

The Relationship between Internal Locus of Control and Peer Social Support with Career Maturity among Vocational High School Students



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ABSTRACT: This study aims to analyze the relationship between internal locus of control and peer social support on the career maturity of Vocational High School (SMK) students in Wonocolo District, Surabaya. This research uses a quantitative method. The population in this study consists of all SMK students in Wonocolo District, comprising 3 private SMK and 2 public SMK, with a total of 6,873 students. The research sample was taken using the Quota Random Sampling technique based on the Krejcie tabel, resulting in a sample size of 364 students. The data collection instrument uses scales that have been tested for validity and reliability. The measuring instruments used in this study are the Career Maturity Scale, the Internal Locus of Control Scale, and the Peer Social Support Scale. Data analysis was carried out using multiple linear regression tests to determine the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable. The results showed that peer social support had a significant effect on the career maturity of students, meaning the hypothesis was accepted. Peer social support has a positive and significant relationship with the career maturity of students. The stronger the peer social support that students have, the higher the career maturity they achieve. On the other hand, internal locus of control did not show a significant relationship with students' career maturity, meaning the hypothesis was rejected. The belief of students in their internal control did not have a significant impact on career maturity.

KEYWORDS: Internal Locus of Control, Peer Social Support, Career Maturity and Vocational High School (SMK) Students.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has great expectations to enhance the career maturity of Vocational High School (SMK) students so that they can become competent workers ready to compete in the global labor market (Mahmudah, 2022). According to the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2023, one of the main strategies is through the refinement of the curriculum and learning programs in SMK. The government collaborates with various stakeholders, including industry, education experts, and the community, to ensure that the SMK curriculum includes skills that meet the current and future needs of the industry. This certainly requires efforts to produce competent SMK students ready to compete in the job market, in line with the two "Merdeka Belajar" policies related to vocational education as a manifestation of the President's vision. Vocational education is being revamped as a strategy for developing human resources in Indonesia.

The government's efforts to produce competent SMK students ready to compete in the job market are carried out by increasing accessibility and the quality of SMK education by expanding the network of schools, enhancing educational facilities, and improving teaching quality through training and development (Basuki, 2022). Internship programs and cooperation between schools and industries are also enhanced to provide students with practical experience and help them understand the world of work directly. Another effort is to integrate career guidance with the curriculum, helping students identify their interests, talents, and career goals, as well as providing support in planning steps to achieve those goals (Pratama, 2021). This is part of the effort to develop human resources in Indonesia in accordance with Article 31, Paragraph 2 of the 1945 Constitution, which states the state's responsibility in the field of education and organizing national education that includes the development of human resource quality (Agustiawan & Santoso, 2021).

The important role of SMK students in enhancing human resources is because they are at the forefront in producing quality workers ready to compete in the job market (Mulyasa, 2021). According to Khurniawan et al. (2019), SMK education is designed to provide practical skills and knowledge directly aligned with industry needs. SMK students are trained to meet the job market requirements directly. Additionally, SMK students are also focused on practical skills.

The Relationship between Internal Locus of Control and Peer Social Support with Career Maturity among Vocational High School Students

Furthermore, according to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2023, the open unemployment rate in Indonesia reached 5.32% out of a population of 280.73 million, dominated by SMK graduates at 11.13% in 2021 and 9.42% in 2022. Consequently, many SMK graduates tend to choose jobs without aligning them with their talents, interests, and education due to the intense competition in the job market. Up to 80% of SMK graduates work in jobs unrelated to their major (Aisyah, 2021).

Tracking graduates of the Special Job Exchange (BKK) of SMK Wonocolo District revealed that out of 6,873 graduates in 2023, 42% worked in the industry, 15% became entrepreneurs, 30% continued to higher education, and 13% were unemployed. Additionally, it was revealed that 39% of alumni worked or studied not in their field of study at SMK. The picture of low career maturity among SMK students was also obtained from interviews with SMK students in Surabaya City. These simple interviews revealed that there was a lack of clear career interests and confusion about the available options after graduating from SMK. They hoped everything would work out on its own after graduation but felt anxious about their future because they hadn't really done much in school, just attended classes and hoped everything would be fine. There was no further information about careers suited to them. The researcher's interviews also mentioned that some students tended to rely on advice and guidance from parents, siblings, and teachers rather than taking the initiative themselves to think about their career future. These interview results emphasized that career maturity among students is still lacking and needs to be improved.

