

Variety of Leadership Styles in the Islamic Education Ecosystem of the Archipelago

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Abstract: Leadership serves as a determining factor in the success of Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, which currently face complex challenges due to globalization and intense competition among educational institutions. This research examines various leadership typologies applied in different types of Islamic educational institutions in the Archipelago, ranging from traditional pesantren to modern madrasah, focusing on how charismatic leadership interacts with professional management demands and how local wisdom can be integrated into contemporary leadership practices. The research employs a qualitative approach with library research methods through content analysis of various Islamic educational leadership literature. Research findings reveal four main leadership typologies: charisma-based leadership centered on barakah that still dominates pesantren, collective leadership based on deliberation emphasizing participation, transformative leadership based on empowerment focusing on potential development, and adaptive leadership based on context that remains flexible to change. Historical, cultural, and contextual factors influence the selection of leadership styles in each institution. The novelty of this research lies in its comprehensive approach that integrates dimensions of Archipelago local wisdom, Islamic prophetic values, and contemporary leadership theories into a single analytical framework across various types of Islamic educational institutions. The research recommends a transformative-prophetic leadership model based on local wisdom that combines spiritual strength with professional management systems as an ideal solution for developing Islamic educational institutions that are authentic yet remain competitive in the modern era.

Keywords:

Leadership; Education;
Islam Nusantara.

Abstrak: Kepemimpinan menjadi faktor penentu keberhasilan lembaga pendidikan Islam di Indonesia yang saat ini menghadapi tantangan kompleks akibat globalisasi dan persaingan ketat antar institusi pendidikan. Penelitian ini mengkaji ragam tipologi kepemimpinan yang diterapkan pada berbagai jenis lembaga pendidikan Islam Nusantara, mulai dari pesantren tradisional hingga madrasah modern, dengan fokus pada bagaimana kepemimpinan kharismatik berinteraksi dengan tuntutan manajemen profesional serta bagaimana kearifan lokal dapat diintegrasikan dalam praktik kepemimpinan kontemporer. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kepustakaan melalui analisis isi terhadap berbagai literatur kepemimpinan pendidikan Islam. Hasil penelitian menemukan empat tipologi utama kepemimpinan: kharismatik berbasis barakah yang masih dominan di pesantren, kolektif berbasis musyawarah yang mengedepankan partisipasi, transformatif berbasis pemberdayaan yang fokus pada pengembangan potensi, dan adaptif berbasis kontekstual yang fleksibel terhadap perubahan. Faktor historis, kultural, dan kontekstual mempengaruhi pemilihan gaya kepemimpinan pada setiap lembaga. Kebaruan penelitian terletak pada pendekatan komprehensif yang mengintegrasikan dimensi kearifan lokal Nusantara, nilai profetik Islam, dan teori kepemimpinan kontemporer dalam satu kerangka analisis lintas jenis lembaga pendidikan Islam. Penelitian merekomendasikan model kepemimpinan transformatif-profetik berbasis

Kata Kunci:

Kepemimpinan;
Pendidikan; Islam
Nusantara.

kearifan lokal yang menggabungkan kekuatan spiritual dengan sistem manajemen profesional sebagai solusi ideal bagi pengembangan lembaga pendidikan Islam yang autentik namun tetap kompetitif di era modern.

A. Introduction

Leadership is a fundamental element that determines the direction and success of an organization, including Islamic educational institutions. Every individual essentially has leadership responsibility, at least in managing themselves so that life becomes directed and meaningful. In the context of educational organizations, leadership cannot be separated from power and authority, because without such legitimacy a leader does not have the strength to influence and mobilize others towards achieving common goals. The current era of globalization presents increasingly complex and uncertain challenges for leaders of Islamic educational institutions. They are required to have high capabilities in managing strategic environmental changes that directly impact the existence of the institutions they lead. Effective leadership becomes the main key in answering the demands of ever-evolving times. A good leader is not only able to apply modern management principles, but is also willing to provide welfare and happiness to organizational members and the wider community. Thus, human resources become the most valuable asset that must be managed optimally to achieve the goals of Islamic educational organizations (Fadlol, 2021).

