

# Implementing Agricultural Education Programmes in Colleges of Education Through Effective Management of Institutional Resources in South Eastern Nigeria

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## Article History

**Received:** June 7, 2020

**Revised:** June 29, 2020

**Accepted:** July 7, 2020

**Published:** July 9, 2020

## Abstract

In tertiary institutions in Nigeria, there is a serious financial challenge arising from government's under-funding and lack of executive capacity to judiciously spend earmarked funds and account for the expenditure satisfactorily. This ugly situation seems to be affecting the resources and quality of Colleges of Education and would continue to downgrade the quantity and quality of facilities of the institutions' programmes including Agricultural Education, if left unabated. The study, therefore, identified ways of managing institutional resources for effective implementation of agricultural education programme at the colleges of education in Southeastern Nigeria. Resources available to colleges of education (COEs) in Nigeria are limited, and balanced academic knowledge and practical skills are required of graduates of agricultural education. Therefore, there is need to evolve sustainable strategies for managing resources in agricultural education programme of COEs in Southeastern Nigeria. The study adopted survey research design with a total population of 98 respondents that comprised of 91 agricultural education lecturers and 7 provosts from Federal and State Colleges of Education in the study area. Questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics like Mean and Standard deviation, while t-test was used to test the hypotheses. Findings revealed 12 initiatives for managing institutional resources on facilities. In addition, the study revealed 7 initiatives for managing personnel resource and 3 initiatives for financial resource. Facility management initiatives recommended are: partnership and group models of facility acquisition, adoption of fixed-time maintenance strategy; while personnel management initiative was sending academic staff to agricultural firms to update their skills on the latest technology. On financial management initiatives, generating fund from the college farm was recommended.

**Keywords:** Agricultural education; Facility management; Management; Personal resources.

## 1. Introduction

Resources of educational institutions are indicators of what such institutions are engaged in, their actual carrying capacity and therefore ensure the quality of programmes offered in such educational institutions. The importance of resources in running academic programmes in tertiary institutions in Nigeria has necessitated the establishment of Nigerian academic programme regulatory agencies such as the National Universities Commission (NUC), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE). These agencies are established to prescribe minimum human resources, structures, infrastructures, equipment and associated facilities in the minimum academic standards for establishing, governing and managing tertiary institutions in Nigeria (Oyebade *et al.*, 2012).

The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) in Nigeria grants or denies accreditation or even withdraws an accreditation from Colleges of Education (Gboosa, 2009). NCCE is a parastatal of the Federal Ministry of Education established by the Federal Government of Nigeria to advise the Federal Government on, and coordinate all aspects of, non-degree teacher education in Nigeria. It has 68 colleges of education under its control. Colleges of education are tertiary institutions in Nigeria that provide a three year training programme for the professional preparation of teachers in various academic disciplines with an award of the Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) on graduation (Federal Republic of Nigeria FRN, 2004).

One of such academic disciplines in which students are prepared as professional teachers in colleges of Education is Agricultural Education. Agricultural Education refers to a formal and non formal system of education designed to educate both young and adults about animal and crop production, horticulture, natural resources and environment, mechanics, marketing, distribution etc (Leising, 2006). The Philosophy of Agricultural Education Programmes in Nigerian Colleges of Education focuses on provision of teachers endowed with balanced approach between principles and practice of Agriculture for academic and vocational ends (National Commission for Colleges of Education NCCE, 2009). Implementing agricultural education programme at the college of education level based

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on the philosophy demands that adequate provisions of required resources be made. Ojo and Olatunji (2012) had noted that agriculture is important to man and the society in the production of food for man and animals; clothing, shelter, fuel (fire wood), income and employment (job opportunities) for the citizens; raw materials for industries, market for agro-allied industries and materials for recreation (horse for polo game and aquarium) among others.

Resources for the implementation of Agricultural Education programme in Colleges of Education can be categorised into human, physical, information and financial resources. These scholars noted that physical resources include space or land, buildings, equipment, furniture and so on; human resource refers to teaching, support and administrative staff. Also the authors refer to information resource as print and non-print media, while financial resource refers to non-recurring and recurring expenditures on the institution as a system. The authors further added that Non-recurring expenditure refers to the financial resource that addresses capital investments on buildings, equipment, furniture and other fixed asset of the institution while the recurring expenditure refers to financial resources that are used for salaries, consumables, water and electricity bills, maintenance costs and other contingent expenditures.

