

New Masculinities Movement for Gender Equality: The Role of Men to Achieving SDGs

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ABSTRACT

This research examines and identifies men's role in supporting the SDGs' achievement. This research uses the literature study method. Data from literature relevant to the research title, such as books, journal articles, reports, and website articles, will be analyzed qualitatively. Gender inequality has become a particular concern globally, especially regarding human resource development. Gender inequality appears in marginalization, subordination, stigma, stereotypes, and violence. The root of the problem of gender inequality is the patriarchal social system that does not support women. Men play a strategic position in supporting women to change social norms, structures, and policies that disadvantage women. We argue that to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment, there is a need to stabilize the discourse of men's roles by abandoning traditional hegemonic masculinity values towards a new masculinity movement that supports gender equality. This research implies that the deconstruction of a new masculinity that mediates the role of men in sustainable development, especially in the social, economic, political, and domestic sectors, in encouraging the realization of gender equality is critical, so we recommend policies from the government and related sector institutions.

Keywords: new masculinities, movement, gender equality, SDGs

Penelitian ini mengkaji dan mengidentifikasi peran laki-laki dalam mendukung pencapaian SDGs. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode studi literatur. Data dari literatur yang relevan dengan judul penelitian, seperti buku, artikel jurnal, laporan, dan artikel situs web, akan dianalisis secara kualitatif. Ketidaksetaraan gender telah menjadi perhatian khusus secara global, terutama dalam hal pengembangan sumber daya manusia. Ketidaksetaraan gender muncul dalam bentuk marginalisasi, subordinasi, stigma, stereotip, dan kekerasan. Akar dari masalah ketidaksetaraan gender adalah sistem sosial patriarki yang tidak mendukung perempuan. Laki-laki memiliki posisi strategis dalam mendukung perempuan untuk mengubah norma, struktur, dan kebijakan sosial yang merugikan perempuan. Kami berpendapat bahwa untuk mencapai kesetaraan gender dan pemberdayaan perempuan, diperlukan pemantapan wacana peran laki-laki dengan meninggalkan nilai-nilai maskulinitas tradisional yang hegemonik menuju gerakan maskulinitas baru yang mendukung kesetaraan gender. Penelitian ini mengimplikasikan bahwa dekonstruksi maskulinitas baru yang memediasi peran laki-laki dalam pembangunan berkelanjutan, khususnya di sektor sosial, ekonomi, politik, dan domestik, dalam mendorong terwujudnya kesetaraan gender menjadi sangat penting, sehingga perlu adanya kebijakan dari pemerintah dan lembaga sektor terkait.

Kata kunci: maskulinitas baru, gerakan, kesetaraan gender, SDGs

Introduction

Gender equality has been recognized by international law since adopting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Achieving full equality for women in all spheres is also a goal and objective of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 (Rudolf, 2019). The idea of equal gender rights has been the formal basis for international discussions on the position of

women since the United Nations Decade for Women in 1975-1985, which has been an essential element in the story of global feminism (Bulbeck, 1988). Gender inequality has recognized how the discourse of gender equality is mediated by the women's agenda, especially the global feminist movement that demands equal rights over men and the elimination of all forms of injustice.

Gender inequality has become a concern globally, especially regarding sustainable human resource development. Gender issues, precisely gender equality issues, can be considered a cross-cutting issue in the implementation of sustainable development goals (SDGs). However, it is still determined how this can be considered (Leal Filho et al., 2022). The SDG, or the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, continues the MDG's global development as an agenda to address additional challenges such as equality, urbanization, and natural sustainability and aims to strengthen global partnerships (Nasrullah, 2021). Policies regarding gender equality have received support from the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) globally (Queisser, 2016).

Gender equality can be one of the ways to achieve economic growth, fight hunger, poverty, and HIV/AIDS prevention, which will be realized in a sustainable national development agenda (Prasetyawati, 2018). Low gender equality limits productivity, economic growth, and development efficiency (Sari, 2021). The consequence is that in realizing gender equality, the SDGs only focus on economic practices that prioritize the logic of capitalism. Koehler (2016) argues that in the action plan, SGDS prioritizes economic growth. The government or related stakeholders continue to use the logic of the capitalist model to drain resources, burden the environment, and not create equal employment. Researchers argue that SDG practices that do not pay attention to gender dynamics and only focus on economic growth will make women increasingly alienated and marginalized from social structures due to their reluctance to enter the male-dominated public sphere (Nasrullah, 2021). Therefore, researchers see that the root of gender inequality is a system that does not favor women.

