

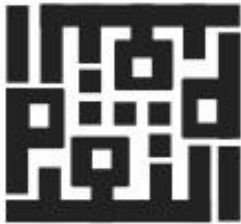
Review the Optimization of the Free Learning Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

The emergence of a new curriculum, namely the independent curriculum as a breakthrough that requires time for educators and students to adjust, is the background of this research. Educators are beset by a lack of understanding regarding the concept of independent learning and how to make it happen in the learning process. Therefore, in its application, educators are required to be alert to the independent curriculum and always develop their own competence. In terms of developing the competence of educators, it refers to the four basic competencies that must be possessed and mastered. This article aims to examine more deeply the concept of independent learning and the important role of educators in it. This research uses the method of library research (library research) through a descriptive qualitative approach. Data sources were obtained from various references in the form of relevant journals, books, proceedings and articles. The results of the study show that teachers should own and master the four basic competencies according to Law Number 14 of 2005 article 10 paragraph 1 concerning teachers and lecturers. This is to support the concept of independent learning in which teachers are at the forefront and driving forces of national education. The results of the research can add to scientific treasures and have implications especially for educators and lecturers to maximize self-competence so that it is as quality as possible.

Introduction

The world of education will continue to change persistently from time to time. Therefore, in every learning process it must always be developed and directed in line with the times. The development of the times is also in line with the development and changes in the curriculum in

Indonesia. This research is motivated by the existence of a new curriculum which is a challenge for educators to make it happen. The changes that occur with the implementation of these curriculum policies have an impact on the role of educators. Educators must be willing to improve their competence and further develop the teaching and learning process

to best implement this new curriculum (Awalia Marwah Suhandi, 2019).

Starting from the Covid-19 pandemic which became one of the reasons for the chaos and instability of the education system in Indonesia, learning from home or what we usually call online learning (in the network) became the decision of the education unit to continue the implementation of the teaching and learning process (Permana & Siti Syarifah, 2021). The pandemic is considered to have exacerbated and resulted in a learning crisis as well as learning loss or not being optimal in learning. This causes a loss of sensitivity in communication between teachers and students in learning activities (Awalia Marwah Suhandi, 2019). This problem certainly requires policies and strategic solutions to overcome them. Responding to this, the government then launched an independent curriculum as an antidote to the problems that occurred. This curriculum refers to the talent and interest approach of students which is assessed as an effort to restore learning. Focusing on essential material and character development, this curriculum is more flexible and makes students more active in exploring learning (Wiguna & Tristaningrat, 2022). According to (Krishnapatria, 2021) one of the positive sides of this pandemic is related to the implementation of the independent learning program which is very well supported by the implementation of online learning. Thus encouraging opportunities for improvement by offering more elective subjects in the curriculum to give students more freedom.

Currently, education in Indonesia adopts the 2013 curriculum and the independent

curriculum. The essence of an independent curriculum is the freedom of teachers and students in the learning process (Daga, 2021). The purpose of the applied curriculum is to seek improvement in Human Resources (HR) towards improving quality and quality education in Indonesia (Rendika Vhalery, Albertus Maria Setyastanto, 2022). So every level of education is expected to contribute to the success of each independent learning program, which starts from basic education to higher education.

Therefore, human resources who are ready and alert in dealing with this independent curriculum are urgently needed. Given that one of the factors for the current lack of quality education is an indication of the need for professional teachers (Lucky Tirta Nurarfiansyah et al., 2021). Seeing also that the readiness of educators in dealing with this curriculum is immature (Wiguna & Tristaningrat, 2022), so it is necessary to increase quality human resources to support the government's efforts to educate the nation's children through an independent curriculum. In the world of education, teachers or educators have an important role so that their existence makes the learning process more focused. In this new curriculum policy, the challenges and role of a teacher are of particular concern who are considered capable of designing learning according to the characteristics of students (Awalia Marwah Suhandi, 2019). In addition to acting as a facilitator, teachers have responsibilities and obligations in fulfilling the basic teacher competencies which consist of 4 components; pedagogic competence, personality competence,

Research conducted by several previous researchers regarding the discussion of independent learning and the role of educators in it has been carried out, including; an article entitled "The Meaning of Independent Learning and Strengthening the Role of Teachers in Elementary Schools" according to Augustine Tanggu Daga in 2021 that true independent learning will bring happiness and independence for educators and students to be independent, both independent in terms of thinking and innovation as well as independence in independent learning as well as being creative. The birth of the independent learning policy apart from acting as a mover or facilitator, educators are also required to be innovative, characteristic, creative, independent and professional in carrying out their duties (Daga, 2021).