National Commission for Colleges of Education NCCE (2009), stipulates that facilities and personnel must be provided before full accreditation status is granted to any college of education in Nigeria, whether private or public, especially those that intend to run programme on agriculture. Such facilities and personnel according to the commission include, classrooms, laboratories, school farms, book in the library, other facilities such as tractor with the necessary coupling implement and haulage vehicles for transportation, equipment, tools and materials.

The personnel resources include the academic staff, support staff and external examiners. The support staff consists of technologists, technicians, artisans and labour hand that include maximum of two messengers. The commission finally added that staff to students ratio in an agricultural programme is one staff to twenty-five students. Apart from meeting up with the initial facilities and personnel requirements by Colleges of Education, sustainability is equally important because of re-accreditation visits by accrediting agency (NCCE) every five years (Gboosa, 2009). The situation described above calls for efficient management and maintenance of facilities and personnel resources for continuity and for keeping the institution in good and up to date condition. In view of Manfred (2012), steps towards keeping schools in good and up-to-date condition include: having accurate information about the condition of facilities and scale of funds needed, i.e. keeping the condition of the building stock and resources under regular review, defining priorities for expenditure (funding), ensure financing by convincing authorities (key people), establishing efficient resource maintenance and funding allocation mechanism, sticking to planned maintenance schedules, act promptly to repair damage; give responsibility for the condition of the facilities to people who are close to the facilities concerned; and involve the users in the management.

In the view of Sisk in Usuman *et al.* (2006), management is the coordination of all resources through process of planning, organizing, directing and controlling in order to attain stated objectives. Resources to be coordinated or managed for attainment of objectives of Colleges of Education Agricultural Education programmes in Nigeria include facility, personnel and financial resources. Facility management refers to an integrated approach to operating, maintaining, improving and adapting the buildings and infrastructure of an organization in order to create an environment that strongly supports the primary objectives of the organization (Bareth and Baldry, 2003). Facility management involves maintenance of the facilities to serve well and longer too. Osinem (2008), had stated that facilities in agricultural education as accommodation for staff, classrooms, equipment, tools, college farms and tractors among others, may be poorly maintained and need proper and regular maintenance to achieve the goals and objectives of a good Agricultural Education Programme.

Personnel management is another aspect of resource management that can make or mar the realization of an agricultural education programme in Nigeria. Personnel management includes; staff improvement programme, evaluation, orientation of new staff to get acquainted with his job, students, co-staff, community, discipline, motivation, etc (Osinem, 2008). In the like manner, management of financial resources which is usually referred to as that phase of school administration that is primarily concerned with procuring, expending, accounting, organizing and maintaining fiscal resources in an effective manner is necessary for the achievement of educational goals. The financial resources related to management of agricultural education include budgeting, budget administration, procuring and handling of funds, purchasing or expenditure of funds, inventory, accounting, auditing, financial reporting, cost analysis and insurance programming (Osinem, 2008). Most authors mentioned above view management as procurement, improvement or maintenance of resources (facility, personnel, or finance). Therefore, in this study, management of resources refers to initiatives for procurement, improvement, or maintenance of facility, personnel, or finance with a view to realizing the objectives of agricultural education in Colleges of Education.