It is appropriate that the public and international discourse on gender equality centers on the discrimination and oppression of women. However, it is also worth noting that traditional male stereotypes perpetuate gender inequality globally and are essential to recognize and address (Edwards, 2015). Socially constructed gender roles have an impact on gender equality. That is reflected in men being the primary holders of economic and political power, and in the realm of professionalism and the corporate industry, men play a high role as public office holders (Connell, 2006). That reflects the traditional male stereotype that men are more competent than women in the public sphere. So this stereotype is used by men to perpetuate their dominance over women. That is what Connell calls hegemonic masculinity, where men occupy a hegemonic position or the top position in the social hierarchy. Hegemonic masculinity maintains a dominant position in social life (Connell et al., 1992). Furthermore, Connell & Messerschmidt (2005) state that this masculinity embodies the most respectable way of being a man, requires all other men to position themselves concerning it, and ideologically legitimizes the global subordination of women to men.

Understanding persistent gender inequality requires an examination of male and female; masculinity and femininity. There is some recognition that gender cannot be coded for women's lives alone, i.e., men's lives are equally governed by gender. Governments and UN agencies have pursued role engagement between men and women by trying to maximize efforts to achieve gender equality. In the masculinity norms of sexism and toxic masculinity, it is one of the essential things in the scope of masculinity that men have a role alongside

women and a responsibility to oppose sexism and violence (Flood, 2019). Men engagement is effectively engaged as agents of transformational change for gender and women's empowerment, and sustainable human development will not fully take place unless the patriarchy that disadvantages women is overhauled and reinvented so that women can contribute and share power and roles with men. This discourse is possible if we can identify and address unjust gender stereotypes as a responsibility to make gender equality a priority. Ultimately, both men and women can obtain rights, opportunities, and a better life.

Over the past few decades, men have empowered women and created gender equality in areas such as the household, community, and workplace. Gender equality awareness is recognized as a social responsibility that concerns and should be fully engaged between men and women. Efforts to understand the role of men in increasing their involvement in promoting gender equality have focused mainly on men as perpetrators of discrimination and subordination of women. Social constructions misrepresent the value of masculinity in society. The new masculinity is seen as a form of movement focused on the actions and attitudes of men who, in recent years, have increasingly supported gender equality and opposed male-on-female violence.

The concept of masculinity involves understanding what society can and should do. In the context of "masculinity," it is understood as independent, tough, brave, and aggressive (Hendra et al., 2013). In this case, men will be considered taboo if they show interest in domestic areas, such as cooking, helping with household chores, caring for children, or just showing their emotions. These stereotypes are shaped by the local context and culture, leading to the construction of toxic masculine values in society. Counter-narratives and discourses are needed to counter the presence of toxic masculinity, namely with new masculinities.

Explicitly, the notion of new masculinities arises from the intersection of masculinity and femininity. The ideology of new masculinity rests on vague notions of men 'loosening' traditional hegemonic norms of masculinity or adopting a 'softer' and 'feminine' approach (Segal, 1993). Furthermore, the use of new concepts of masculinity is featured in discourses of male liberation, which emphasise authenticity and self-awareness (Connell, 2005), and in the context of consumerism relating to metrosexual bodies and fashion consciousness (Clarkson, 2005). The implication is that men face far-reaching changes in gender practices and power structures at interpersonal, social, and political levels (Kimmel, 1987; Whitehead & Barrett, 2001).

The application of this new concept of masculinity can be seen in men performing domestic roles, namely: 1) cooking, taking care of children, and other domestic functions usually done by a woman or a mother (Stephanie & Yogananti, 2019). 2) men who carry out metrosexual lifestyles, such as paying attention to their appearance and personal beauty and displaying a gentle side (Rinata et al., 2022; Sahidan, 2023).