In an article entitled "Teacher Difficulties Defining and Implementing the Concept of Independent Learning at SMA Negeri 2 Amahai Central Maluku" by Herly Janet Lesilolo in 2022 stated that the result of educators' lack of understanding regarding this independent curriculum is that teachers experience difficulties in implementing this curriculum as it should. This is triggered by several things; 1) the teacher's lack of experience in the teaching and learning process 2) the teacher's lack of understanding regarding the basic principles and meaning of independent learning 3) the teacher's lack of mastery of environmental and instrumental factors, for example the independent curriculum learning model.(Lesilolo, 2022).

In another article entitled "Professionalism of PAI Teachers at SMAN 2 Semarang" by Lina Agustina in 2018 explained that a

professional educator is not only assessed from the academic aspect but is also assessed from the aspect of personality and no less important is also assessed from the way he interacts with the environment . Especially if a teacher has good personality and social status, of course he will be an example to students and have a good influence on his environment (Agustina, 2018). Subsequent research in an article entitled "Developing Teacher Competence in Implementing Learning Evaluation in the Free Learning Era" in 2022 according to Sutrisno et al that in learning evaluation activities in the independence era teachers are also required to master and develop competency evaluation activities. The evaluation activities include planning, implementation, data processing, reporting and utilization of evaluation results (Sutrisno, 2022).

In the current research, there is a significant difference when compared to the previous research above. The urgency of this research lies in the research focus that examines the concept of independent learning and its relation to the role of educators in realizing independent learning. This research will also provide a deeper understanding of the importance of basic teacher competencies which consist of 4 competencies; pedagogic, personality, social and professional in carrying out tasks in the era of independent learning. Armed with competence, educators will be able to carry out their duties professionally (Imam Suraji, 2012).

Literature Review

The independent curriculum as a new breakthrough that makes educators need time to adjust is a natural thing that often

happens because of curriculum changes from time to time. The birth of this curriculum is expected to be a first step in order to improve the quality of education in Indonesia to be even better. The article entitled "Effectiveness and Role of the Teacher in the Free Learning Curriculum" by Muhammad Reza Arviansyah and Ageng Shagena in 2022 stated that considering that education in Indonesia has a system that is assessed there is a big difference when compared to other countries, so the presence of this independent curriculum is expected able to bring a real change towards a better education system. However, in view of the rapidly changing world of education, The role of the teacher is increasingly complex. One of them is as a driving force for independent learning. In this case, teachers are required to be able to become facilitators driving change. Because the higher the effectiveness of a lesson, the clearer the goals and aspirations to be achieved later (Muhammad Reza Arviansyah, 2017).

Educators as the main key in implementing independent learning play a strong enough role so that the presence of educators always has a positive influence on teaching and learning activities. Merdekalearning also presents a driving teacher program initiated by the ministry of education and culture (Mulyadi et al., 2022). This program aims to shape and improve the competence of educators in order to create student-centered learning. The purpose of independent learning and driving teachers is as a forum for improving the quality of education in the era of global competition (Wijaya et al., 2020).

As a professional teacher, there are many things that are mandatory which are important in carrying out the role as an educator. Facing the world of education which is full of challenges and struggles, teachers must be armed with competencies that they need to improve continuously. In this case the teacher has four competencies including pedagogic, personality, social and professional (Hafsah M. Nur, 2022).

Research methods

Descriptive qualitative approach is used in this research. With this approach, the researcher tries to describe the object under study without making certain comparisons (Annisa Alfath et al., 2022). This study uses library research methods obtained through books, proceedings, or journal articles as listed in the bibliography. In this case, researchers are looking for data sources that are relevant to the research they are doing.

The data obtained is then analyzed. The researcher then reduced the data before pouring it into the results and discussion. This research uses data analysis techniques in the form of content analysis (Permana & Siti Syarifah, 2021), which is expected to explain the concept of independent learning and the important role of the teacher in it. The result data that has been obtained will then be analyzed through descriptive analysis methods, namely describing various existing facts and conducting analysis as well as providing sufficient understanding and explanation (Habsy, 2017).

