



## Prevalence of Drug Abuse amongst Nigerian Young Adults: A Systematic Review

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### ABSTRACT

*This study has shown the various side effects of young adults in Nigeria who use drugs at high levels. According to the findings of this study, the number of drug users can be reduced by making the right strategic decisions. Implementing this policy can help to reduce the number of new drug addicts and keep others from abusing drugs. Raising awareness about the negative consequences of drug abuse can help the Nigerian government by reducing the number of drug addicts. The side effects of drug abuse are extremely dangerous, including decreased mental and physical ability in drug addicts. Drug abuse raises cardiovascular risks, which can reduce the life expectancy of those involved. Abusing drugs can lead to heart vessel blockage, which is a major concern for the Nigerian government. However, drug abuse should be reduced by encouraging people to live a healthy lifestyle. Knee arthritis can also be caused by drug abuse, and the youth generation is especially vulnerable to these side effects. "National health institutions" have represented various side effects of drug abuse, and this knowledge has been disseminated through this study. This study demonstrates strategies for mitigating drug addiction in Nigeria's youth generation. Colleges should be kept clean to eliminate the possibility of drug supply. Colleges should also hold presentations on the negative consequences of drug abuse, which can tackle drug addiction.*

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### INTRODUCTION

Substance abuse can be defined as a pattern of continuous, recurrent, or sporadic use of a psychoactive substance that has resulted in clinically substantial harm to a person's physical or mental health or behavior that harms others. The International Classification of Disorders 11 [ICD11] regulations were used to define this term. (International Classification of Disorders, 2019) The World Health Organization's (WHO) International Classification of Diseases (ICD) is the most widely used classification system for mental, behavioral, or neurodevelopmental disorders (MBND) and somatic illnesses worldwide.

The ICD-11 is a free resource for physicians in a variety of settings, academics, consumers, administrators, policymakers, and governments around the world. The International Classification of Diseases (ICD) is a tool for clinical documentation and demographic statistics.

### Research Rationale

Around 40% of Nigerian youth have been found to be heavily involved in high-dose drug use. As a result, drug abuse is the most serious threat to Nigerian youth, and it must be addressed. This problem is caused by the availability of drugs in the Nigerian market as well as the illegal supply of drugs. Poor economic and educational status is also a contributing factor to

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the rise in the number of drug addicts in Nigeria. This is now a problem because the Nigerian government has failed to implement mitigation strategies (Ngwu et al. 2022). There is a trend toward drug use, which is leading to an increase in the number of drug abusers. There is a large drug supply chain, which increases the availability of drugs on the black market. It is also the cause of the rise in the number of drug addicts in Nigeria. This research investigates the factors that lead to people becoming addicted to drugs. Additionally, the study will provide information on regulatory strategies to address these issues (Jatau Abubakar et al. 2021). This study will look at ways to reduce the number of drug users.

### **Synthesis of Current Literature**

Substance abuse is becoming a public health concern in Nigeria, according to the UNODC, Nigeria is one of the current highest consumers of cannabis and amphetamine in Africa, but few studies have focused on drug use among adolescents and young adults. Young adults confront unique obstacles during this period of transition, which frequently leads to drug and alcohol experimentation. Adolescents who misuse substances are more likely to continue doing so into adulthood, therefore addressing the reality of young adults and addiction is critical.

Research previously conducted by Jatau et al., 2021 estimated that 271 million (5.5%) of the global population in Nigeria (aged between 15 and 64 years), had used drugs in the previous year. United Nations office on drugs and crime (UNODC) (2019). Also, it has been projected those 35 million individuals will be experiencing drug use disorders. Another primary study conducted in Nigerian universities by Anthony Idowu Ajayi and Oluwaseyi Dolapo Somefun., 2020 showed that, 24.5 percent of students have taken drugs recreationally at some point in their lives, and 17.5 percent are current users. Current users (n = 137) had a median drug usage frequency of six days in the previous month. Living in the same household as one's mother (AOR 0.28 95 percent CI 0.16–0.49), having adequate family support (AOR 0.48 95 percent CI 0.26–0.89), and attending religious

fellowships frequently (AOR 0.13 95 percent CI 0.07–0.25) were all associated with a lower likelihood of recreational drug use in the multivariable analyses.

