A Review on The Portrayal of Generational Endgame (GEG) through Digital Media Narratives and Its Impact towards The Public Health Sector in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT
In Malaysia, smoking is predominantly a male problem with approximately two out of every five men are smokers and more than 27,200 smoking-related deaths are reported annually. Tobacco consumption will lead to the cause of cancer such as lung cancer and mouth cancer, and it contributes to 22% of cancer deaths. Nevertheless, the coverage of this campaign in the media, particularly digital media, is very low and most people are not aware of the real purpose of Generational Endgame. Thus, the aim of this study is to explore the digital media narratives on Generational Endgame policy and its impact towards the public health sector in Malaysia. This study employed a qualitative method, by reviewing 15 journal articles related to the Generational Endgame and media that have been selected through Google Scholar from 2019 onwards. The research findings suggest that Generational Endgame in Malaysia received less coverage from media and there is a limitation of information regarding the good side of being tobacco-free towards individuals and country. Digital media is not just a bystander, but it is an active platform in disseminating the information of public health. In making the policy come true, all parties including the media must contribute by educating, disseminating information, and explaining the outcomes of the Generational Endgame. It is to ensure the understanding of the policy among all individuals, especially the young generation in Malaysia.

Keywords: Generational Endgame (GEG), Digital Media, Public Health, Malaysia.

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INTRODUCTION

The tobacco-free generation is one of social initiatives that aims to rebalance the patterns of teenage smoking and vaping addiction. This movement is to create a significant change in the acceptance of tobacco use among the young generation by fostering a culture that rejects smoking and vaping. In January 2022, after New Zealand announced a lifetime ban from purchasing combustible cigarettes for those born after 2008, Malaysian Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin, declared that Malaysia would also pursue a tobacco-free generation (TFG) policy (Amul, et al., 2022). This new act is to ban the use of tobacco products including cigarettes and vape to generation born after 2007, which proposes a fine for offenders, and also empower enforcement officers to act without warrant to open any baggage or container and examine tobacco or substitute tobacco products and smoking devices (Free Malaysia Today, 2022).

The campaign of Generational Endgame (GEG) is one of the provisions of the Control of Tobacco Products for Public Health Bill 2023 that is being finalised (The Star, 2023). The main purpose of GEG is to protect the young generation from smoking habits and getting addicted to the tobacco products particularly cigarettes and vapes. The issue of tobacco is one of the significant public health threats that kill over 8 million people annually and cost 5.7% of global health expenditure (Marshall, Gartner, & Fong, 2023). In Malaysia, more than 10,000 people die yearly from smoking-related diseases (Jetly, Mohammed Nawi, & R, 2021). However, according to CodeBlue (2022), more than 27,200 smoking-related deaths are reported in Malaysia. It shows the increasing number of deaths caused by smoking and it happened only in a year gap.

Afif Bahardin in News Strait Time article (2023) mentioned that there are currently no vaping regulations and no regulations on nicotine levels, so this GEG policy needs support from everyone, not only from enforcement but also from the community. In fact, to get the support from people, the government must educate all Malaysians regarding the GEG policy and campaign. Government may use all the media available to disseminate the information and to create awareness of GEG among the young generation. Media broadly describes all channels of communication, including everything from printed paper to digital data and it comprises news, art, educational content, and any form of information that reach or influence people (Rosencrance, 2023). In addition, the media is able to reach a huge number of people and it is functioning well to create awareness on the new GEG policy towards the young generation particularly using the digital media.