As an example of implementing gender equality and new masculinities in of a country, Sweden has not formally implemented the concept of "New Masculinity" as a government policy or program. However, as a society, Sweden is often recognized as having a more progressive and inclusive understanding of masculinity than many other countries. This is reflected in a variety of policies and practices that promote gender equality and encourage men and boys to prioritize emotional intelligence, empathy, and collaboration. For example, Swedish men are encouraged to be active fathers and to share household and childcare responsibilities equally with their partners. As a result of these policies and cultural shifts,

traditional gender roles and expectations have been increasingly challenged in Sweden. Men are now expected to share responsibility for household and childcare duties, as well as to be emotionally available and communicative. Reflecting on this, sustainable development provides a discourse so that men and women get equal treatment and opportunities in public and domestic sphere.

The policy of gender equality has been implemented in Sweden for several decades. The first policy was adopted in 1944, which ensured women equal rights to education and employment. The policy was strengthened and expanded in the following decades through a series of laws and policies aimed at promoting gender equality in all aspects of society. In recent years, Sweden has been recognized as one of the leading countries in the world in terms of gender equality, with a high ranking in global gender equality indexes. However, it is important to note that the path towards gender equality is an ongoing process, and that there is still work to be done to address remaining gender disparities.

In order to achieve gender equality, men also need to be educated about the perspectives, experiences and challenges faced by women so that they can work together to create a place where they can thrive equally. The new masculinity approach is the basis for understanding the meaning and context of masculinity, which emphasizes understanding problems in gender inequality and other masculinity issues such as toxic masculinity. This can break the culture of violence, gender bias, and sexism that will create a new culture and outlook for men and women to achieve the goals echoed in the discourse of sustainable development. Sustainable development goal 5 refers to changing unequal power relations between men and women that impede structurally and culturally by empowering all women and girls (Queisser, 2016).

This research aims to examine and identify the role of men and the new masculinity movement in supporting the achievement of SDGs by providing an understanding of gender equality in sustainable development goals (SDGs) through literature and literature methods based on new social movement (NSM) theory (Buechler, 1995; Faulks, 2012; Turner, 2013). Various studies that examine new masculinities and sustainable development are used to support this research. Achieving gender equality is still primarily considered a women's issue. It is crucial to raise awareness that gender equality is a social issue that should be of concern to the whole society, one of which involves men, to provide a great understanding of the issues of masculinity and gender equality that develop in society.

Materials and Methods

Researchers used a literature study method with a qualitative approach. Literature research collects data by understanding and studying theories from various literature related to the research (Adlini et al., 2022). According to (Zed, 2004, pp. 4–5), the four main characteristics of library research are: 1) Researchers are confronted directly with text or numerical data rather than with direct knowledge from the field or witnesses. 2) library data is 'ready to use.' 3) library data is generally a secondary source, meaning the researcher obtains the original data first-hand in the field. 4) the condition of library data is not limited by space and time. In collecting data, researchers use literature relevant to the research topic, such as books, journal articles, reports, and websites, that are analyzed qualitatively and in-depth to answer research questions.

Results and Discussion

Gender inequality is a system that involves men or women being victimized in a system. The system raises several issues of injustice, such as discrimination against certain types of gender. These injustices in society mostly feature women as victims of injustice. Gender differences with sorting according to traits, roles, and positions is a determination that is not a problem if it does not lead to gender differences. The urgency in addressing gender inequality stems from the social and economic consequences that lead to substantial.

Gender inequality refers to the part of the gap that is driven by gender bias and unequal rights or opportunities. The difference in participation rates between male and female labor force has narrowed, but the gap remains high in some countries. It is still found that women who participate in the public sector experience marginalization, especially in leadership and political positions. The primary and most important thing in gender inequality is related to the issue of justice and the welfare of women, giving rise to various forms or causes of actions that harm women. These forms of injustice develop into acts of discrimination and violence against women, such as sexual violence, stereotyping or labeling, marginalization, subordination, and double burden. These forms of injustice arise due to the faulty construction in society and the existence of a patriarchal system, which is the leading cause of the double burden on women. The construction of gender, both masculinity and femininity, has resulted in gender injustice itself.