Islamic education in the Archipelago has its own uniqueness in terms of leadership, especially in the context of pesantren which still adheres to a charismatic leadership system based on the figure of the kiai. The charismatic authority of the kiai becomes a central element that cannot be separated from pesantren life, even amid the continuous flow of modernity. The charisma inherent in the figure of the kiai stems from religious legitimacy, scholarly lineage, and spiritual depth that provides strong influence over santri, alumni, and the community surrounding the pesantren. Personal and emotional relationships built through various activities such as regular religious gatherings, spiritual guidance, and exemplary behavior further strengthen this charismatic authority. Many pesantren were established and developed based on the charisma of their founders, where important decisions are often made based on direct guidance or blessing from the kiai. Traditions such as sungkem, tabarruk, and respectful

attitudes when meeting the kiai become concrete manifestations of the recognition of charismatic authority in pesantren leadership. However, this charismatic leadership model that tends to be personal and centralistic faces challenges when it must adapt to the demands of professional governance that emphasizes clear and structured systems, procedures, and delegation of authority (Hidayasha & Syukri, 2024).

Leadership issues in traditional Islamic educational institutions become increasingly complex when faced with various internal and external challenges. Internally, organizational structure problems, budget systems, curriculum, student affairs, and potential conflicts between organizational components become significant obstacles. Externally, the level of public trust in traditional Islamic educational institutions remains an issue that needs serious attention. The view of some communities that place traditional Islamic educational institutions as a last choice after favorite private schools and public schools indicates a perception gap that must be bridged. This condition not only reflects objective assessment, but also impacts the community's interest in enrolling their children in traditional Islamic educational institutions. In the context of increasingly fierce competition, every educational institution is forced to appear with its respective competitive advantages. Traditional Islamic educational institutions must be able to strengthen human resources, facilities, and management systems to win the competition. Leadership transformation becomes an inevitability that cannot be avoided, while maintaining the noble values that constitute the identity of Islamic educational institutions themselves (Dinia & Masykur, 2025).

Based on these problems, this research attempts to answer several fundamental questions related to leadership typology in Islamic educational institutions of the Archipelago. The first question that becomes the focus is how the various leadership styles are applied in different types of Islamic educational institutions in the Archipelago, from salaf pesantren to modern madrasah. The second question relates to what factors influence the selection and application of certain leadership styles in Islamic educational institutions. The third question explores how the dynamics of charismatic leadership interact with the demands of professional management in the context of contemporary Islamic educational institutions. The fourth question attempts to identify transformative and prophetic leadership models that are relevant to be

applied in Islamic educational institutions of the Archipelago. The last question examines how leadership in Islamic educational institutions can accommodate local wisdom of the Archipelago while answering global challenges. Through these research questions, it is expected that an ideal leadership pattern can be found for Islamic educational institutions of the Archipelago that is able to balance traditional values and the demands of modernity in a harmonious and productive unity (Quraish, 2023).

This research is based on the hypothesis that there is a diversity of leadership styles in Islamic educational institutions of the Archipelago influenced by the historical, cultural, and contextual factors of each institution. The first hypothesis states that charismatic leadership still dominates traditional Islamic educational institutions, but is beginning to transform towards more professional and collaborative leadership. The second hypothesis assumes that the integration of transformative and prophetic leadership can be an effective solution in improving the quality of Islamic education without eliminating the spiritual and moral values that are its foundation. The third hypothesis states that the success of leadership in Islamic educational institutions highly depends on the leader's ability to balance charismatic authority with systematic professional governance. The implications of this research are very important for the development of leadership models in Islamic educational institutions in the future. The research results are expected to provide theoretical contributions in enriching the treasury of Islamic educational leadership knowledge, while providing practical implications for leaders of Islamic educational institutions in designing leadership strategies that are more effective and responsive to the dynamics of the times (Awaluddin, 2021).