Nevertheless, the media coverage of GEG in Malaysia is low compared to other public health campaigns and policy such as mental health and vaccination. In addition, most Malaysians are not aware of GEG and the policy to prohibit the use of tobacco, specifically cigarettes and vapes for future generations. Figure 1 is a conceptual framework that explains the relationship between the portrayal of GEG through digital media narratives and the impact on the public health sector in Malaysia. Thus, this study is to explore the digital media narratives on Generational Endgame (GEG) and its impact towards the public health sector in Malaysia.
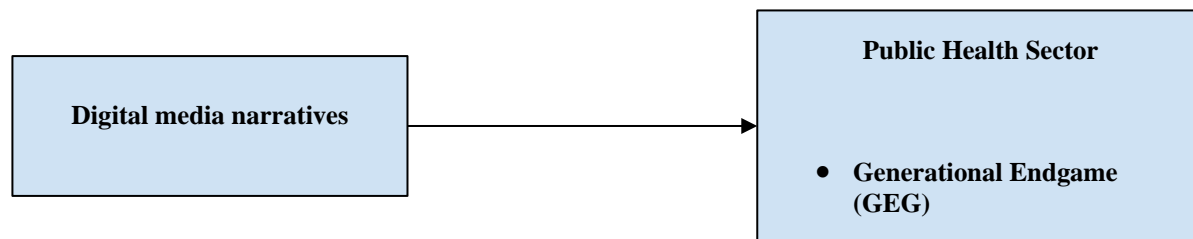
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Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

LITERATURE REVIEW

Known as the Third Industrial Revolution, the digital revolution signifies the shift from mechanical and analog electronic devices to digital technology (Rosencrance, 2023). This revolution started in the 1980s and originated from one fundamental concept: the internet. The internet is functioning for the masses and people may have access to search for information including news, entertainment and more. Thus, the internet is an important element for digital media. Unlike traditional media, digital media is different, and it is transmitted as digital data which involves digital cables or satellites sending binary signals, like 0s and 1s to devices and translating them into audio, video, pictures text and more (Maryville University, 2020). Digital media is a platform that may disseminate information to a huge number of people all around the world, for example social media and websites. In fact, using digital media may raise awareness about public health campaigns, particularly GEG, which is a new policy that requires a broad platform to reach all Malaysians. The growing number of digital media platforms means that campaigns have multiple media platforms, creating the additional challenge for practitioners to understand which platform, or combination of platforms, should be used for public health campaigns (Chan, et al., 2020).

Generational End Game Exposure On Online Newspaper

In Malaysia, there are several amendments made to the Control of Tobacco Product Regulations (2004) to regulate smoke-free environments, price and tax, tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship, and it is including the implementation of pictorial health warnings and smoke-free public places (Amer Nordin, et al., 2022). However, there is no significant decline in smoking by the public from 2011 to 2019. It shows that there is a loophole in disseminating the information to the people due to the ignorance about the smoking and tobacco-free products. Even though, in 2003, tobacco advertising was banned and since January 1995, displaying cigarette packaging in advertisements has been prohibited, and print media advertising was limited to one page (Md Tahir & Onn, 2022). In fact, research conducted in India shows that the influence of smoking scenes in movies and the frequent display of tobacco brands on-screen give an impact on the initiation of tobacco use among the young generation (Yadav & Glantz, 2020). Thus, it is evident that people who smoke have a really hard time to quit smoking and they fail many times due to the lack of information about its side effects (Aye, et al., 2022).

The news about Generational Endgame (GEG) has captured the attention of various media, particularly newspapers. Today, newspapers no longer relied on the traditional tangible

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media where people need to purchase a physical copy to access news, newspapers have become a part of online media that utilise websites to publish and disseminate news content. 40% of global internet users read online newspapers (Othman, et al., 2019). Online newspapers have become digital platforms which provide the extensive and real-time coverage of the GEG. For example, The Star reported on the launch of a survey by the Health Ministry that aims to gather public feedback on the GEG regarding the ban on the sale of tobacco products. Apart from that, they encourage all Malaysians to participate in doing the survey on MySejahtera app that covers various topics such as public opinion on the health risk of smoking, the GEG provision and the Control of Tobacco Products for Public Health Bill 2023 (The Star, 2023). It is a good coverage from the online newspapers as it encourages people about the update of the GEG and gives awareness towards the young generation. Yet, most newspaper content concerning the GEG is lacking in reporting the details about the policy and campaign. It includes articles about countries that have implemented endgame policies like Finland, France and Belgium, and the future without tobacco from a health and economy perspective.