Males on the other hand, was linked to a higher risk of recreational drug use (AOR 1.52, 95 percent CI 1.05–2.21). Men are more likely than women to use all types of illicit drugs, and illicit drug use leads to more emergency room visits and overdose deaths in men than in women. Office of Research on Women's Health (ORWH). It was gathered from findings that the male child feels more pressure at this transitioning stage because most of them do not open to their parents. Thereby leading them to make irrational decisions and bending to peer pressure.

As a result, updated summarized data on drug addiction in Nigeria is required. As a result, a scoping review of the literature would be carried out to synthesize the findings of epidemiological studies on drug misuse as well as the provisions of Nigerian drug legislation. In this study, which aim to describe the findings of much research on the incidence of drug abuse, commonly abused drugs, drug sources, groups of people who are frequently involved, the cause for drug misuse, risk factors, existing policies and laws, and prevention interventions.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Drug abuse is a critical public health issue globally, and Nigeria is no exception. The problem is particularly pronounced among young adults, a demographic that represents the future workforce and leadership of the nation. The prevalence of drug abuse among this age group has far-reaching implications for both individual and societal well-being. Despite various efforts by government and non-governmental organizations to curb the menace, drug abuse remains a persistent challenge.

In Nigeria, young adults aged 18-35 are increasingly exposed to various substances, ranging from alcohol and tobacco to more potent drugs like cannabis, cocaine, and methamphetamine. This demographic is at a vulnerable stage of life, often facing significant social, economic, and psychological pressures.

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These pressures, coupled with the availability and accessibility of drugs, contribute to the high prevalence of substance abuse. The consequences of drug abuse among young Nigerian adults are severe, encompassing health problems, academic underperformance, unemployment, criminal behavior, and strained family relationships. Additionally, drug abuse contributes to the burden on the healthcare system and hampers economic development due to the loss of productive workforce.

### **Objectives of the Study**

Aim of this research is to identify the factors increasing drug abuse amongst young adults in Nigeria and create strategies to mitigate these issues.

1. To identify the factors responsible for high rate of drug abuse in Nigeria
2. To create strategies for awareness of drug abuse in Nigeria
3. To decrease the number of young adults abusing drugs with the right strategic decisions

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the factors that are responsible for increasing number of drug abuse in Nigeria?
2. How can government improve knowledge about drug abuse and stop further increase of drug abuse among the Nigerian youths?
3. What is the prevalence of young adults abusing drugs in Nigeria?
4. How can drug abusers be managed and the number of drug addicts reduced?

### **Limitations of the study**

The limitation of the systematic review is that there is insufficient data to control the subsequence relevant data based on this report, which has the potential to provide effective data on society. With the presence of some eligible studies on this subject, the approaches of this report may be excluded. The research result will be used to modify the data calculation in the summarized reports. These reports would provide

basic ideas about data reflection to change the classification of the objective, the outcome of the report's method and technique selection.

This report study also has limitations that have influenced the findings of this research paper. The first limitation of the report is that it was created based on the behavior of adolescents in a community in southern Nigeria. The adolescent was required to modify the effective nature of drug abuse based on the findings of the connective and effective. Furthermore, this research has established a fundamental distinction between the connective and cultural effects on society. Nigeria has some additional advantages in modifying the variable number of the research study to maintain the effective response of this research report. This report demonstrated that drug abuse is significantly active with various factors, which do not have sufficient effects to maintain their effective result. Furthermore, some of the factors that have been affected to maintain the nature of drug abuse, along with some legal steps and the effective nature of the drug, help to maintain the growth of society.

To control the effectiveness of this report, drug abuse is significantly associated with some other factors of sociality, depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem. This report also gives the community's social activities an effective sense and control. The research review provides insufficient data to sustain the report's growth and connective nature. The decrease in the prevalence of drug abuse will alter the nature of the Nigerian community's active communication. The socioeconomic effects provide an effective nature to this report, which lacks sufficient data to maintain the society's active and growth. Despite these limitations, the strength of this report is that it provides an effective result between the social and economic conditions of Nigerian communities.