Realization of goals and objectives of agricultural education in Colleges of Education depends very much on available resources. However, and unfortunately too, the resources are limited in supply by nature and are in a very sorry state in tertiary institutions, colleges of Education inclusive, in Nigeria. In support of the above view, the Education Sector National Technical Working Group ESNTWG (2009) reported that alarming inadequacies of infrastructural facilities exist in tertiary institutions. The group added that tertiary institutions have been expanding their enrollments in response to demand, but without expanding their classrooms, lecture halls, laboratories and other facilities such as power and water supply, sanitation and ICT facilities, due to the breakdown of national planning in the last two decades. The report by the group further revealed that universities have adequate facilities for only 14% of their student enrollments, polytechnics have for only 40% while colleges of education have for only 33% of their enrollment. On personnel resources, the group reported that universities have academic staff shortage of 45%, polytechnics have shortage of 43.5% while colleges of education have shortages of 57%. On financial resources the group reported that there are serious funding gaps arising from government under-funding. The report showed that while Iran and Korea spend 4.1% and 4.9% of their GDP on Education respectively, Nigeria spends only 0.9% of her

GDP on education. Besides the problem of under-funding by the government, there is also serious lack of executive capacity to judiciously spend earmarked funds and account for the expenditure satisfactorily as evidenced by the size of un-accessed Education Trust Fund (ETF) belonging to the tertiary education sub-sector. For instance, the universities have N6,434,000,000, the polytechnics have N2,884,030,919 and the colleges of education have N1,272,738,750 trapped with the Education Trust Fund and were not accessed ([Education Sector National Technical Working Group ESNTWG, 2009](#)). The above ugly picture of the situation of the resources in tertiary institutions, especially colleges of education will definitely affect the quality of the institutions' programmes including agricultural education programme, as the quantity and quality of facilities has an impact not only on educational outcomes, but on the well-being of students, lecturers and provosts ([Manfred, 2012](#)). Lecturers of agricultural education at colleges of education are professional teachers who prepare the students in the pedagogical and technical areas of agriculture. They utilize the institutional facilities in the implementation of the agricultural education programme. Provosts are administrative heads of colleges of education, who with the assistance of deans of faculties, supervise various activities such as instructions, research, finance, among others in the colleges. The provosts acquire, direct the distribution and utilisation of institutional resources in the colleges. Both the lecturers and the provosts can therefore identify appropriate initiatives for acquisition and sustainable utilisation of resources in colleges of education. The study is therefore interested in finding out some management initiatives that could enhance acquisition and sustainable use of resources for effective implementation of agricultural education programme in the colleges of education. Specifically, the study sought to identify ways of managing:

1. Facility in colleges of education;
2. Personnel in colleges of education; and
3. Finance in colleges of education.

### **1.1. Research Questions**

To guide the study, the following research questions were raised:

1. What are the facility management initiatives for effective implementation of the agricultural education programme in colleges of education?
2. What are the personnel management initiatives for effective implementation of the agricultural education programme?
3. What are the financial management initiatives for effective implementation of the agricultural education programme?

### **1.2. Hypotheses**

The following three null hypotheses were formulated and tested at  $p < 0.05$  level of significance.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of

Agricultural Education lecturers and the provosts of the colleges of education on the facility management initiatives for effective implementation of the agricultural education programme.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of Agricultural Education lecturers and the provosts of the colleges of education on the personnel management initiatives for effective implementation of the agricultural education programme.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Agricultural Education lecturers and the provosts of the colleges on the financial management initiatives for effective implementation of the agricultural education programme.

## **2. Methodology**

The design of the study is descriptive survey research design. [Nworgu \(2006\)](#), noted that descriptive survey research design is a design in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from a representative sample of the group. The study area is Southeastern Nigeria which is made up of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States of Nigeria with a total of seven Colleges of Education in the study area. The population of the study was lecturers of Agricultural Education and Provosts of Colleges of Education in the study area. A total of ninety-eight (98) respondents made up of ninety-one (91) lecturers of Agricultural Education and seven provosts of colleges of education were used for the study. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire structured on a four point scale of strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and strongly Disagree, with corresponding value of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. Face validation of the instrument was done by three experts in the Department of Vocational Teacher Education of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The Cronbach alpha reliability of the instrument gave an alpha reliability co-efficient value of 0.76. After effecting corrections on the instrument, it was administered by the researchers with the help of two other trained research assistants. The whole 98 copies of the questionnaire were administered, collected back and analyzed. Weighted mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while t-test statistic was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance and 96 degree of freedom. In the analyses, any mean score for any item that is below the criterion mean of 2.50 was rejected as a facility management, personnel management or financial management initiative for effective management of agricultural education programme, while a mean of 2.50 and above was accepted. Any item with a standard deviation between 0.00 and 1.98 showed that the respondents were not far from the mean and the opinion of one another. In testing hypothesis of no significant difference, at a probability of 0.05 and 96 degree of freedom for any item, once a t-cal was more than the t-critical (t-tab) the hypothesis was rejected, otherwise do not reject the hypothesis.