Moreover, campaigns like GEG use various strategies to enhance population message exposure, including storyline integration, and sponsoring 'news articles' linking to campaign webpages and messaging those who previously clicked on online campaign materials with additional messaging (Durkin, Brennan, & Wakefield, 2021). Also, several large systematic reviews have concluded that web-based cessation interventions are effective for helping smokers quit, in both the short and the long term (Prutzman, et al., 2021). All of these are the creativity of the government and media, particularly online newspapers, to deliver the message about GEG to the public. It also encourages the young generation to read more about the policy that has been implemented by the government and the benefit towards them. Before this, people considered traditional printed news as their primary source of information. Nevertheless, today, the alternative media have become the new mainstream media and internet sites are far more popular than printed media (Wilson, et al., 2021). The media, like online newspapers, are perceived to be fair, unbiased, and accurate in disseminating information and educating people (Stromback, et al., 2020). It indicates that online newspapers have gained trust from readers, and it is an important element for the media in delivering information about the GEG campaign and policy.

In summary, online newspapers have a chance to cover a wide range of topics regarding the GEG and be explored from various angles either from the health or economy side. Thus, it also has a capacity to educate readers and create public opinions about the GEG. According to Tobacco Reporter (2023), the government of Malaysia has eliminated the GEG clause from its Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Bill 2023 due to it being unconstitutional as it would create two sets of law for two different groups of citizens based on age. This is not a good sign for the public health sector in Malaysia as it is a backward step that will lead to the realms of nicotine addiction and drug dependence towards children and adolescents. As a trusted news media, online newspapers should give positive narratives about GEG to encourage people, particularly the young generation, to support the policy and prioritise public health over political and economic interests.

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Generational End Game on Social Media

According to Statista (2023), about 78.5% of the Malaysian population were active social media users, as of January 2023. Most Malaysians are using social media to connect and to get information for instance Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp. Now, campaign planners rely more on online platforms and channels to expose target audiences to messages (Durkin, Brennan, & Wakefield, 2021). This concept should be applied in giving messages and educating audiences about GEG as utilising social media offers many benefits in terms of creating awareness and reporting news. In addition, users are able to share the articles and post to others, for instance friends and family. It is a good opportunity for the public health sector to spread the information and update about the GEG from time to time. According to Kelleghan, et al., (2020), digital media has potential to expose the young generation to peer social environments or to direct or indirect marketing like social media, compared to digital media that does not result in such exposure like reading news or blogs. Furthermore, social media platforms, social influencers and music festivals have replaced tobacco product placement in movies and endorsements by film stars (Hoek, Edwards, & Waa, 2021). However, these promotions are linked to a quick increase in the use of Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) among young individuals who have never smoked before. This has raised widespread concerns that the marketing of ENDS could contribute to the emergence of a new generation dependent on nicotine. Instead of sharing content that could encourage the young generation to smoke or vape, spreading information about the negative effects and consequences of smoking and vaping might persuade them to avoid using tobacco products.

Smoking or using tobacco products among adolescents or young generations is a significant public health concern with various social, health, and economic implications. There are a few factors that contribute to younger age of smoking initiation, and one of the factors is the easy availability of cheap cigarettes (Jetly, Mohammed Nawi, & R, 2021). This information should be published on social media repetitively as a reminder for the young generation on this issue. It led to other consequences if GEG got no support from them. For countries like Finland, there are several barriers to achieve tobacco-free by 2030 and one of them is the professionals who developed media campaigns targeted to high-risk groups like students were less focused on changing social norms of the general population (Timberlake, et al., 2019). The media campaigns including social media should be consistent and persistent in delivering the messages as it involves the young generation. Besides that, the government, particularly the Health Ministry should monitor the content of influencers on social media regarding the smoking activity or tobacco use. Nowadays, the young generation seems to look normal by posting photos while smoking. It is against the law for the young generation to get cigarettes and this action influences other people to try smoking. This is not a healthy lifestyle to be followed by others and it leads to other issues and affects people around.