### **Scope of the Study**

This study aims to systematically review and synthesize existing research on the prevalence of drug abuse among young Nigerian adults. The focus will be on understanding the extent, patterns, and socio-demographic factors associated with drug abuse in this population.

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### **Significance of the Study**

This systematic review will provide a consolidated and comprehensive overview of the current state of drug abuse among young adults in Nigeria. The findings will be crucial for developing effective prevention and intervention strategies tailored to the needs of this demographic.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The issue of drug abuse among young adults in Nigeria has garnered significant attention over the years due to its impact on health, socio-economic development, and crime rates. This literature review aims to explore the existing body of research on this topic, highlighting key findings, trends, and gaps in the current knowledge. Substance abuse is becoming a public health concern in Nigeria, according to the UNODC, Nigeria is one of the current highest consumers of cannabis and amphetamine in Africa, but few studies have focused on drug use among adolescents and young adults. Young adults confront unique obstacles during this period of transition, which frequently leads to drug and alcohol experimentation. Adolescents who misuse substances are more likely to continue doing so into adulthood, therefore addressing the reality of young adults and addiction is critical.

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### **Literature Gap**

This literature will use secondary data sources to determine the actual level of drug abuse in Nigeria, so it may contain some unauthentic data. Another gap in this research is that no primary research will be conducted to obtain real-time data. This study will only be able to provide information on how to improve the situation with drug abuse. As a result, recommendations for this study may be found to be ineffective in practice.

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Research Design**

This research will be conducted using secondary research methods and data will be obtained from qualitative data sources. Previous primary research conducted has been selected for collecting real-time data on the research (Bowler et al. 2018). A systematic review has been

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conducted to collect data from the journals and articles. This study is based on regulating strategies for reducing the drug abuse rate in Nigeria. Therefore, the strategies will be analyzed by consulting journals, news articles and newspapers. These sources contain real data related to this research topic, which makes it easy to improve strategies for conducting this research. Developing strategies for improving healthy lifestyle amongst youth generation can be enhanced using secondary data. Conducting primary research in this research will provide limited amounts of data, which can affect the quality of the research outcome.

### Search strategy

Data will be searched based on drug abuse in Nigeria and will utilize information related to Nigerian youth. Databases have been searched using some keywords and the keywords are “drug abuse in Nigeria”, “number of drug abuse cases in Nigeria”, and “strategies to decrease drug abuse cases”. This study will not source for data using

unauthentic data sources. The outcome of the search process will be used if there is a valid document or journal available.

A systematic review has been conducted using a PRISMA flowchart to demonstrate quality of this research, review and analyze strengths and weaknesses of study outcome. Records identified from database after searching was 1327 articles, duplicate articles were 54, after removing duplicates, 1273 articles were screened. 856 articles were removed because title and abstract did not match. This leaves us with 417 papers which was sorted and retrieved, 319 was removed after sorting. The remaining 98 articles were considered using the inclusion and exclusion criteria and we had 8 papers left because the rest did not meet the criteria.

Table 1. PICO Framework

Criteria	Determinants
Population	Nigerian Young adults
Intervention	Drug Abuse Awareness
Comparison	Before and after Sensitization
Outcome	Creating Awareness and reducing the number of drug addicts amongst the young generation

### Study selection

This study will include the data sources that are directly related to drug abuse in Nigeria and will exclude those data sources that are not related to drug abuse in Nigeria. This study will only consider journals and articles from last five years (Dimitrov, 2021). This study will include SPIDER framework for conducting the research to provide a better outcome of the research.

studies. This study will also be using survey questionnaires to retrieve primary quantitative data from the respective research participants.