According to Hanifah & Djamhoer (2022), the mismatch between jobs or university study programs and SMK study interests has resulted in many SMK graduates being unemployed due to insufficient work preparation and lack of skills. These SMK graduates' lack of work readiness is driven by their low ability to manage career development tasks aligned with their study levels. Krisphianti & Nurwulansari (2022) explained that students with low career maturity tend to have no plans related to their careers after graduation, do not attempt to seek information about their desired career majors, and many SMK students are not interested in reading job-related information and have difficulty deciding what to do after graduation.

Career maturity is important for individual career choice so that career selection can be made optimally and without confusion in choosing a major in higher education (Pramasari, 2021). The impact of low career maturity is the selection of wrong study majors and interests after graduation, ultimately increasing the educated unemployment rate (Amalia, 2020). According to Brown (2002), the developmental tasks that SMK students at the career exploration stage must undertake include finding a career that suits them, planning for the future with self-information, and self-discovery through interests, abilities, and values. It is expected that at this stage, self-understanding can be developed, job choices can be identified, the future to be pursued can be determined, and suitable job alternatives can be created (Santrock, 2007), so at this stage, individuals need to prepare themselves to face adulthood by preparing a better career.

Decision-making ability regarding the chosen job and understanding the compatibility between one's abilities and the job need to be possessed by SMK students (Rogahang, 2011). Achieving career development stages in SMK students will encourage them to gain knowledge about themselves, knowledge about various types of jobs, their job choices, and be able to set expectations in building their careers in the future (Wijaya, 2020). SMK students with high career maturity, aware of their career tasks, will have self-awareness, a good understanding of interests and values that support their careers, able to plan and set career goals, and skillful in interpersonal interactions with others in the workplace (Oktavia & Tyas, 2023).

High career maturity, as mentioned by Oktavia & Tyas (2023), leads SMK students to develop a mindset centered on locus of control. Specifically, they can internalize the belief that they have control over their career direction and outcomes (internal locus), or conversely, tend to think that external factors such as luck or environmental conditions control their career fate (external locus) (Ortloff & Ranu, 2015). Career maturity can be achieved when a person has an internal locus of control. Hasanah (2023) and Azzarah (2022) mentioned that the assumption of success achieved comes from one's diligent, diligent, persistent, independent activities, and has better resistance to social influences, thus tasks can be completed more effectively, and relevant information to their situation can be more sensitive (Siregar, 2021).

Other studies mention that factors that have a strong influence on enhancing career resilience include peer support (Winkel, 2004). According to Winkel (2004), SMK students enter the adolescent development phase where peer support provides many views, choices, and expectations about the future that arise in everyday interactions. Social support provided to adolescents can support planning their careers and making career decisions in the future (Hanifah & Djamhoer, 2022). Social support provided by peers, which can influence students' personal development, is peer support (Santrock, 2003). Munna & Indrawati (2019), especially when more time is spent with peers than with family.

Interviews conducted with students at SMK Wonocolo District, Surabaya, stated that peer support is very much needed to increase support and motivation in life. When with peers, they feel comfortable sharing and discussing their career interests. Sometimes they also experience pressure from friends to follow trends or join in choosing certain career paths that sometimes do not match their interests or personal values. These interview results prove that one of the factors influencing student career maturity is peer social support. Peers are considered a suitable source of emotional support during the adolescent transition (Sasmita & Rustika, 2015).

The Relationship between Internal Locus of Control and Peer Social Support with Career Maturity among Vocational High School Students

According to Tarakanita (2001), references for adolescents about various things are not only given by peers but also opportunities for adolescents to take on new roles and responsibilities through the social support given. Based on Berk (2009), peers are increasingly relied upon by adolescents more than parents for closeness and support. Peer support is understood as actions of giving and receiving help, based on mutual understanding, respect, and empowerment of people in similar situations, through support, friendship, empathy, sharing experiences, and psychological help (Faulkner et al., 2013).