Social media coverage about the GEG is not detailed as compared to online newspapers. More posting about smoking and vaping in social media, which are one of most public health concerns in Malaysia among the young generation. This type of posting is able to relate with GEG and create engagement with audiences. Organisations of tobacco control advocacy should post a variety of content to promote endgame, and there are some types of content that are more

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effective than others (Arendt, et al., 2021). The organisations may utilise the visual concept such as short video to attract audiences to listen to the information given. Thus, in Malaysia, organisations, including the Malaysian Institute for Public Health, International Tobacco Control Policy Evaluation (ITC) Project and local universities, have actively monitored tobacco use and control policies (Lai, et al., 2022). They often do surveys on tobacco use among adults and young generations. Thus, public support is a key lever for tobacco policy change, and it creates a low-risk political environment for policymakers and mediates policy (Cosgrave, et al., 2023). By utilising social media features, they are able to disseminate information about the survey to the target audiences and this approach aids in raising awareness on the initiatives to help the young generation to quit smoking and gain support for the GEG and other public health campaigns.

In conclusion, social media plays a crucial role in creating awareness and educating Malaysians about the campaign of GEG. Social media has so many advantages towards the public health sector from the visual content, building online communities, and enhancing the effectiveness of conveying the messages about GEG. As a versatile platform, social media contributes significantly to the success of initiatives that aim to develop a future without tobacco and promote positive generational change.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative method, involving the narrative review of articles published on the database Google Scholar and a few articles from online newspapers between 2019 and 2023. Narrative review synthesises the outcomes of individual studies with no reference to the statistical significance of the findings (Siddaway, Wood, & Hedges, 2019). The search was using the keywords 'digital media', 'Generational Endgame', 'media', 'tobacco endgame', 'tobacco use', 'smoking', 'Malaysia', and 'public health campaign'. The articles in this study must follow a few selection criteria:

1. The articles published from 2019 until 2023.
2. The articles were related to the Generational Endgame or media either in Malaysia or internationally.
3. The articles published in peer-reviewed journals.

All criteria were validated by reviewing the titles and abstracts. If all the requirements met or if there is unclear, the full articles were thoroughly read. This study related to Generational Endgame was a new policy and campaign made by the Health Ministry of Malaysia and not many articles were found, however, the study also included the online newspaper and social media for supporting documents.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

These are 15 journal articles that met the selection criteria and to be included in the study. Table 1 below shows the summary of the selected articles:

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Article	Journal (Author)	Aim	Method	Findings
Article 1	Strategies and Barriers to achieving the goal of Finland's Tobacco Endgame – (Timberlake, et al., 2019).	To explore stakeholders' perceptions about the strengths, barriers, solutions, and rationale for Finland's comprehensive but conventional strategy to achieve its nicotine-free goal.	A qualitative method	Barriers to achieve the endgame goal: 1. Insufficient fund 2. Over-reliance on non-governmental organisations. 3. Political/legal constraints 4. Impact of institutional practices on tobacco disparities 5. Ambivalence about the role of mass media 6. Lack of prioritising smoking cessation.
Article 2	Optimising Tobacco Control Campaigns	To investigate the potential for	A qualitative method	Campaign planners now

	within a Changing Media Landscape and among Priority Populations – (Durkin, Brennan, & Wakefield, 2021).	campaigns to influence the public's understanding and support for endgame tobacco control policies and for campaign elements that may influence the social and environmental contexts surrounding smokers that support and maintain behaviour change.		rely more heavily on online platforms (e.g. Facebook, Insta- gram, Twitter, YouTube, Snapchat and TikTok) and channels (e.g., catch-up television, pre- roll videos shown before online news and entertainment videos) in addition to more traditional channels (i.e., television, radio, billboards, and print) to expose target audiences to messages.
Article 3	Methods of the 2020 (Wave 1) International Tobacco Control	To describe the methods used in the 2020 International	A quantitative method	Malaysia made several amendments to the Control of