### Critical appraisal

This study will be conducted using journals, articles, and newspapers obtained from authentic sources like Google Scholar. Journals published within the last five years will be used to maintain the authenticity and quality of included

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Table 2. Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
All the articles that are chosen are authentic with similar information on drug abuse in Nigeria	Articles that have and irrelevant data sets are excluded from the research development process
Only articles published in English was included	Articles published in other languages was not included
This research is developed with the help of secondary information from articles on drug abuse	Articles and research journals that are available from charges and payments are also excluded from this study.

### Ethical appraisal

Data obtained will be reanalyzed before implementing the pieces of data into this research. Data used will not contain any fake report, which will provide great quality to this research. Sensitive data will be kept secured and this study will not harm any sensitive content in future. Data

retrieved from the questionnaire forms will also be kept discreet

PRISMA 2020 flow diagram for updated systematic reviews which included searches of databases and registers only

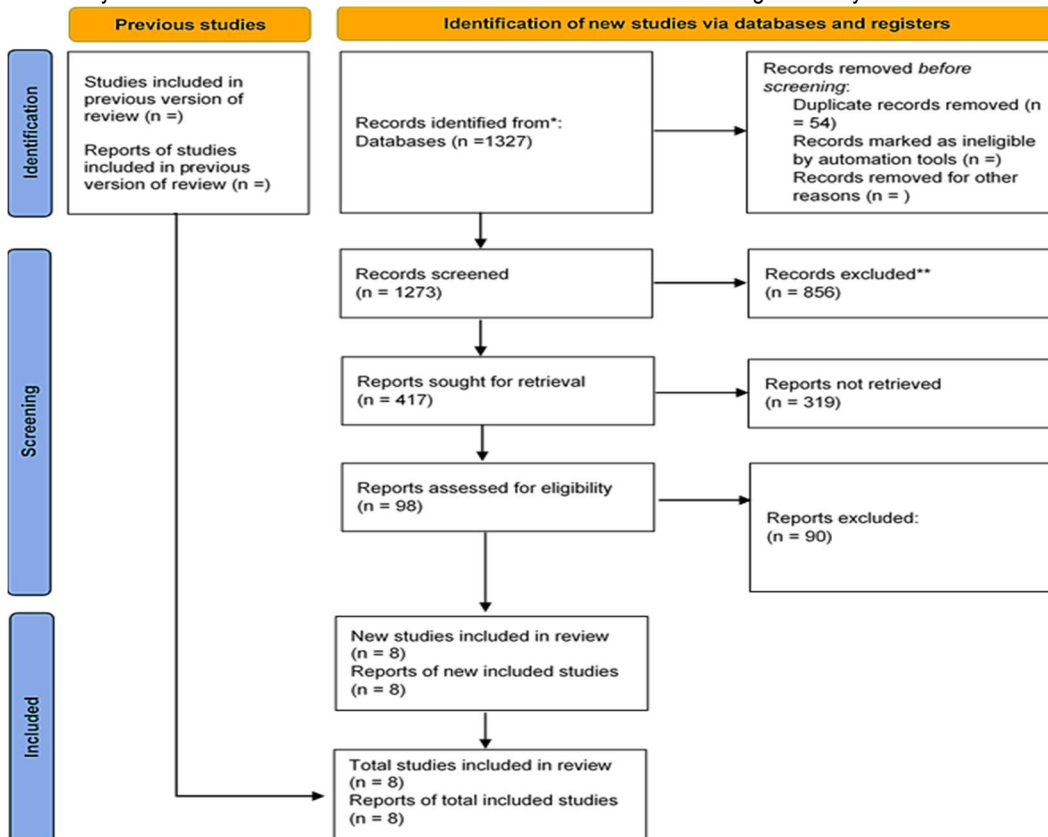


Figure 1: Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 flow diagram.

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## RESULTS

### ***Project Management and Relevance***

The results of systematic research based on a selective literature review will be discussed in this chapter to provide a brief overview of drug abuse among Nigerian young adults. To maintain their regular lifestyle, the prevalence of 20-40% and 20.9% of drug abuse procedures can be found, which has been found to have negative effects on their lifestyle. The initial research is being conducted with the assistance of some Google Scholar-generated articles and some selected articles from the company's official website. To support the epidemiological research that will be undertaken among secondary and college-bound students, 8 to 10 case studies were chosen to develop this report.