The novelty of this research lies in a comprehensive approach in analyzing the leadership typology of Islamic educational institutions in the Archipelago by considering the dimensions of local wisdom, social transformation, and global demands simultaneously. Different from previous studies that tend to focus on one type of institution or one leadership approach, this research presents a comparative analysis across types of Islamic educational institutions, ranging from salaf pesantren, modern pesantren, madrasah, to integrated Islamic schools. Another novelty is the effort to integrate the concept of prophetic leadership sourced from Islamic teachings with contemporary leadership theories such as transformational, situational, and collaborative

in one complete analytical framework. This research also explores how the values of Archipelago local wisdom can enrich Islamic educational leadership practices without reducing the essence of Islamic teachings themselves. Thus, this research is expected to produce an authentic Archipelago Islamic educational leadership model, namely a model rooted in Islamic tradition and local culture, yet remains adaptive to changing times and able to compete in the global arena. The contribution of this research becomes important in answering the leadership crisis challenge currently faced by Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia (Penelitian, Komunikasi, & Keagamaan, 2023).

B. Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with a library research method to study in depth the various leadership styles in Islamic educational institutions of the Archipelago. The library research method was chosen because it is considered most appropriate for exploring and analyzing various concepts, theories, and practices of Islamic educational leadership that have been documented in various literature sources. Primary data sources in this research include textbooks, scientific journals, research articles, and other academic works that discuss Islamic educational leadership, both written by domestic and foreign experts. Meanwhile, secondary data sources are obtained from Islamic educational institution documentation, previous research reports, mass media articles, and other supporting sources relevant to the research focus. Data collection techniques are carried out through documentation by reading, examining, and recording important information from various collected literature. The literature selection process is carried out carefully by considering the credibility of the author, the relevance of substance to the research theme, and the actuality of the information presented to ensure that the data used is truly valid and academically accountable (Fadli, 2021).

C. Result and Discussion

1. Leadership Typology Based on Islamic Local Wisdom

The characteristics of leadership in Islamic educational institutions in the Archipelago have their own uniqueness that distinguishes them from conventional leadership models. This uniqueness is born from the combination of universal Islamic teaching values with local wisdom that has been deeply rooted in Indonesian society's

culture (Jakarta & Jakarta, 2024). The long journey of Islam's spread in the Archipelago has given birth to various forms of educational institutions with diverse leadership characteristics. From traditional pesantren led by a kiai to modern madrasah with professional management systems, all show their own dynamics in leadership practices. This diversity of leadership typology is inseparable from the social, cultural, and geographical context of each region. The interaction between leaders and the communities they lead is also influenced by local values that live in the local community. Understanding leadership typology based on local wisdom becomes important for developing leadership models that suit the character of Indonesian society. This typology is not merely a theoretical classification, but a reflection of real practices that have been passed down through generations in various Islamic educational institutions. By understanding this diversity of leadership typology, it is expected that an ideal formula can be found that is able to accommodate the needs of Islamic education development without eliminating the cultural roots and spiritual values that are its foundation (Puadi & Malang, 2024).

Charismatic Leadership Typology Based on Barakah

Charismatic leadership is the most prominent model in the Archipelago Islamic education tradition, especially in the pesantren environment. This model places the leader figure as the center of authority who is respected not because of formal position, but because of the spiritual and scholarly qualities they possess. The concept of barakah or blessing becomes the main foundation in the relationship between the leader and those led (Mei et al., 2024). The community believes that closeness to a leader who has barakah will bring goodness in their lives. Traditions such as sungkem, kissing hands, and asking for prayers become concrete manifestations of recognition of the leader's spiritual authority. The charisma possessed by leaders does not just appear suddenly, but is built through a long process of dedication in the religious field and service to the community. The scholarly lineage that connects to great ulama of the past becomes an important factor in strengthening the charismatic legitimacy of a leader. The depth of religious knowledge, personal piety, and the ability to understand the ummah's problems become the main capital for the formation of charisma. In practice, important decisions are often made based on the consideration and blessing of this charismatic leader, even

though there is already a formal organizational structure that should function (Puadi & Malang, 2024).

Collective Leadership Typology Based on Deliberation

Collective leadership prioritizes the principle of active participation of all organizational elements in the decision-making process. This model adopts the value of musyawarah taught in Islam while reflecting the tradition of deliberation in Archipelago local culture. Leaders in this typology function as facilitators who gather various aspirations and views to then be formulated into joint decisions. There is no unilateral dominance in determining the direction of educational institution policies, all voices have the opportunity to be heard and considered (Jaya, 2021). The board of caretakers, teachers' council, and various deliberation forums become important platforms in the implementation of this collective leadership. Decisions made through the musyawarah mechanism are considered more legitimate because they involve many parties and minimize the potential for resistance in their implementation. The division of tasks and responsibilities is done proportionally according to the expertise and capacity of each individual. Transparency and accountability become the main principles firmly held in running the organization. However, collective leadership does not mean eliminating the central role of the main leader who remains the final determinant when consensus is difficult to achieve. The balance between collective participation and leader authority becomes the key to the success of this leadership model in the context of Archipelago Islamic educational institutions (Puadi & Malang, 2024).