Forms of peer support include emotional support, esteem support, instrumental support, and informational support, which can influence career maturity (Sarafino, 2008). Meaningful positive assistance from peers for SMK students will make career development tasks well completed, and career maturity can be achieved (Munna & Indrawati, 2019). Career maturity will be higher with higher peer social support (Sari, 2020).

METHOD

The research method used is quantitative, aimed at determining the relationship between the three variables (Creswell, 2012). This study uses the population of Vocational High School (SMK) students in Wonocolo District, Surabaya, totaling 6,873 students from 3 private SMKs and 2 public SMKs. The sample was taken using Quota Random Sampling technique with a sample size of 364 students, based on Krejcie’s table. Data were collected through career maturity scale, internal locus of control scale, and peer social support scale, which were developed by the researcher based on the operational definition and indicators of each variable with a Likert scale model. Data analysis was performed using multiple linear regression techniques with SPSS version 16 IBM for Windows application. Before analysis, prerequisite tests were conducted, including normality test, linearity test, multicollinearity test, and heteroscedasticity test. The results of the prerequisite tests showed that the data were normally distributed, the relationship between variables was linear, there was no multicollinearity, and there was no heteroscedasticity, thus the data met the requirements for multiple linear regression analysis.

RESULTS

In this study, assumption tests were conducted first before performing multiple linear regression analysis, and the assumption test results are presented in the following tables:

Table I. Normality Test Results for Career Maturity

Z Kolmogorov Smirnov	p	Description
0,045	0,078	Normal ($p > 0,05$)

Source: Output SPSS Version 16

The normality test results using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test showed a significance value of $0.078 > 0.05$, indicating that the data is normally distributed. This test was conducted on the career maturity variable to determine if the data distribution is normal.

Table II. Linearity Test Results

Variable	F Deviation from Linearity	p	Description
Locus of control internal - Career Maturity	0,893	0,643	Linear
Peer Social Support - Career Maturity	0,991	0,513	Linear

Source: Output SPSS Version 16

The linearity test results between the internal locus of control and career maturity variables showed an F deviation from linearity of 0.893 with a significance of 0.643, indicating a linear relationship. The linearity test results for peer social support and career maturity showed an F deviation from linearity of 0.991 with a significance of 0.513, indicating a linear relationship.

Table III. Multicollinearity Test Results for Internal Locus of Control and Peer Social Support

Tolerance	VIF	Description
0,995	1,005	No multicollinearity

Source: Output SPSS Version 16

The Relationship between Internal Locus of Control and Peer Social Support with Career Maturity among Vocational High School Students

The multicollinearity test results for internal locus of control and peer social support showed a tolerance value of 0.995 (>0.10) and a VIF value of 1.005 (<10.00). This means there is no multicollinearity or intercorrelation between the internal locus of control and peer social support.

Table IV. Heteroscedasticity Test Results

Variabel	rho	P p	Description
Locus of control internal - ABS RES	0,004	0,944	No heteroscedasticity (p > 0.05)
Peer Social Support – ABS RES	0,012	0,824	No heteroscedasticity (p > 0.05)

Source: Output SPSS Version 16

The heteroscedasticity test results for the internal locus of control and peer social support variables with ABS_REiS showed a significance of 0.944 > 0.05 for the internal locus of control variable and a significance of 0.824 > 0.05 for the peer social support variable. This means there is no heteroscedasticity.

After performing the assumption tests, this study used parametric analysis, namely multiple linear regression analysis, as the normality test results showed a normal distribution, meeting the requirements for this method. The Multiple Regression Analysis technique in this study produced several outputs: Simultaneous Regression, Partial Regression, Regression Line Equation, and Effective Balance.

The results of the simultaneous regression analysis on the first hypothesis showed a correlation between internal locus of control and peer social support with career maturity. The simultaneous regression analysis results showed an F coefficient of 33.772 with p = 0.000 (p < 0.05), indicating significance. The first hypothesis is accepted, showing a significant correlation between internal locus of control and peer social support with career maturity. The results can be summarized in the following table:

Table V. Simultaneous Regression Analysis Results

Coefficient (F)	p	Description
33,772	0,000	Very significant correlation (p<0,05) Hypothesis accepted

Source: Output SPSS Version 16

For the second hypothesis, the analysis shows a t coefficient of 0.058 with a p-value of 0.954 (p>0.05) for the correlation between internal locus of control and career maturity. The result indicates that there is no significant correlation between internal locus of control and career maturity. Therefore, the second hypothesis in this study is rejected. This means that students with an internal locus of control do not directly influence their career maturity.