Construction of masculinity consists of behaviors, language, and actions in a particular culture or organization commonly associated with men and defined in a non-feminine way. Masculinity is present as something that describes and shows the identity of a man. The concept of masculinity and male behavior is not a gender coding (Clatterbaugh, 1998). However, in society, the use of masculine concepts is an assumption that a person's behavior is a result of their gender, which is male. This suggests that someone who is not masculine will be judged to behave differently from men (Everitt-Penhale & Ratele, 2015). This conception is formed based on individuality that develops in society. The construction of gender, according to Nina (1993), provides a statement that what is masculinity or femininity must be seen from the point of view of what men or women do, namely how they behave, not from what they are. If gender is cultural, it can be concluded that women and men can enter and inhabit masculinity as a "culture" (Beynon, 2002). MacInnes (1998, p. 2) states the discussion on masculinity is based on a few assumptions. Firstly, it is an identity that has been established empirically. Secondly, the implications of this identity are used to analyze male characters that are associated with acts of 'oppressing' and 'exploiting'. Moreover, masculinity is a product of the patriarchal system. Thirdly, there are suggestions for alternative models of masculinity that men can accept or that may encourage them to reject the concept of masculinity altogether.

Constructions of masculinity can include understandings of traditional masculinity that are toxic to men. The understanding of hegemonic masculinity that reinforces dominance over women is very different from traditional masculinity because this masculinity develops from men's interactions with their environment in society about behavior, social norms, and social behavior (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Traditional masculinity creates a system that codes men to be what the system dictates, that men should be tough, tearful, dominant, independent, and so on. This system creates an invisible "poison" to men that we call toxic masculinity (Harrington, 2021).

The patriarchal system gives power to men to normalize the domination of women through the normalization of traditional masculinity values that are hegemonic in various aspects of human life. Researchers argue that we need to focus on the use of masculinity in maintaining social hierarchies and the power of political and environmental elites to see how gender inequality occurs due to systemic problems. According to UN WOMEN (2021), developing gender-transformative work with men on the patriarchal masculinities that maintain and normalize the power of economic and political elites will help clarify the contribution that can be made to the broader movement for gender equality and social justice. New masculinities are a new discourse to engage men to achieve gender equality.

In brief, the development of masculinity towards a new masculinity is divided into four tendencies (Wandi, 2015). 1) pre-1980s masculinity is shown with men who have the nature of hard workers, macho and can cover their emotions. 2) In the 1980s, male masculinity began to show its femininity, such as men involved in domestic affairs. 3) The 1990s male masculinity is shown again as in the pre-1980s where men must have elements of violence, macho and holiganism. 4) The 2000s was the beginning of a new masculinity, which began with the phenomenon of metrosexual male life, which was so concerned with appearance, details and perfectionism.

The new masculinity concept has its own dynamics regarding its function to achieve gender equality. The concept of new masculinity is seen as an instrument to break the heteronormativity of manhood. Then, new masculinity is seen as a form of self-expression, which refers more to a self-centred attitude that does little to address gender inequality (Connell, 1996; Messner, 1993). Sweetman (2013) state that the presence of new masculinities is a form of resistance to traditional hegemonic masculinity that harms women structurally, where hegemonic masculinity shows superior strength and intelligence at the expense of women's existence.

The concept of new masculinity arises from the opposition to traditional norms of masculinity, hegemonic masculinity, and toxic masculinity. These traditional concepts have given rise to ideas supporting gender equality. The New Masculinity approach argues that traditional notions of masculinity as dominant, unexpressive, and hyper-independent are outdated and obsolete. It advocates for men to strive for emotional intelligence, empathy, and collaboration rather than pursuing dominance. This movement encourages men to be open and embrace vulnerabilities, including emotional complexity and depth, as integral aspects of their personalities. This perspective aims to challenge and dismantle gender inequality, particularly within traditional masculinity, allowing men to express emotions such as affection, tenderness, and cooperation beyond the norm of male dominance.

From this standpoint, it becomes evident that traditional concepts of masculinity can have negative impacts on individuals, manifesting in increased stress and depression. Conversely, men who explicitly express and embrace their emotions tend to experience good emotional well-being. This is attributed to their ability to articulate and display personal emotional vulnerabilities without conforming to traditional norms of masculinity.