Adaptive Leadership Typology Based on Context

Adaptive leadership is a response to the dynamics of continuous change occurring in the contemporary education world. This model demands flexibility from leaders in adjusting their leadership style according to the situations and conditions faced. Adaptive leaders understand that there is no one leadership formula suitable for all situations, so sensitivity is needed in reading the context. Local wisdom such as *alon-alon asal kelakon* or slowly but surely becomes a guide in managing change without causing excessive turmoil (Hidayanto & Rachman, 2021). At certain times leaders can be firm and directive, but at other times can be more democratic and participative. The ability to read the internal political situation of the organization becomes important to

determine the right leadership strategy. Adaptive leaders must also be able to bridge the demands of modernization with the preservation of traditional values that have been rooted. Technology and modern management systems are integrated without eliminating the essence of Islamic education that emphasizes the formation of noble character. Collaboration with various external parties is carried out selectively according to the values and principles held by the institution. This contextual-based adaptive leadership becomes a strategic choice for Islamic educational institutions that want to remain relevant amid changing times while maintaining their identity and character as institutions rooted in the Archipelago Islamic tradition (Malik & Amrullah, 2022).

2. Collective Versus Individual Leadership in Madrasah

The dynamics of leadership in madrasah demonstrate two different models that are equally relevant in the practice of managing Islamic educational institutions. The first model is individual leadership that places the madrasah principal figure as the holder of primary authority in decision-making. The second model is collective leadership that prioritizes the participation of various parties in the managerial process of the institution. Both models have their respective advantages and limitations that need to be understood comprehensively (Aryawan, 2021). In the context of madrasah as an Islamic educational institution, the choice between individual or collective leadership cannot be decided carelessly. Factors such as organizational culture, human resource characteristics, problem complexity, and external demands also influence the effectiveness of the leadership model applied. The madrasah principal as the main leader must have the sensitivity to determine when to make decisions individually and when to involve other parties collectively. This ability to read situations becomes an important competence that must be possessed by every Islamic education leader. The discourse on madrasah leadership cannot be separated from Islamic leadership principles that teach the values of justice, musyawarah, and moral responsibility to Allah and to the people led (Rahma, Andika, Natifa, Farhani, & Dahlan, 2022).

Individual leadership in madrasah places the madrasah principal as a central figure who has full authority in determining the direction of institutional policy. This model has advantages in terms of decision-making speed because it does not require a long and complicated deliberation process. In emergency situations or conditions that demand quick responses, individual leadership proves more effective compared to the collective

model that requires time for coordination and consultation. Madrasah principals who lead individually usually have a clear and strong vision about where the institution will be taken (Transformatif et al., n.d.). The strength of this personal vision becomes the driving force for all madrasah components to move towards the established goals. Consistency in policy is also easier to maintain when decisions are in the hands of one person who has a deep understanding of the institution's condition. However, individual leadership also has its own risks, especially when the madrasah principal does not have adequate capacity or when personal ego is more dominant than institutional interests. The potential for errors in decision-making becomes greater because there is no effective checks and balances mechanism. High dependence on the leader figure can also cause problems when leadership changes occur, where programs that have been running can stop or change drastically according to the wishes of the new leader (Manajemen, Muzakki, Maunah, & Patoni, 2023).

Different from individual leadership, the collective leadership model in madrasah emphasizes the active participation of various parties in the decision-making process. Teacher councils, madrasah committees, even student representatives can be involved in deliberation forums to formulate institutional policies. This model is in line with the principle of shura in Islam which teaches the importance of musyawarah in solving common problems (Julaiha, n.d.). Decisions produced through a collective process tend to have stronger legitimacy because they involve many interested parties. The sense of ownership towards the resulting policies is also higher so that implementation can run more smoothly with full support from all madrasah components. Collective leadership also opens space for the emergence of creative and innovative ideas from various groups that may not have been thought of by the madrasah principal alone. Diversity of perspectives in the decision-making process can minimize blind spots and produce more comprehensive solutions. The division of responsibilities in collective leadership can also reduce the workload of the madrasah principal so they can focus on more important strategic aspects. However, the weakness of this model lies in the length of the decision-making process and the potential for conflicts of interest among parties involved in musyawarah (Kh & Ali, 2023).