For the third hypothesis, the analysis shows a t coefficient of 8.202 with a p-value of 0.000 (p<0.05) for the correlation between peer social support and career maturity. The result indicates that there is a significant correlation between peer social support and career maturity. Therefore, the third hypothesis in this study is accepted. The positive value means that as peer social support increases, career maturity also increases. Conversely, if peer social support decreases, career maturity also decreases. The following table summarizes the results of the partial regression analysis:

Table VI. Partial Regression Analysis Results

Variable	t	p	Description
Internal Locus of Control – Career Maturity	0,058	0,954	Not Significant (p>0,05) Hypothesis Rejected
Peer Social Support – Career Maturity	8,202	0,000	Significant (p<0,05) Hypothesis Accepted

Source: Output SPSS Version 16

The multiple regression analysis results in two types of effective contribution: the simultaneous effective contribution of both independent variables to the dependent variable and the effective contribution of each independent variable to the dependent variable. The effective contribution of both independent variables, internal locus of control and peer social support, to career maturity is $R^2 = 0.158$, or about 15.8%.

The Relationship between Internal Locus of Control and Peer Social Support with Career Maturity among Vocational High School Students

Based on the calculation using the formula

$SEX_1 = \left(\frac{b_{x1} \cdot \text{Cross Product} \cdot R^2}{\text{Regression}} \right) \times 100 \%$, the effective contribution of the internal locus of control variable to the dependent variable, career maturity, is 0%. On the other hand, the effective contribution of the peer social support variable to the dependent variable, career maturity, is 15.77%. The following table summarizes the effective contribution results:

Table VII. Effective Contribution of Each Independent Variable to the Dependent Variable

Variable	Effective Contribution
Locus of control internal	0 %
Peer Social Support	15,77 %
Total	15,77 %

Source: Output SPSS Version 16

The empirical mean value for career maturity is 93.42, while the theoretical mean is 75. This indicates that respondents have a high level of career maturity, as the empirical mean is greater than the theoretical mean. For the internal locus of control variable, the empirical mean is 60.43, and the theoretical mean is 45. This indicates that respondents have a high level of internal locus of control, as the empirical mean is greater than the theoretical mean.

For the peer social support variable, the empirical mean is 169.33, and the theoretical mean is 141. This indicates that respondents have a high level of peer social support, as the empirical mean is greater than the theoretical mean. A more detailed explanation is provided in the table below:

Table VIII. Descriptive Statistics of Empirical Mean and Theoretical Mean

Variable	Empirical Mean	Theoretical Mean
Career Maturity	93,42	75
Locus of Control Internal	60,43	45
Peer Social Support	169,33	141

Source: SPSS Version 16 Output and Manual Calculation Results

DISCUSSION

The simultaneous analysis results for the first hypothesis indicate a significant relationship between career maturity, internal locus of control, and peer social support, with the hypothesis being accepted. This suggests that when all three variables are analyzed together, they significantly impact an individual's career maturity. Specifically, students with a high internal locus of control and high peer social support demonstrate better career maturity. Conversely, students with a low internal locus of control and low peer social support show lower career maturity.

Super (1992) identified several key indicators in career development that can be associated with internal locus of control and peer social support.

Career planning involves students' abilities to plan their futures effectively, recognizing the importance of creating educational and career plans, and preparing for these choices. Students with a high internal locus of control, as explained by Phareis (1976), believe that success and failure are results of their own abilities. Peer social support, including emotional support such as warmth and attention, helps students feel more confident in planning their futures (Winkel, 2004). Confidence and peer social support aid students in creating more mature and structured educational and career plans, making them better prepared to face future challenges.

Career exploration involves students seeking information about the career world from various sources such as parents, peers, teachers, and counselors. Students with a high internal locus of control are generally more proactive in seeking relevant information (Siregar, 2021). Peer social support, including advice and feedback, facilitates this exploration by providing access to relevant and practical information (Sarafino, 2015). Students become more effective in exploring various career options and understanding career paths that best align with their interests and abilities.