### 3. Results

The results of the study were got from the research questions answered and hypotheses tested through the collected and analyzed data.

**Table-1.** Mean Ratings, Standard Deviation and t-test Analysis of the Responses of the Lecturers and the Provosts on facility management initiatives for effective implementation of the agricultural education programme (N= 98)

S/N	Item statement	X	S	t-cal	t-tab	Remarks / Decision
1	Adoption of gift/ philanthropic model of facility provision.	3.71	0.46	0.60	1.98	A, N.S
2	Adoption of group model of facility provision.	3.54	0.50	1.31	1.98	A, N.S
3	Adoption of sharing model of facility provision.	2.00	0.82	1.49	1.98	D.A, N.S
4	Adoption of partnership model of facility provision.	3.31	0.63	1.43	1.98	A, N.S
5	Adoption of operate-to failure facility maintenance strategy, i.e. all regular servicing is done but nothing else to prolong the life of the building/equipment until a complete failure occur.	2.00	0.00	1.39	1.98	D.A, N.S
6	Adoption of condition – based facility maintenance strategy, i.e. parts or materials are replaced before they fail, but the replacing is done only when there is a clear indication that failure would occur.	3.66	0.48	0.07	1.98	A, N.S
7	Adoption of Fixed-time maintenance strategy, i.e. components, parts and materials of the building/equipment are replaced strictly in accordance with pre-determined or manufacturer-specified schedule.	4.00	0.00	0.00	1.98	A, N.S
8	Setting up well qualified and experienced inspection members to detect and replace part or used up materials in the building/equipment early enough.	3.66	0.48	0.07	1.98	A, N.S
9	Use of contractor to detect and carry out the maintenance work on the building/equipment	2.68	0.95	5.03	1.98	A, S
10	Having a maintenance plan of up to five years, i. e a list of the maintenance work to be done for the next five years.	3.67	0.48	1.12	1.98	A, N.S
11	Making top management aware of the importance of maintenance and the consequences of neglecting maintenance	3.09	0.46	1.73	1.98	A, N.S
12	Keeping in the institution, a comprehensive and up to date maintenance manual supplied by the manufacturer/supplier of the equipment/facility.	3.33	0.48	- 0.15	1.98	A, N.S
13	Provision of better tools and transport for the maintenance department/group	3.67	0.48	1.27	1.98	A, N.S
14	Introducing an incentive scheme for maintenance staff based on output.	3.76	0.24		1.98	A, N.S
	<b>Grand total</b>	3.29	0.46	1.43	1.98	A, N.S

X = Mean, SD = standard deviation, t-cal = t- calculated, t- table = 1.98, A = Agree, D.A = Disagreed, N.S = Not significant, S = Significant

The data in Table 1 revealed that the mean of the 12 items and grand mean of all the items ranged from 2.00 to 4.00. This showed that 12 out of the 14 items had a mean value above the cutoff point of 2.50 which indicated that the 12 items were regarded by the respondents as facility management initiatives for effective implementation of agricultural education programme in colleges of education. The table also revealed that each of the items had their standard deviation ranged from 0.00 to 0.95; this showed that the respondents were not far from the mean and from one another in their responses. The result of the test of hypothesis in Table 1 indicated that each of the 13 items had its calculated t-value lower than the table value of 1.98, while only one item (item 9) had its calculated t- value (5.03) more than the table value of 1.98. This shows that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of the provosts and the lecturers on 13 facility management initiatives for effective implementation of the agricultural education programme, while there was significant difference in their mean ratings on one of the initiative. Therefore, the hypothesis of no significant difference was upheld for each of the 13 items, while it was rejected for one item (item 9). However, the grand total mean calculated for all the item (1.43) was less than the table value of 1.98. The null hypothesis of no significant difference on the mean ratings of provosts and the lecturers on the facility management initiatives is therefore upheld.