In practice, effective leadership in madrasah is often a combination of individual and collective models adapted to the context of the problems faced. Wise madrasah

principals will use an individual approach for routine operational technical decisions that do not require in-depth discussion. Meanwhile, for strategic policies that have long-term impacts and concern the interests of many parties, the collective approach becomes a more appropriate choice. Flexibility in choosing leadership models requires maturity and wisdom from the madrasah principal to not be trapped in one rigid pattern (Suryani Octavia Jurusan Manajemen Pendidikan, Ilmu Pendidikan, & Ina Savira Jurusan Psikologi, n.d.). The ability to read situations and understand problem characteristics becomes key in determining the most appropriate approach. Such situational leadership is in line with Islamic teachings that teach the importance of hikmah or wisdom in leading. The Prophet himself in his leadership showed flexibility in approach, sometimes he made decisions alone and sometimes he deliberated with his companions. The principle of justice must also be the foundation in every decision-making, whether done individually or collectively, so that no party feels disadvantaged or their interests ignored (Ahmad et al., 2022).

To realize balanced leadership between individual and collective models, madrasah need to build supporting systems and organizational culture. A clear organizational structure with firm division of tasks and authority becomes an important foundation so that there is no overlap or functional vacuum. Structured and regularly scheduled deliberation mechanisms need to be established so that the collective process does not run sporadically and ineffectively. Information transparency to all madrasah stakeholders is also important so that each party understands the context and considerations behind every decision made. Leadership capacity development should not only be focused on the madrasah principal but also on teachers and other education personnel so they are ready when asked to participate in the collective leadership process (Prihantoro, n.d.). Periodic evaluation of the effectiveness of the applied leadership model needs to be done to identify existing strengths and weaknesses. By building a mature leadership system, madrasah can optimize the advantages of both leadership models while minimizing their respective weaknesses. Ultimately, both individual and collective leadership equally aim to bring madrasah to achieve the established vision and mission while upholding Islamic values in every process (Pendidikan, 2022).

3. Leadership Dynamics of Indonesian Islamic Educational Organizations

Leadership in Indonesian Islamic educational institutions has a crucial role in determining the progress and sustainability of institutions. Every person essentially has the responsibility to lead, at least towards themselves to achieve a meaningful life. In the realm of educational organizations, leadership cannot be separated from aspects of authority and legitimacy because without these a leader will have difficulty mobilizing organizational members towards expected goals. Amid the current of globalization that brings rapid change, leaders of Islamic educational institutions face increasingly complex and uncertain challenges (Dinia & Masykur, 2025). They are required to have high capabilities in managing strategic environmental changes that directly impact the existence of the institutions they lead. Effective leadership becomes the main key to answering the dynamics of ever-evolving times. Quality leaders not only master contemporary management principles, but are also able to provide welfare and happiness for all organizational members and the surrounding community. Therefore, human resources become the most valuable asset that must be managed optimally in order to achieve the goals of Islamic educational organizations maximally and sustainably (Sosial & Hayati, n.d.).

Indonesian Islamic educational institutions have unique characteristics in terms of leadership, especially in pesantren which still maintain a charismatic leadership system centered on the figure of the kiai. The charismatic authority of the kiai becomes a fundamental element that is inseparable from pesantren life, even as modernity continues to develop. The charisma inherent in the kiai stems from religious legitimacy, strong scholarly lineage, and depth of spirituality that provides great influence on santri, alumni, and the community around the pesantren. Personal and emotional relationships formed through various activities such as regular religious gatherings, spiritual guidance, and exemplary attitudes further strengthen this charismatic authority. Many pesantren were established and developed based on the charisma of their founders, where important decisions are often made based on direct guidance or approval from the kiai (Quraish, 2023). Traditions such as sungkem, seeking blessings, and respectful attitudes when meeting the kiai become concrete manifestations of recognition of spiritual authority in pesantren leadership. Nevertheless, this charismatic leadership model that tends to be personal and centralized faces challenges when it must adapt to

the demands of professional governance that emphasizes clear and well-structured systems, procedures, and delegation of authority (Iano, Gistituati, & Padang, 2025).