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	(ITC) Malaysia survey – (Amer Nordin, et al., 2022).	Tobacco Control (ITC) Malaysia (MYS1) Survey.		Tobacco Product Regulations (2004) to regulate: 1. Smoke-free environments 2. Price and tax 3. Tobacco advertising 4. Promotion and sponsorship 5. Tobacco packaging and labelling in the country.
Article 4	Translation of Scientific Evidence into Tobacco Control Policy in Malaysia: A Narrative Review – (Lai, et al., 2022).	To narrate on the translations of research evidence in the design and implementation of the Tobacco Control Policy in Malaysia.	A qualitative method	In Malaysia, organisations, including the Malaysian Institute for Public Health, International Tobacco Control Policy Evaluation (ITC) Project

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				and local universities, have actively monitored tobacco use and control policies.
Article 5	Is the public ready for a tobacco-free Ireland? A National Survey of Public Knowledge and Attitudes to Tobacco Endgame in Ireland – (Cosgrave, et al., 2023).	To measure public knowledge and attitudes to tobacco endgame.	A quantitative method	Public support is a key lever for tobacco policy change — it creates a low-risk political environment for policymakers and mediates policy.
Article 6	Digital Media Use and Subsequent Cannabis and Tobacco Product Use Initiation among Adolescents – (Kelleghan, et al., 2020)	To examine associations of frequent use (i.e., multiple times per day) of different digital media activities with subsequent cannabis and tobacco product use initiation over	A qualitative method	Digital media use that has the potential to expose youth to peer social environments or to direct or indirect marketing via social media, known risk

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		18 months of follow-up from 2015–2017 in a prospective cohort of youth recruited from the greater Los Angeles, CA metropolitan area.		factors for substance use initiation that would be more strongly associated with substance use initiation than digital media use that does not result in such exposure (e.g., reading news or blogs).
Article 7	The Effectiveness of Anti-Smoking Advertisements: The Roles of Media – (Aye, et al., 2022).	To determine the social demographic status of the respondents, to evaluate the respondents' perception on anti-smoking advertisement, to identify the most preferred social media for anti-smoking advertisement and to determine the	A quantitative method	It is evident that smokers find it extremely difficult to quit smoking and they failed so many times because of the lack of information about its side effects.

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		effectiveness of anti-smoking advertisements.		
Article 8	Trust and Credibility of Urban Youth on Online News Media – (Wilson, et al., 2021).	To investigate online consumer behaviour with regards to student perceptions of the trust and credibility of online news.	A quantitative method – Questionnaire	Today, however, the alternative media have become the new mainstream media, and internet news sites are far more popular with readers than print media, which is suffering a decline in readership globally.
Article 9	From Social Accessory to Societal Disapproval: Smoking, Social Norms and Tobacco Endgames – (Hoek,	To explore how the industry's renewed efforts to influence social norms could affect tobacco endgame strategies and people who smoke.	A qualitative method	Social media platforms, social influencers and music festivals have replaced tobacco product placement in movies and

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	Edwards, & Waa, 2021).			endorsements by film stars. These promotions are associated with rapid ENDS uptake among never-smoking young people and have led to widespread concerns that ENDS marketing will create new generation dependent on nicotine.
Article 10	Smoking in Malaysia: Early Initiation and Ways to Overcome – (Jetly, Mohammed Nawi, & R, 2021).	To describe the factors which contribute to the smoking initiation at younger age, issues regarding smoking bans and ways to overcome the early smoking initiation in Malaysia	A qualitative method	The main challenges in implementation of the smoking ban are poor enforcement and innovation of tobacco products. To enhance the positive effects of SFL, the

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				enforcement must be continuous and the environmental health officers should perform monitoring regularly
Article 11	Review of Evaluation Metrics Used in Digital and Traditional Tobacco Control Campaigns – (Chan, et al., 2020).	To examine how tobacco control campaigns that use traditional and digital media platforms have been evaluated.	A qualitative method	The growing number of digital media platforms means that campaigns have multiple media platforms, creating the additional challenge for practitioners to understand which platform, or combination of platforms, should be used for public health campaigns.