Informational competence includes students' abilities to understand different career types and ways to achieve success. Students with a high internal locus of control tend to be confident in seeking knowledge about their interests and abilities, which helps them acquire necessary skills and achieve success (Shalihah, 2017). Instrumental support from peers, such as assistance with tasks or projects, helps students enhance their competencies and balance the skills needed (Sarafino, 2015). This preparation makes students better equipped to face career challenges and achieve success.

The Relationship between Internal Locus of Control and Peer Social Support with Career Maturity among Vocational High School Students

Career decision-making involves evaluating educational and career options and making choices that align with interests and abilities. Students with a high internal locus of control typically make more informed and mature decisions (Rotter, 1966). Peer recognition, which includes encouragement and validation of ideas, provides additional self-confidence in the decision-making process (Sarafino, 2017). Considering interests, abilities, and peer recognition, students can make more suitable and satisfactory educational and career choices.

This study highlights the importance of internal locus of control and peer social support in influencing career maturity among vocational high school students. Peer social support, in various forms such as emotional support, recognition, instrumental support, and information, significantly affects students' internal locus of control and helps them with career planning, exploration, competence development, and decision-making. By balancing these aspects, students can better face future career challenges and make better decisions throughout their educational and career journeys. The partial analysis results for the second hypothesis show that career maturity does not have a significant relationship with internal locus of control, leading to the rejection of this hypothesis. This may be attributed to the fact that the study subjects are vocational high school students aged 16-19. At this age, students are still in their adolescence phase, which is a crucial period involving physical, psychological, social, and emotional changes. During this period, adolescents are not only seeking a deeper understanding of their self-identity but are also facing significant questions about their future, including educational and career choices.

Erikson also argues that during adolescence, individuals strive to understand who they are and how they fit into society (Erikson, 1968). Additionally, according to Jean Piaget, adolescents begin to think abstractly, which helps them envision their future and potential (Piaget, 1972). Students aged 16-19 believe that their failures are due to their own abilities and feel capable of mastering specific skills. However, this belief is often not accompanied by a realistic understanding of what is required for career success. Adolescents are still in the process of exploring their identity and lack the practical experience needed to fully understand the dynamics of the job market (Erikson, 1968). While adolescents may feel they possess certain skills, they may not yet have the competency to apply these skills in a professional context. Practical experience is crucial for balancing career maturity, and the lack of it can be a barrier. Piaget also notes that although adolescents begin to think abstractly, they need concrete experiences to connect theory with real-life practice (Piaget, 1972).

Indicators of internal locus of control, such as abilities, interests, and effort, do not always have a significant relationship with career maturity in vocational high school students aged 16-19. Balancing identity, abstract thinking, and handling complex problems at this age requires both support and practical experience to help students achieve the desired level of career maturity. Career maturity reflects an individual's readiness to manage and balance their career responsibilities and goals (Anwar et al., 2020). Wijaya (2020) found in a study that internal locus of control did not significantly influence career maturity. This finding can be understood through the theoretical framework suggesting that career development is influenced not only by internal factors like locus of control but also by other internal factors such as intelligence, talent, interests, self-esteem, values, and personality (Azzahrah, 2022).

Partial analysis of the third hypothesis indicates a positive relationship between peer social support and career maturity, with the hypothesis accepted. Higher levels of peer social support correlate with higher career maturity. As peer social support increases, so does the career maturity of individuals. Vocational high school students with strong peer social support demonstrate higher career maturity, while those with lower peer support show lower career maturity.

Based on the subjects in this study—adolescents—Santrock (2007) suggests that peer social support plays a crucial role in shaping identity and career exploration (not only providing emotional and social support but also serving as a valuable source of information about various career paths). Adolescents tend to value the perspectives of their peers more than those of adults (Hurlock, 1992). This process involves seeking information from various sources, including peers, teachers, counselors, and parents. Adolescents are more receptive to feedback and advice from their peers as they explore educational and career options (Meriati, 2015).