Results and Discussion

Free Learning Concept

Teachers need to prepare a lot before the teaching and learning process takes place in class. Teachers as professionals should carry out applicable teaching plans. However, before planning teaching, the teacher must first understand what the curriculum is (Majid, 2019). The curriculum is a set of guidelines that guide teachers and schools in teaching and learning activities in schools. Along with the times, the curriculum also developed from time to time. We cannot deny the changes in the curriculum that have occurred, but we must face them and make them a challenge for better teaching and learning activities. Freedom to learn as a new curriculum which is an improvement from the 2013 curriculum is still a hot topic of discussion today. The existence of an independent curriculum is a new breakthrough that applies independence in thinking and provides a new view that education should not only focus on cognitive aspects (Annisa Alfath et al., 2022). However, education should include affective as well as psychomotor aspects of students.

One of the reasons for the emergence of Nadiem Makarim's self-learning concept is his desire to create a learning environment that does not burden the achievement of scores in the form of certain grades or numbers. However, it creates a learning atmosphere that can make educators and students happy and joyful (Mustaghfiroh, 2020). According to the Ministry of Education and Culture, the concept of independent learning applies fun and non-monotonous learning that requires

students to develop creative and innovative mindsets. As this independent learning progresses, of course it is under the supervision and guidance of educators. Because in essence the essence of freedom of thought stems from educators as the driving force of national education. Nadiem Anwar Makarim stated that at whatever level a teacher's competency,

The essence of fun learning and independent thinking must initially lie with the teacher or educator. Without teacher optimization, it is impossible to distribute it to students (Sherly et al., 2020). So we can draw a common thread that learning is a program stipulated by the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia as a policy to return the country's education system to the essence of the law. The freedom to innovate starts with the teacher, namely as the driving force of national education. The meaning of the teacher as a driving force for national educators is hoped to be able to become a pioneer so that they continue to develop their potential amidst the times and construct a more advanced educational ecosystem in the future. (Faiz & Faridah, 2022). Motivator teachers as agents of change at least produce output as learning leaders, mobilizers of a community of practitioners, mentors for other teachers, encouraging collaboration between teachers, and realizing student leadership (Ningrum & Suryani, 2022).

The "Freedom to Learn" program has a policy consisting of four main points; First, USBN is a test (assessment). This policy emphasizes student competence and takes effect in 2020. The USBN budget is diverted to improving the quality of education by increasing the capacity of

teachers and schools. Second, the UN (National Examination) in 2021 will be replaced with a minimum competency assessment and according to character. The Minister of Education and Culture emphasizes that competence is very important, not only limited to content mastery. This assessment emphasizes aspects of literacy and numeracy which are important to master. In addition, the Minister of Education and Culture also prioritized the importance of referring to international standards for human resource development (Human Resources).

Third, The Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) is shortened to one page. RPP only contains learning objectives and activities, as well as assessment. RPP, which stands for Learning Implementation Plan, was previously considered an additional burden or burden for educators in administrative matters. RPP is also considered too detailed so that it diverts educators' time from teaching and increasing competence. This is because the preparation of a detailed RPP requires additional time in the process. Fourth, PPDB zoning becomes more flexible. During PPDB (New Student Acceptance), the Ministry of Education and Culture continues to apply the zoning system. However, PPDB will be more flexible by considering various aspects such as: taking into account inequality of access and quality in various regions (excluding 3T areas) (Saleh, 2020).

The Role of the Teacher in the Era of Freedom of Learning

The teacher plays a very important role in the implementation of the teaching and learning process. In carrying out its duties and functions the teacher should guide and foster students so that they are able to find

their true identity through the learning process. Referring to RI Regulation Number 19 of 2005 concerning National Standards "Education, the quality of education is said to be of quality if the learning process in educational units is carried out in an interactive, inspiring, fun, challenging and motivating way for students to achieve actively and provide sufficient space for initiative, creativity and independence according to the talents, interests and physical and psychological development of students" (Rahmansyah, 2021).