**Table-2.** Mean Ratings, Standard Deviation and t-test Analysis of the Responses of the Lecturers and the Provosts on personnel management initiatives for effective implementation of the agricultural education programme. (N= 98)

S/N	Item Statement	X	S	t-cal	t-tab	Remarks/Decision
1	Outsourcing the services of academic staff members on Sabbatical leave from other universities	3.56	0.48	7.92	1.98	A, S
2	Engaging a model farmer to teach by sharing experiences with the students and staff of the agricultural education programme	2.94	0.24	-1.17	1.98	A, N.S
3	Engagement of the farm manager and farm attendant in teaching field practical to the students	3.49	0.50	1.26	1.98	A, N.S
4	Engaging technicians/craftsmen in teaching basic mechanics/repair skills to the student	3.61	0.49	2.07	1.98	A, S
5	Sending the academic staff to standard agricultural industries to update their skills on the latest technology in agriculture	3.52	0.50	0.29	1.98	A, N.S
6	Promoting staff exchange programme among colleges of education in the country	2.84	0.33	-0.19	1.98	A, N.S
7	Basing the promotion of the academic staff on the staff evaluation performance	3.49	0.50	0.25	1.98	A, N.S
	<b>Grand total</b>	<b>3.35</b>	<b>0.43</b>	<b>1.49</b>	<b>1.98</b>	<b>A, N.S</b>

X = Mean, SD = standard deviation, t-cal = t- calculated, t- table = 1.98, A = Agree, D.A = Disagreed, N.S= Not significant, S = Significant

The data in Table 2 revealed that the mean of the 7 items and the grand mean ranged from 2.84 to 3.61. This showed that each and all the items had a mean value above the cut-off point of 2.50, which indicated that the respondents regarded all the items as personnel management initiatives for effective implementation of agricultural education programme in colleges of education. The table also revealed that each and all the items had their standard deviation ranged from 0.24 to 0.50; which showed that the respondents were not far from the mean and from one another in their responses. The result of the test of hypothesis in Table 2 indicated that 5 of the items had their respective calculated t-value lower than the table value of 1.98, while 2 of the items (item 1 and 4 ) had their respective calculated t-value more than the table value of 1.98. This showed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of the provosts and the lecturers on the personnel management initiatives for effective implementation of agricultural education programme on the 5 items, while there was significant difference between the groups on two initiatives (item 1 and 4). The hypothesis of no significant difference was upheld for 5 items while it was rejected for the 2 items. The grand total mean of the calculated t-values of 1.49 was less than the table value of 1.98. The hypothesis of no significant difference for all the items was therefore upheld

**Table-3.** Mean Ratings, Standard Deviation and t-test Analysis of the initiatives for effective implementation of the agricultural education programme. (N= 98)

S/N	Item Statement	X	S	t-cal	t-tab	Remarks/Decisions
1	Making annual maintenance budget based on estimated cost of actual maintenance requirement	3.65	0.48	1.39	1.98	D.A, N.S
2	Basing the annual budget for maintenance work on historical data (data of previous year’s maintenance budget) with an allowance for escalation	2.33	1.26	0.11	1.98	D.A, N.S
3	Seeking fund from philanthropists, donor agencies and foundations.	2.92	0.27	0.80	1.98	A, N.S
4	Generating fund from the college farm by embarking on large scale farming enterprise	3.35	0.48	1.16	1.98	A, N.S
	<b>Grand total</b>	<b>3.06</b>	<b>0.62</b>	<b>0.87</b>	<b>1.98</b>	<b>A, N.S</b>

X = Mean, SD = standard deviation, t-cal = t- calculated, t- table = 1.98, A = Agree, D.A = Disagreed, N.S= Not significant, S = Significant

The data in Table 3 revealed that the mean of 3 items and the grand mean of all the items ranged from 2.92 to 3.65, while the mean of 1 item (item 2) was 2.33. This showed that each of the 3 items had a mean value above the cut-off point of 2.50, while 1 item (item 2) had a mean value below the cut-off point. This indicated that each of the 3 items were regarded as financial management initiatives for effective implementation of agricultural education programme by the respondents, while 1 item (item 2) was not. The table also showed that each of the items had its standard deviation ranged from 0.27 to 1.26; which showed that the respondents were not far from the mean and from one another in their responses. The result of the test of hypothesis in table 3 indicated that the t-value of each and all the items were lower than the table value of 1.98. This revealed that there was no significant difference between the mean ratings of the provosts and lecturers on the financial management initiatives for effective implementation of agricultural education programme in colleges of education. Therefore, the hypothesis of no significant difference was upheld for the 4 items.