### ***Prevalence of Drug Abuse***

According to previous articles and statistical case reports, there is a high prevalence of drug abuse among Nigerians, estimated to be 20-40% of their higher secondary school students. Selective studies were carried out to calculate the results among the youth community. According to the most frequent and consistent reports, amphetamine, cocaine, diazepam, and cough syrup are the types of drugs used in their community. The Caribbean is known as the most abused drug in the population, as evidenced by several case studies. As a result, the prevalence of cannabis among drug abusers in the community is generally found among 10- 11% of general people, whereas 22-25% of drug abuse can be found among adolescents aged 25. As a result, despite existing and legal control measures, the frequency of drug abuse in Nigeria can be calculated by drug trafficking. The data findings aid in understanding the collection of reports, resulting in effective results that are clear and simple to understand the community's situation.

### ***Sources of Drugs***

The identification of the source of hard drugs is critical to prevent the case of drug abuse in Nigeria. As a result, the supply chain of drug dealers in Nigeria should be controlled by legal

steps, and the identification of the source of drugs in the community should be reduced. As a result, identifying the source of hard drugs can help to reduce the rising rate of drug abuse in the adolescent community. As a result, only a few studies had relevant information about the source of hard drugs in Nigerian communities to maintain connective and realistic drug abuse methods in Nigeria. Pharmacies, drugstores (23-33%), open markets (15%), drug hawkers, and undercover agents can all be sources of drugs. 57% of Nigerians also report receiving drugs from friends and family on occasion. In a society where most people believe that only those with a background in medicine should be able to supply pharmaceuticals, only 3-5% of health professionals do so.

### ***Recreational Drug Use***

It is difficult to pinpoint the specific cause of drug addiction in society or to explain to the average person how to keep their regular lifestyle without being hampered by it. As a result, it is impossible to say with certainty that the decision to incorporate drugs into people's lives will lessen the burden of drug misuse in Nigeria (Opakunle et al. 2022). On the other side, research indicates that people use drugs in their lives to boost physical activity and to maintain their level of relaxation despite any challenging circumstances because they feel drugs can reduce their stress levels.

Some teenagers use to drugs for anxiety alleviation, quick access to frustration, unemployment, and to stay up before examinations so they could perform at their best. In college or higher secondary pupils, curiosity can occasionally trigger the desire to use drugs. As a result, each person's motive influences the substances they consume, which can lead to drug abuse and misuse (Nelson, 2021). Drug usage is more prevalent in Nigerian society because of the country's high prevalence of poverty and need for constant mental relaxation.

On the other side, rising unemployment rates are a sign of socioeconomic problems in Nigeria, which contribute to the country's rising drug misuse rates. According to a limited study,

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the general rate of drug misuse in the Nigerian population rises when there are 24% unemployment rates and 50% poverty rates (Chioma et al. 2022). These circumstances increase people's propensity to use drugs, which can stunt the community's capacity for healthy development. Drug usage helps preserve this situation, which keeps hard-working people's lives free of stress and lessens their aggravation from the difficulties of daily life.

### **Frequency of Drug Intake**

Most Nigerians conducting case studies to sustain the efficacy of the community are younger persons under the age of 35. Several case studies discuss the prevalence of drug usage and its actual prevalence. Adolescent communities' propensity for drug addiction is predicated on their engagement in constructive endeavors that ensure their sustainability and contribute to the community's growth. The most affected groups by Nigeria's drug misuse include the general populace, undergraduate students, and secondary school pupils (Nelson, 2021). The effectiveness of drug abuse, which fuels its continual growth, and the social impact of drug misuse in Nigerian communities will be revealed through statistical analysis based on the various aspects that have been mentioned.