Being a teacher whose job is to educate people with various characters and problems and different needs is not easy (Annisa Alfath et al., 2022). As an educator, in the Islamic context it is explained that teachers must have intellectual intelligence and character intelligence. This is so that the teacher can be a good role model for students and the surrounding community in carrying out their role. The teacher is likened to an intermediary between God and his creatures to convey and evaluate all useful knowledge and scholarship. In this regard, the teacher holds the highest position after prophethood in his position (Annisa Alfath et al., 2022). Because in reality the teacher is a figure to be admired and imitated.

The teacher is a profession that is quite complex and quite heavy because it is required to interact with human subjects and objects and is the most important human element in learning activities (Ilyas, 2022). The teacher is the only profession whose job is to shape students into complete human beings. In the concept of independent learning, the teacher has an important influence in fostering students

not only from a cognitive perspective, but also from an affective and psychomotor aspect. The existence of an independent learning policy also gave birth to the role of the teacher, in this case the implementation includes driving teachers, learning facilitators, innovative and creative teachers, teachers who are characterized and independent (Aritonang & Armanto, 2022). In carrying out the role as a teacher, mastery of basic competencies is mandatory and is very necessary to support the profession. The four basic competencies include competence; pedagogic, personality, social and professional. Therefore, the competence of each teacher will show the quality of an educator in the learning process (Majid, 2019).

The basic meaning of the word competence is ability or skill (Solong & Husin, 2020). Competence is considered as the main capital in the effort to become a driving teacher (Riowati, 2022). Competence is the basis for knowing the qualifications of a teacher. The ability of a teacher to guide and coordinate student learning is a teacher's pedagogic competency. Teacher personality skills that can be noble, intelligent, and become role models for their students are called teacher personality competencies. The purpose of social competence is the ability of a teacher to communicate and interact well between teachers and students, fellow teachers, teachers with student guardians and with the community. Meanwhile, teacher professional competence is the ability to acquire broad and in-depth knowledge related to learning as well as the knowledge and skills needed to apply the profession as a teacher. According to Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning teachers and lecturers

article 10 paragraph (1) "Teacher competence includes pedagogical competence, personal competence, social competence, and professional competence obtained through professional education" (Hafsah M. Nur, 2022). The description regarding the four basic teacher competencies is as follows (Febriana, 2019)

Pedagogic Competence

Law No. 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers says that pedagogic competence is the ability of teachers to manage the ongoing learning of students. A teacher can be judged to have mastered pedagogical competence from his ability to plan the teaching and learning process from beginning to end as well as his ability to evaluate during learning.

According to the government, pedagogical competence is the ability of a teacher in managing the teaching and learning process by mastering at least the things below;

First, pedagogical knowledge and basic understanding. Teachers and educators have educational backgrounds in various fields and therefore have special scientific and intellectual expertise. Regarding subject-related learning management systems, educators must balance and coordinate between the topics being taught and the scientific context of interest. In addition, educators must be experienced and knowledgeable about classroom lessons. This can be indicated by attaching educational background or teaching certificates from certain educational institutions accredited by the government.

Second, understanding of students. Educators in this case should have a good understanding of the psychology of

student development. That way, as an educator it will be easier to understand and know the right approach in dealing with students. In addition, it is important for educators to know the background of students so that it makes it easier for educators to identify problems faced by students and determine the appropriate approach technique.

Third, syllabus or curriculum development. Educators should have the ability to develop a national education curriculum. In this case the curriculum is developed according to the specific conditions of the school environment.

Fourth, learning design. Educators should make plans related to teaching and learning systems that will be applied in the learning process. In this case, the lesson plan is prepared from start to finish including anticipating problems against possibilities that may arise unexpectedly.

Fifth, creating educative and interactive learning. A teacher or educator should create a comfortable learning environment and provide space for students to further explore and explore the potential in each student. Thus, learning must be active, educative, creative and fun

Sixth, use of technology in education. In the learning process, educators should use technology as a medium. In this increasingly sophisticated era, educators must familiarize students with how to interact with technology in everyday life.

Seventh, evaluation of learning outcomes. In evaluating, the teacher needs to take measurements in advance of what he will evaluate. Measurements applied include planning, student responses, learning outcomes and the methods and

approaches used. Making it easier for educators to make conclusions and appropriate solutions.