The presence of this new masculinity implicitly gives the idea that men with the hegemonic axis of traditional masculinity plunge men into a hidden injustice. Research conducted by Scambor & Seidler (2013) shows that men also experience a crisis in education. They discuss how the "boys' crisis" in education follows a path that seeks to describe the situation of boys in schools in various countries across Europe with all its complexities. They recommend supporting men as they seek to shape new masculinities and more equal ways of relating in

their schools, but also more generally in terms of how their learning helps shape them as citizens who are committed to ending sexual violence and committed to a vision of gender equality, as well as being able to respect gender diversity. Other studies have highlighted that men who behave according to hegemonic models of masculinity tend to have several health problems (Oriol et al., 2021).

Contemporary hegemonic images of masculinity gradually take on a new and improved face (Johansson & Klinth, 2008). It is evidenced that today masculinity is not a fixed male gender identity. Rather, it is a male gender identity that has complexities and has been recognized by the intersectionality of various identities (Ammann & Staudacher, 2020; Haenfler, 2015; Johansson & Klinth, 2008; Messerschmidt & Messner, 2018; Messner et al., 2015; Yo Digo No Más, 2021). Furthermore, this intersectionality encourages men to engage in gender-political practices with female feminists to fight gender-based violence (Messner et al., 2015). Yo Digo No Más (2021) further asserts that through the intersectionality of masculinity, the new masculinity has redefined long-internalized gender roles and contributed to producing more egalitarian gender relations. So structurally, the context of "new" masculinities can help us understand men's involvement in feminist and other progressive social movements (Messner, 1993).

The third-wave feminist movement initially initiated the discourse on men's new masculinities as drivers of gender equality. The United Nations then adopted this idea to campaign for men to be involved in gender equality and justice efforts (Larasati, 2019). This global campaign gave birth to policies that implicitly involve men in realizing gender equality. In Europe today, the role of men in promoting gender equality is more important than it was 1520 years ago. In fact, men and masculinity have also been the subject of gender studies and policies in the European Union (Scambor et al., 2014).

One of the strategies to achieve gender equality following SDGs goal 5 is gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming has received significant attention worldwide (Caglar, 2013). Various countries around the world characterize it has adopted this term to implement gender equality policies (George, 2007; Mergaert, 2012; Nurdin, 2022; Schech & Mustafa, 2010; Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2017; Zakar et al., 2018). However, this strategy has been criticized for not going far enough from the politically conservative Women in Development (WID) approach (Sweetman, 2013), and, in fact, gender mainstreaming has not proven successful in achieving gender equality (True & Parisi, 2013). Researchers argue that in achieving gender equality, men must be the ones to deliberate women's issues so that women do not walk alone politically. In other words, men must use their power to accompany women in achieving equality and justice. Chant and Gutmann (2002) argue that one of the most common strategies to engage men is to make gender equality about men themselves: by masculinizing gender equality or "men-streaming" gender equality. Masculinization is seen in gender equality efforts both in local efforts and at the level of international development discourse (Huis & Leek, 2020).

It is realizing that achieving gender equality is a challenging and complex effort, and there are still many gender inequalities and injustices in the form of marginalization, subordination, double burden, stereotypes, and violence. Various new masculinity movements motivate men to engage in various social actions that voice women's rights. Jiang (2019) argues in his literature study that masculinity must be challenged for the good of men and to build a foundation for development toward gender equality.

In India, Men's Action to Stop Violence Against Women (MASVAW) is a social movement that politically seeks to educate men through anti-violence campaigns against the practices

of murder for dowry, rape, torture, domestic violence, molestation, sexual harassment, and similar acts are very common in India (Bhandari, 2008; Mogford et al., 2015; Shahrokh et al., 2015). MASVAW has successfully influenced men regarding gender-equitable beliefs and practices (Das et al., 2012). The involvement of men who belong to "New Alternative Masculinities" contributes to the fight against sexual violence (Nazareno et al., 2021).

In South Africa, Sonke Gender Justice has worked with women's rights organizations to hold police and other state institutions accountable. Sonke Gender Justice through the Shukumisa Campaign to educate men on how they can support survivors to access the provisions of the revised South African Sexual Offences Act (Peacock & Barker, 2014).