Peer social support can significantly influence career planning and future career paths (Hanifah & Djamhoir, 2022). Peer support can impact career maturity by offering emotional support such as attention, encouragement, and enthusiasm, and by providing relevant information for career planning (Heindayani & Abdullah, 2018). Positive peer support allows students to complete career development tasks effectively and achieve higher career maturity (Muinna & Indrawati, 2019). Peer support encompasses emotional support, recognition, instrumental support, and information (Sarafino, 2015).

Emotional support from peers plays a role in influencing career maturity. Vocational high school students in the adolescent phase who experience affection, attention, trust, and sympathy from their peers tend to have a strong emotional foundation to tackle career challenges (Sarafino, 2017). Peer recognition, which includes encouragement, validation of ideas, and positive comparisons with others, is crucial in fostering career maturity. This support helps adolescents feel recognized in their career pursuits and builds their self-efficacy and positive self-identity. Ryan and Deci (2000) found that positive peer support significantly enhances intrinsic motivation, a key factor in achieving career goals (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

The Relationship between Internal Locus of Control and Peer Social Support with Career Maturity among Vocational High School Students

Instrumental support from peers, such as help with tasks or financial assistance, is crucial in overcoming concrete barriers to developing skills and experience needed for career advancement (Sarafino, 2015). Information support from peers provides adolescents with access to knowledge and perspectives on various career options. Adolescents receiving good informational support tend to have higher satisfaction with their career choices and are better prepared to face career-related challenges (Joseph, 2017). Timely and relevant information helps adolescents make better decisions regarding further education, training, or employment that align with their interests and goals. This support also functions as a tool for balancing self-understanding and potential in the context of career development.

Peer support serves as both an emotional and informational resource, assisting adolescents in exploring and developing satisfying and meaningful careers. Stable support from various sources provides a strong foundation for adolescents to explore their interests, balance skills, and make appropriate decisions regarding education and career. Emotional support, which includes creating a sense of security and positive emotional reinforcement, also plays an important role in helping adolescents achieve career maturity. Through emotional support from significant others such as family and close friends, adolescents can feel emotionally supported and better manage the pressures and challenges associated with career exploration and achievement (Johnson, 2018). Social integration, involving participation in groups or communities with shared interests and activities, also provides important social support for career development. Active participation in communities helps adolescents develop social networks, balance social skills and collaboration, and feel a sense of belonging (Galuzei, 2017).

The study results indicate that peer social support has a significant contribution to the variables studied, with an effective contribution of 15.77%. In contrast, internal locus of control does not have a significant effective contribution, indicating that internal locus of control does not have a substantial impact. The remaining percentage of 84.23% suggests that there are other factors beyond peer social support and internal locus of control. This remaining percentage emphasizes the need for further research to identify and understand additional factors that contribute to the variables studied, such as environmental factors, specific educational experiences, or other psychological dynamics such as self-determination, self-efficacy, self-concept, self-awareness, self-identity, parental support, guidance, and perceptions of the future. Future research is expected to provide deeper insights and guide the development of more effective and sustainable educational and career strategies for vocational high school students.

CONCLUSION

Based on the data analysis, the simultaneous analysis shows a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$, indicating a significant relationship between internal locus of control and peer social support with career maturity of vocational high school (SMK) students. This means that the higher the internal locus of control and peer social support, the higher the career maturity of the SMK students.

On a partial level, the second hypothesis shows a significance value of $0.954 > 0.05$, indicating that internal locus of control does not have a significant relationship with career maturity, as students are still in the stage of identity exploration and rely on external guidance. Conversely, the third hypothesis shows a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$, meaning that peer social support has a significant relationship with career maturity. The higher the peer social support, the higher the level of career maturity of the students. Peer social support includes emotional support, esteem, instrumental support, and information that helps students plan and balance their careers.

These results demonstrate that peer social support plays a crucial role in enhancing career maturity, with an effective contribution of 15.77%, while internal locus of control does not provide a significant contribution. The remaining 84.23% of career maturity is influenced by other factors such as self-determination, self-efficacy, self-concept, self-awareness, self-identity, parental support, teachers, and perceptions of the future.

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The Relationship between Internal Locus of Control and Peer Social Support with Career Maturity among Vocational High School Students

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The Relationship between Internal Locus of Control and Peer Social Support with Career Maturity among Vocational High School Students

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