Eighth, special assistance for students in actualizing their competencies. In this case educators always accompany and create learning platforms that are able to introduce the potential of each student and actualize it.

Basically, all aspects of pedagogical competence can always be developed by examining the problem more deeply and developing alternative solutions. So, in dealing with this concept of independent learning, teachers should realize their pedagogical competence in teaching and learning activities.

Personality Competence

In the development of advanced and quality Human Resources (HR), the personality competencies possessed by a teacher have a significant influence in realizing this. As an educator, the teacher has the main task of teaching. Not only that, teachers also have a role as role models for their students. Armed with a competent teacher's personality will be a factor in the success of student learning.

Each individual certainly has a difference in character between one person and another. This is what makes each individual unique (Zola & Mudjiran, 2020). Likewise, the figure of a teacher, of course, has different characteristics, mindset, teaching style and behavior. However, it is necessary to identify the personality patterns possessed by the teacher, because in fact it is the teacher who will be a role model for his students. The sizable contribution obtained by students stems from the personality of a teacher and has a

significant influence on the formation of students.

The human person is intangible and invisible (abstract), making it difficult to define theoretically. Human personality is also a subject to change. In general, what is used in Indonesia as a standard score measure of personality competence is embodied in the philosophical notion of Pancasila, which describes the many dynamics and variations of the nation's cultural values. In "Ing ngarso sungtulodo, Ing madya mangun karso, Tut wuri handayani" Ki Hajar Dewantoro outlines the importance of a teacher's personality in the educational process. If being in front means he gives an example or role model. Because leading by example is the most effective way to build and innovate. When in the middle, the teacher creates opportunities and creates motivation, but when in the back, the teacher provides encouragement and direction. (Nurhidayati, 2022). In addition, the teacher or educator acts as a supervisor who does not accustom students to doing anything that is not in accordance with educational goals (Majid, 2019). The Law on Teachers and Lecturers explains that "Personality competency is a solid personality ability, has noble character, is wise and authoritative and is a good role model. Personal competence is personal competence, namely the personal ability of an educator to be able to become a good educator. It is expected that teachers or educators have a calling from within themselves to have an open educator spirit, be able to control and develop themselves and have solid personality integrity.

Social Competence

The teacher's ability as an educator to

communicate and interact effectively with students, peers, parents or guardians, and the community is a teacher's social competence. The social competence of a teacher is closely related to the competence of educators as social beings and members of society. First, the ability to interact with colleagues and improve their professional skills. Second, the ability to understand and appreciate the various functions of each member of society. Third, the ability to build good cooperation in groups and individuals.

As for its relation to the concept of independent learning, success or failure depends on the teacher or educator as the vanguard, here are some social competencies that educators need to possess; skilled in communication and interaction with parents or guardians of students and with students in particular, has a sympathetic attitude, is able to collaborate and work well with committees and education boards in schools, is intelligent in getting along and interacting with colleagues and educational partners and able to read and understand the situation around the environment

Professional Competence

The professional competence of a teacher is mastering a subject broadly and deeply, and a teacher can guide his students in mastering the subject. Professional competence also requires synergy and strategic efforts from three categories, namely the teacher himself, colleagues and the school in efforts to develop professional human resources. (Yanto & Silalahi, 2022). A professional educator is someone who has the ability to perform tasks optimally and continuously improve their competence. Educator's professional

subcompetence relates to how educators obtain sustainable scientific content in certain fields of study which include essential indicators, ways of understanding material in the curriculum, learning structures and concepts, as well as various scientific concepts encountered in everyday life.

In collaboration with the concept of independent learning, professional teachers will be able to place themselves in the right position. The competencies possessed by teachers can significantly affect the quality of education because competent teachers will complete their professional responsibilities (Sopandi, 2019). Meanwhile, by mastering learning well and optimally, educators are expected to be able to transfer knowledge to students properly and optimally as well. Not forgetting their professionalism, educators are able to become *uswah* or good role models that students should emulate.

Discussion

Independent learning actually has good implications that educators can make as a breakthrough in the learning process. In a sense, educators are given the freedom to create teaching and learning processes and are not burdened with administrative matters which are considered to take up quite a long time for educators. So that educators are more focused on developing the potential of students and directed at students who think critically, creatively and innovatively. (Khasanah, Siti Uswatun, 2022).

