a survey
in 2022 conducted by the BNPT RI, together with the FKPT (Coordination Forum for the Prevention of Terrorism, Puslitbang Kemenag, BRIN, CICSR, Terrorism Studies UI, and other Ministries/Institutions has shown a decrease in the Potential Radicalism Index in 2022 by 10% which has decreased by 2.2% from 12.2% in 2020. The survey has also found that the Potential for Radicalism Index is higher in women, the younger generation, and those who are active on social media/internet networks.

The government continues to be committed to inviting and encouraging all parties to take action to prevent and overcome acts of terrorism and extremism through the presence of Presidential Regulation Number 27 of 2021. The Presidential Regulation has a crucial part, namely the National Action Plan for the Fight against Ecrimism (RAN PE). As a comprehensive, systematic, planned, and integrated strategy involving the active role of relevant ministries/agencies, local governments, and communities, the RAN PE is described in three pillars. The three pillars are (1) prevention, which includes preparedness, counterradicalization, and deradicalization; (2) strengthening the law, witness victim protection, and the national legal framework; and (3) international cooperation. Five of the 6 strategies produced in the RAN PE position women as actors in countering extremism, including strategies to build the capacity of women's communities and involve women leaders in responding to violent extremism that leads to terrorism. With the contribution of these women, it is hoped that the implementation of the RAN PE can reach mothers who play an important role as social navigators, so that they have sufficient capacity to strengthen families against the impact of radicalization.

Its implementation was driven by Dian Yulia Novi and a housewife with the initials TS. To deal with the infiltration of women in Indonesia from the understanding of radicalism became the background for the formation of the Women's Group of Pioneers of Peace in 32 Provinces in Indonesia. This group was initiated by the Sub-Directorate of Youth and Women's Empowerment of the National Counterterrorism Prevention Agency or BNPT. The pioneer of the Women's Peace Movement is a series of national consultation activities involving representatives of religious organizations, teachers, and women's empowerment groups as resource persons and participants. The national conference "Women as Pioneers of Peace" aims to socialize pluralism in Indonesia and can be seen as the wealth of the nation, thus making women's circles avoid exclusive thinking and can counteract the issue of radicalism and avoid calls for terrorism. Involving women in these issues in contact with radicalism is an effort to empower women. In addition, making massive movements positively on social media networks is also very important to do. Because, based on Napoleon Cat's report in databoks.katadata, the majority of Instagram users in Indonesia are women at 52.6% in May 2021. Thus, it can be used to support social media patterns that can limit and fill the gaps in the understanding of social media users regarding the importance of tolerance and fostering peace without violence in their beloved homeland.

For this reason, women are close to daily activities that involve children and other members of society. At this time women must take a role as the forward guard to overcome
the issue of radicalism. At least women are the potential that can be used to counteract radicalism for children or the surrounding community. The Women Peace Pioneers group was formed in many provinces in the country, to counteract the issue of radicalism from the smallest scale in Indonesia in families and households. At this level, the element of women's empowerment is more prominent to be utilized. Women are no longer perceived simply as empty bottles that must be filled with water but are also placed as harmonized partners by facilitators. Because it is placed in such a way, women are increasingly attached to the group. And they see for themselves how they can do it together providing the benefits of skills that generate material profit and can create economic independence.

5. CONCLUSION

Women have a high awareness of the issue of harmful acts of radicalism. Women are not only able to understand acts of radicalism, but also able to recognize actions that lead to acts of radicalism. Although women have had a briefing of their instinctive abilities as women and readiness to resist radicalism, in reality, women have not been seen to take much real action to eradicate radicalism, even though they already have the power to influence their communities. This is because women still have many limitations to do many things. Including access to knowledge, networks, funds, and protection for himself.

Therefore, the implementation of women's empowerment in efforts to eradicate acts of terrorism at the local level does not only require knowledge, but also real practice and other tangible assistance are needed. For this reason, synergy is needed for relevant stakeholders who have full power and influence on the eradication of extremism in Indonesia. Not only that, the empowerment of independence for women must continue to be intensified to create permanent independence for regional women. Thus, welfare can be achieved along with the increase in the level of peace in the micro (family) to the macro environment (throughout Indonesia).

Based on this, it is recommended to strengthen the legal umbrella related to deradicalization at the local level. Incorporating deradicalization efforts into national priorities so that policies related to deradicalization at the local level can enter into local government policies and be implemented on a clear basis. In its series of programs and activities, women's empowerment is the main focus in regional policies as an effort to deradicalize.

For this reason, there is a need for synergy that runs very well between ministries or government agencies to jointly realize women's empowerment policies in deradicalization efforts. Real seriousness can be initiated through the creation of new policies or regulations that can organize or insert deradicalization efforts in regional programs/policies. That is, by inserting the cultivation of an understanding of tolerance, peace-loving, and a sense of love for the motherland. As well as the realization of an anti-radicalism environment in the smallest scope of the region.
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