## 4. Discussion of Results

The result of the study revealed that 12 initiatives are relevant facility management initiatives for colleges of education. The initiatives include: gift/philanthropic, partnership, and group models of facility management; adoption of fixed time maintenance strategies (component, parts and materials of buildings/equipment are replaced strictly in accordance with pre-determined or manufacturer's specified schedule); setting up a well qualified and experienced inspection team to detect and replace damaged/ used up materials in the buildings/equipment early enough). This agrees with the works of Olaitan (2008), who noted that sharing model ( two communities sharing the financing of one project that is beneficial to both); partnership model ( a community enter into agreement with the government, wealthy individuals or an organization to finance a project); group initiative model ( a group such as Age grade, company etc finance a project and hands it over to the community); and gift/philanthropic model ( individual single handedly financing a project for the community) are models for financing development project in Nigeria. Okoye (2009), also found out that donation and installation of ICT facilities to schools by Banks, provision of buildings for ICT by communities, donation of generating sets by philanthropists are ways people outside the government can partner with government in managing ICT facility provided for training students in secondary schools. The result equally agrees with the view of Manfred (2012), who noted that sticking to planned maintenance schedules, acting promptly to repair damaged equipments; giving responsibility for the condition of the facilities to people who are close to the facilities concerned, and involving the users of the facilities in the management, among others, are the right steps towards keeping schools in good and up-to-date condition.

On personnel management, all the 7 initiatives were accepted as relevant for managing personnel by the respondents. Some of the major personnel management initiatives identified include: sending the academic staff to agricultural firms to update their skills on the latest technology in agriculture, and engagement of the farm manager and farm attendant in teaching field practicals to the students. Updating of the staff skills mentioned above, is in line with the view of Osinem (2008), who noted that staff improvement programme among others is necessary in personnel management in agricultural education programme. The use of farm managers and farm attendants equally agrees with the views of Olaitan and Mama (2001) who noted that practical skill training in agriculture is better carried out by farm attendants and technicians in the farm.

On financial management initiatives, the respondents agreed that relevant financial management initiatives include: making annual maintenance budget based on estimated cost of actual maintenance requirement, generating fund from the college farm by embarking on large scale farm enterprise by the agricultural education sub-department. The above findings agree with Manfred (2012), who observed that establishing efficient resource maintenance and funding allocation mechanism, ensuring adequate financing of facility maintenance by authorities (key people), and defining priorities for expenditure (funding) are ways of keeping institutions in good and up to date condition. Olaitan and Mama (2001), equally observed that a resourceful teacher of agriculture in secondary school can generate enough fund from the school farm, which makes him/her less dependent on school authorities for funding farm practical.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Resource management is a very crucial issue in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Colleges of education agricultural education programme whose graduates are expected to have balanced academic knowledge and practical skills on graduation would be ineffective in the prevailing circumstances. Hence, concerted effort should be made to manage resources effectively for successful implementation of the programme in colleges of education. The study found out that 22 initiatives could be employed in the management of resources for effective implementation of agricultural education programme in colleges of education. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Provosts of the colleges of education should adopt partnership, gift and group models of project financing to acquire facilities for their institutions.
2. Academic staff of agricultural education should be sent to agricultural firms to update their skills on the latest technology in agriculture.
3. Agricultural department of the colleges of education should embark on large scale farming enterprise to generate fund from the college farm.
4. The agricultural education department of colleges of education should use services of farm managers, farm attendants and experience of the model farmers to improve the students and staff skills in agriculture.

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