In Indonesia, the new men's Alliance (Aliansi Laki-Laki Baru) movement is a men's movement as a resistance to patriarchy and hegemonic masculinity as cultural violence that is the ideological basis of violence against women (Ramadhan, 2018; Simaibang & Bajari, 2019). The movement also emphasizes the urgency for men to become 'men' by advocating for gender equality locally and globally (Fahadi, 2022).

Regarding the government's movement in pursuing gender equality according to point 5 of the SDGs, we need to learn much from the island country (Safarin, 2021). Researchers argue that Iceland is one of the countries that implicitly uses the concept of new masculinity in formulating gender policies. The government made breakthroughs, such as enacting exclusive paternity leave, which paved the way for gender equality efforts between men and women. This policy also encourages men to take part in childcare and household affairs. So that fathers and mothers have the same obligations in caring for children and households. Iceland also issued a policy to eliminate the income gap between men and women.

Henslin (2006, p. 228) states that internalized contradictions in power arrangements will create power that results in social movements by forming an organization that promotes or opposes change. Researchers identified several reasons why the new masculinity movement is classified as a new social movement. 1) The new masculinity movement does not control the state. Instead, NSMs represent a new form of democratic organization rooted in maintaining a pluralistic and autonomous civil society (Faulks, 2012, p. 140). 2) Activist of the new masculinity movement show a high awareness of gender equality. 3) The new masculinity movement seeks to realize social change for gender equality by deconstructing the heteronormativity norms of patriarchal society. 4) The new masculinity movement performatively changes the social order of global society by aiming to change gender concepts and practices that oppress and discriminate against women and men.

New masculinity movements use social capital in the form of affiliation networks to avoid institutionalization so that they can more easily maintain the status quo and maintain independence over ideology. This can be seen from the activists of the new masculinity movements who refuse to depend on elite groups when campaigning for gender equality. These activists prefer to embrace a fluctuating and dynamic membership (Faulks, 2012, p. 147) which is expressed through sporadic support actions, such as organizing online petitions, attracting mass media attention through various gender equality discourses, opposing government policies that are not gender inclusive and organizing capacity building activities for men.

Researchers also argue that the new masculinity movement that various activists have carried out is one of the non-violence resistance movements to invite men to get involved in efforts to eradicate the inequality experienced by women and the inequality of women's

political roles in the public or domestic sphere. Furthermore, this new masculinity movement seeks to initiate men to act as the ears and hands of women whose voices are silenced by dominant groups who can exercise control and power in determining society's gender roles and relations.

One of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) is to achieve gender equality and empower all women worldwide. Efforts have been made to support gender equality. For example, in 2015, public investment in education almost eliminated the gender gap in school enrollment, legislative reforms have significantly reduced discrimination, countries have enacted or introduced policies or laws to protect women, deal with cases of violence against women, including sexual harassment. In the domestic sphere, men can be a father of the household who actively cares for children and families. In addition, strengthening the role of men in the domestic sphere can overcome systemic problems, such as stunting. When women can hack their territory and participate in the public sphere, men should also be able to hack their role in the domestic sphere so that both can lead in the family's welfare and self-actualization (Sumiyatiningsih, 2013).

Increasing the role of men in the discourse of gender equality is not easy, given the values that maintain their "power" over the years (Wandi, 2015). The role of men supported by the new masculinity movement provides a platform for all elements to give their aspirations in reducing gender inequality. The key to this transformation is the extent to which development can support efforts to achieve the necessary inequalities by involving men as agents of change in unequal gender relations. Men's participation in sharing tasks and burdens with women is a form of conception based on progressive masculinity.

Conclusion

The new masculinity movement is a new social movement that seeks to initiate men to achieve sustainable development goals 5. Men have promising potential to eradicate various gender issues, so we must mediate the position of men in society so that they want to move towards realizing gender equality and supporting women's lives. Men's participation in supporting the gap between genders is a form of implementing the new masculinity movement, where gender inequality is not an issue that women must bear entirely. Men can also feel injustice caused by the construction of gender formed by culture and systems. Achieving the sustainable development agenda requires hand in hand from all elements of society and gender by realizing the urgency of the issue to realize the goal of sustainable development, namely gender equality. It is worth discussing whether the contemporary masculinity movement in this current era of modernity has weakened men's power over women, or instead, reinforced men's social position in society.

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