The measurement with specific tools, on the other hand, completes the function of the connective and realistic measurement of the society level. This report was created by measuring exploration variables, which represent the socioeconomic condition of Nigerian communities. By selecting several socioeconomic conditions in Nigeria, the level of statistical significance was chosen to maintain the community's rates of less than 0.5, indicating the critical condition of the Nigerian society. The findings of drug use provide an approximate accumulation of drug user participation over the last 6-8 months, indicating the growth of drug abuse in Nigerian society. As a result, orthodox students and fellowships have fewer drug users than modern and easily acceptable Modern mentality-based adolescents. However, age, poverty, and way of life can all influence the use

of drugs in their lives. Drug abuse in the Nigerian community is clearly described as an influencer factor in this report (Olapegba, et al. 2021).

## **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

### **Summary of major findings**

Tramadol and codeine are the most abused drugs in Nigeria's adolescent community, limiting the society's overall growth. This report was conducted using accurate data on drug abusers to stimulate society in a decreasing manner, which has the potential to reduce societal growth and development. This study identified several factors that contribute to drug abuse incidents to reduce the influence of recreational drugs on ordinary Nigerians. As a result, high poverty, unemployment, and the presence of anxiety in students' lives all contribute to the community's drug abusers. On the other hand, the ecosystem of drug addiction can be reduced by introducing several effective factors to the ecological system of the community (Dumbili et al. 2021).

The study, which was conducted in Nigeria's southern region, provided psychiatric admission due to drug abuse. Drug abuse lowers the rate of education among school-age children, which demotivates the findings and predictors of drug abuse in Nigeria. The lack of awareness about drug abuse in this country is a major contributor to the significant increase in drug-addicted people. According to a relevant study, approximately 60-65% of students never abuse the drug in the absence of education, whereas education and awareness can improve their situation and contribute to the growth of a healthy society.

The peer group was influenced to reduce the effective and communicative growth of society, which helps to modify people's presence and activeness to stimulate society's growth. Religious and commercial drivers, on the other hand, abuse drugs less than non-religious Nigerians (Okechukwu et al. 2021). This report contributes to a better understanding of society's needs and connections in combating drug abuse. However, preventing drug abuse among commercial vehicle drivers in Nigeria is an

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essential part of meeting an essential part of the Nigerian society's social-economic needs. Preventing drug-promoting activities in Nigeria helps to reduce drug use among adolescent groups in Nigerian communities. Though Nigeria has used drug abuse science since 1935 to combat drug addiction in their society. They have specific rules and laws in place to create a drug-free society, but their unemployment and massive poverty always act as impediments to their society's social development.

The Nigerian government also takes significant steps to combat their drug abuse crisis to create a healthy and stable society. To combat drug abuse in the Nigerian community, "The National Agency for Foods and Drug Administration and Control" has been mentioned as an active agency to ban the manufacturing of restricted medicine and medicine delivery without prescription. As a result, several eliminations of medicine production also provide efficacy and active management of drug production can be under controlled by trafficking tube production level and drug cultivation in Nigeria. However, this report suggests that the burdens of drug abuse in Nigeria may increase due to the involvement and political influence of the Nigerian society (Okafor, 2020).

## CONCLUSION

This research will provide information on strategies for reducing drug abuse in Nigeria. Nigeria has been identified as a country with a high rate of drug abuse among youth, and thus this study will help to improve the youth generation in Nigeria. Additionally, this study will examine Nigerian drug control laws and regulations, as well as strategies for enforcing these laws. The decreasing supply rate of drugs to colleges and other institutions will also be considered in this study, which will place a value on providing students with a safety measure. This study will also consider the distribution of knowledge for controlling drug addiction and staying away from drug abuse. This will promote awareness amongst the young generation.

## RECOMMENDATION

The Nigerian government should investigate the organizations that supply drugs to colleges and other educational institutions. Distributing information about the dangers of drug abuse can help to reduce the number of drug users in Nigeria. Building more rehab facilities for drug addicts could be a great way to address Nigeria's drug addiction problem (Oluwasola et al. 2021). However, parents should be aware of the behavioral changes that can occur due of drug abuse. It is a good way to determine whether their children are using drugs. Parents can also contact doctors if they discover any indications of drug abuse. As a result, disseminating information about the changes that occur because of drug addiction may be ideal for reducing drug use.

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