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Article 12	Using Digital Technologies to Reach Tobacco Users Who Want to Quit: Evidence from the National Cancer Institute's Smokefree.gov Initiative – (Prutzman, et al., 2021).	To describe the reach and use of the Smokefree.gov Initiative's resources over a 5-year period between 2014 and 2018, including how users interact with the program's digital content in ways that facilitate engagement with live counselling support.	A qualitative method	Several large systematic reviews have concluded that web-based cessation interventions are effective for helping smokers quit, in both the short and the long term.
Article 13	Tobacco Imagery in Entertainment Media: Evolution of Tobacco-Free Movies and Television Programmes Rules in India – (Yadav & Glantz, 2020)	To present the enablers and barriers in development and implementation of the regulations to curb tobacco imagery in films and television in India.	A qualitative method	Research in India shows that high levels of smoking in Indian movies and frequent displays of tobacco brands on-screen influenced youth uptake.

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Article 14	Tobacco Smoke and Children: The Legal Protection under Malaysian Laws – (Md Tahir & Onn, 2022).	To examine and analyse the extent to which Malaysian law shields children from exposure to tobacco smoke.	A qualitative method	In the 150th meeting session in Geneva Switzerland, the Health Minister, Khairy Jamaluddin said that this plan is hoped to bring out the 'generation endgame to smoking' (known as GEG) which will be included in the tobacco legislation.
Article 15	News Media Trust and Its impact on Media Use: Toward a Framework for Future Research – (Stromback, et al., 2020).	To understand on new media trust that has conceptualised and operationalized in previous research and research on the extent to which news media trust influences media	A qualitative method	Source credibility on news media consists of two main components: expertise and trustworthiness. Some components that

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		use and offer a theoretically derived framework for future research on news media trust and its influence on media use.		have been identified are the degree to which the media are perceived to be fair, unbiased, and accurate

CONCLUSION

Tobacco endgame is an initiative and comprehensive strategy that aims to eliminate the use of tobacco and achieve a tobacco-free society. In Malaysia, the GEG has been planned to bring out the 'generation endgame to smoking' which involves tobacco legislation. Tobacco is subject to significant taxes in Malaysia and directly contributes to government revenue. However, there are many issues that are triggered from the smoking and vaping activities such as health problems, and social and economic issues. Health issues are a common effect of people who smoke or vape and become one of serious concerns in the public health sector. However, a social issue that occurred from tobacco use is an unpopular statement that has been normalised in Malaysian society. Cigarettes are a major source of litter and environmental pollution, and vaping devices contribute to electronic waste. In addition, tobacco use also may lead to the economic burden especially on the healthcare system that include the medical expenses and premature baby death. These are the issues that people need to be concerned about because it may affect other people who are not smoking and vaping and create secondhand smoke. Otherwise, a good strategy and effective communication to educate and advocate people on the campaign and policy that related to tobacco endgame like Generational Endgame is a compulsory move to get support from people and it gives a significant impact to the success of the tobacco endgame goals.

In conclusion, the public health sector is able to disseminate the useful contents by using digital media platforms which deliver the information regarding the GEG campaign and policy to a huge number of audiences, particularly the young generation. Online newspapers are digital media that gain trust from audiences. So, journalists in Malaysia should use this advantage to clearly post all about the GEG and the future of tobacco-free. Other than that, social media platforms also play a significant role in developing the GEG campaign and policy. Social media serves as a primary source of news, trends, and information for many young generations. It allows them to stay updated on current issues and events happening all around the world. Besides, social media is able to be used as a learning tool with educational content available on platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. It is an opportunity for the

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government to educate the young generation on the main purpose of the GEG and the negative and positive impact it has towards the country.

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