Facing this independent curriculum, the teacher factor becomes the main topic in ensuring that independent learning takes

place as it should. This is because the teacher is the front guard and someone who holds the initial key in the journey of independent learning. In line with that, Henry Adams, a historian, argued that the great influence of the teacher figure will have a lasting impact whose influence will not stop. (Murshid, 2021).

Basic competencies that must be possessed by teachers are important things that need to be considered in realizing independent learning towards the learning process. Armed with pedagogical competence, a teacher can easily manage and plan learning as it should. Because in essence the learning process for students is a maturing process that starts from a cycle of not knowing to knowing. In this case, there are cognitive aspects that need to be instilled and can be developed in-depth intelligence and knowledge. Not only the cognitive aspect but actualizing learning in this era of learning independence the teacher's pedagogic competence at least understands four things related to students; level of intelligence, physical disability, creativity and the last is cognitive development (Perni, 2019). With the implementation of the concept of independent learning, various experiences and knowledge will be explored more deeply by students through a fun process.

It is important for an educator to be armed with personality and social competencies, many factors make it mandatory for educators to have. One of them is with a good personality, educators will be able to trigger good student personalities. Teachers with good personalities are able to be a determining factor for the bright future of students or vice versa (Princess, Farhanna Oka, 2022). The personality of

the educator figure is a person's soul calling to improve the good personality in him. Especially for an educator, so that it becomes a refraction for students and becomes uswah or a good role model.

It is the same with social competence, which is a form of implementing social competence, namely communication which in principle contains respect for others, empathy, is clear in conveying and must be built on the principle of humility.(Ahmed, 2019). Educators who have good social competence will certainly lead them to a good pattern of social life. Apart from that, it can build effective communication and interaction and can contribute a lot in various good. In this case, there are affective aspects that must be instilled in students by educators. This affective aspect refers to the development of a mature attitude and mentality and is a manifestation of the courage to choose consciously (Majid, 2019)

Likewise, the professional competence of educators is no less important in the application of independent learning. Professional educators will position themselves as professionals. In this case, smart educators will maximize their professional competence and always try to develop their competencies consistently according to the times. Teachers as professional educators have goals that are aligned with the national education system(Fitria & Martha, 2020)namely for the development of the potential of students so that they become human beings of faith and knowledge, capable and creative.

So that it can be said that the role of educators in the success of independent learning will greatly affect the embedded

basic competencies that educators have. Not only armed with one competency, but armed with pedagogic competence, personal competence, social competence and professional competence, educators should be able to deliver the desired learning from an independent learning perspective.

Conclusion

Freedom of learning in essence is freedom of thought, which starts with educators as the driving force of national education. The concept of independent learning applies fun and exciting learning for the development of creative and innovative mindsets. The existence of an independent learning policy also creates a role for educators whose implementation includes driving teachers, learning facilitators, innovative and creative and independent teachers. Not only that, but teachers are required to be prepared and intelligent in improving their own competence and developing teaching and learning processes by not only referring to cognitive aspects, but also relying on affective and psychomotor aspects. The teacher is an important factor which is the key to the success of the educational process so that a teacher must master the basic competencies that must be possessed by the teacher (pedagogic competence, personal competence, social competence and professional competence). No matter how good the curriculum, infrastructure and buildings of a school are, if they are not supported by competent and qualified teachers, it will be very difficult to realize everything that is the hope of an educational institution. Likewise, a teacher without competence is like a car driver who

does not have driving skills, of course he will not arrive at the desired destination. if it is not supported by competent and qualified teachers, it will not be easy to realize all that is expected of an educational institution. Likewise, a teacher without competence is like a car driver who does not have driving skills, of course he will not arrive at the desired destination. if it is not supported by competent and qualified teachers, it will not be easy to realize all that is expected of an educational institution. Likewise, a teacher without competence is like a car driver who does not have driving skills, of course he will not arrive at the desired destination.

Suggestion

Here are some expressions that the author would like to convey as suggestions to; The government should always support and facilitate educators to be creative and innovative in optimizing the independent curriculum. All teachers and educators should really understand the independence of learning and apply it properly. Do not forget to always develop self-potential and competence and have self-awareness of the profession that is being carried out. All students to study hard and continue to excel.

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