Leadership problems in traditional Islamic educational institutions become increasingly complex when faced with various challenges from inside and outside the organization. From the internal side, problems of organizational regulation, budgeting systems, curriculum, student affairs, and potential conflicts between organizational components become quite significant obstacles. From the external side, the level of public trust in traditional Islamic educational institutions remains an issue that requires special attention (Administrasi Pendidikan, Nurbaya Ali, Zahri Harun, & Pd, 2015). The view of some communities that place traditional Islamic educational institutions as a last option after favorite private schools and public schools shows a perception gap that must be overcome. This condition not only reflects objective assessment, but also influences the community's interest in enrolling their children in traditional Islamic educational institutions. In the context of increasingly tight competition, every educational institution is forced to display its respective competitive advantages. Traditional Islamic educational institutions must be able to strengthen the quality of human resources, completeness of facilities, and management systems to be able to compete. Leadership transformation becomes an inevitability that cannot be avoided, while maintaining the noble values that are the distinctive identity of Islamic educational institutions themselves (Definisi, Tipologi, & Efektif, 2025).

Various leadership models have developed in Indonesian Islamic educational institutions as a response to the challenges of the times. The charismatic leadership model based on barakah still dominates traditional pesantren, where the leader figure becomes the center of authority respected not because of formal position, but because of the spiritual and scholarly qualities possessed. The collective leadership model based on musyawarah prioritizes the principle of active participation of all organizational elements in the decision-making process, where the leader functions as a facilitator who gathers various aspirations to be formulated into joint decisions (Daulay et al., 2024). The transformative leadership model based on empowerment emphasizes efforts to change and develop the potential of all organizational members towards higher levels, not only focusing on achieving short-term targets but also on long-term character formation. The adaptive leadership model based on contextual is a response to the

dynamics of continuous change, demanding flexibility from leaders in adjusting their leadership style according to the situations faced. In practice, effective leadership in Islamic educational institutions is often a combination of various models adapted to the context of problems. The ability to read situations and understand problem characteristics becomes key in determining the most appropriate approach to institutional conditions (Harsoyo, 2022).

D. Conclusion

Important findings regarding the complexity of leadership in Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia demonstrate the diversity of approaches according to the historical, cultural, and geographical context of each institution. There are four main typologies identified in the leadership practices of Islamic educational institutions in the Archipelago. First, charismatic leadership based on barakah that still dominates traditional pesantren, where the leader's authority stems from spiritual legitimacy and profound religious knowledge. Second, collective leadership based on deliberation that emphasizes active participation of all organizational elements in formulating shared policies. Third, transformative leadership based on empowerment that focuses on long-term potential development and character formation of organizational members. Fourth, adaptive leadership based on context that requires leaders' flexibility in adjusting their leadership style according to the dynamics of the situation faced. These four models do not stand exclusively alone, but are often used in combination depending on the specific needs and conditions of the institution. Factors influencing the selection of leadership style are highly diverse, encompassing historical, cultural, contextual aspects, the leader's personality, as well as the institution's level of openness to change and developing innovation.

The ideal leadership model for Indonesian Islamic educational institutions moving forward is a model capable of integrating local wisdom of the Archipelago, prophetic Islamic values, and modern management principles into one harmonious unity. This model must be deeply rooted in Islamic tradition and local culture as authentic identity, yet remain adaptive and responsive to the changing times and capable of competing in the global context. The dynamics of interaction between charismatic leadership and professional management demands demonstrate complex patterns, where spiritual authority must be harmonized with structured management

systems. Transformative-prophetic leadership based on local wisdom becomes a strategic choice that combines spiritual strength, empowerment vision, and professional management systems. In practice, leaders must possess sensitivity to determine when to use firm individual approaches and when to involve participatory collective mechanisms, depending on the context of the problems faced. The ability to read situations, flexibility in approach, and commitment to justice values become key competencies that contemporary Islamic education leaders must possess to develop institutions optimally without losing their identity and noble values.

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