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Innovation Typology of the Local Government in Educational Affairs

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Abstract. Many studies have been carried out on the application of innovation concept in the local government administration, but none has specifically studied innovation typology from the aspect of levels and types of the innovations developed. Therefore, it is important to understand the innovation typology developed by the local government. This study focuses on the development of innovative program of the local government in educational affairs. Through descriptive-qualitative method, this study aims to describe innovation typology of educational affairs. Primary data is obtained from interviews and field observations while secondary data is obtained from official documents of the local government. The data are analyzed with Spiral Model technique. The findings show four programs of innovation, namely Educational Studio of Pious Children (SPAS), Free Education, Punggawa D'Emba Education Program (PDEP), and Task Force for Education. They are categorized as innovation typology of the process of service at the incremental level adopted from other regions through a replication strategy.

Keywords: local government innovation, innovation typology, educational affair

Abstrak. Kajian terhadap penerapan konsep inovasi dalam administrasi pemerintahan daerah telah banyak dilakukan oleh berbagai pihak. Namun belum ada yang meneliti secara khusus bagaimana tipologi inovasi, baik dari aspek tingkatan inovasi maupun jenis program inovasi yang dikembangkan. Oleh karena itu penting memahami tipologi inovasi bagaimana yang dikembangkan oleh pemerintah daerah selama ini. Penelitian ini fokus pada pengembangan program inovasi pemerintah daerah dalam urusan pendidikan. Melalui metode kualitatif deskriptif penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggambarkan tipologi program inovasi penyelenggaraan urusan pendidikan. Data primer diperoleh dari wawancara dengan informan, observasi lapangan, dan data sekunder bersumber dari dokumentasi resmi pemerintah daerah. Selanjutnya data penelitian dianalisis dengan teknik analisis Model Spiral. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa terdapat empat program inovatif yaitu Sanggar Pendidikan Anak Saleh, Pendidikan Gratis, Punggawa D'Emba Education, dan Satuan Tugas Pendidikan. Dikategorikan sebagai tipologi inovasi proses pelayanan, berada pada tingkatan inkremental dan diadopsi dari daerah lain melalui strategi replikasi.

Kata kunci: inovasi pemerintahan daerah, tipologi inovasi, urusan pendidikan

INTRODUCTION

There are many studies on local government innovation; but specifically studies on innovation in educational affairs, particularly at the level of local governments in Indonesia, are rare. Even if there is, such study is often juxtaposed with other governmental affairs. Therefore, the issues found in the innovation of educational affairs may be similar to the issues of other innovations of local government. For example, the study conducted by Prasojo (2006) in Jembrana in which innovations in education and health sector are compared and similar issues for the development of the innovations are found.

Various issues encountered in the development of local government innovation are explained by Muhammad (2007) in his book entitled *Reinventing Local Government: Pengalaman dari Daerah*. The issues can be observed from the perspective of reinventing local government. In this perspective, the issues are divided into eight-point agenda requiring serious

attention. First, leadership. This issue is considered crucial by Prasojo (2006), Muluk (2008), Said (2009), Evans (2010), Capuno (2010), and Akomolafe (2011). Second, organizational culture. This issue is considered crucial by Mulgan and Albury (2003), Prasojo (2006), Ajibola (2008), Said (2009), Kim (2009), Evans (2010), and Capuno (2010). Third, incentives and rewards. Fourth, innovation capacity, both individual and system capacity. Muhammad (2007), Farazmand (2004), Muluk (2008), Said (2009), Evans (2010), Capuno (2010), and Supriyono (2011) also state that innovation capacity is a serious issue for the development of innovation. Fifth, the perspective of the consumers or people served. Sixth, the limited collaboration with the public sector. This issue is also considered crucial by Farazmand (2004), Muluk (2008), Said (2009), Evans (2010), and Hennala (2011). Seventh, the lack of courage to experiment. Eighth, the lack of awareness of the importance of innovation investment.

Practically, some issues of the development of local government innovation according to Said (2009)

includes: first, the difficulty concerning where to start, by whom, and when the innovation is developed in practice; second, the lack of political, financial, and technical support; third, the lack of cooperation between a leader and other leaders and between a leader and the society (stakeholders); fourth, lack of orientation on the value of excellent service; and fifth, the improper condition of administration and personnel system to support innovation.

By observing the study of innovation in the development of public administration thinking, it seems that innovation concept has been already known before the era of the development of new public management paradigm. According to Vigoda-Gadot, et al. (2005), basically innovation concept has existed in the era of classic public administration thinking. However, innovation is merely defined as an internal mechanism of an organization. Innovation is highly dominated by a top manager. In other words, it has a top down system and merely aims to retain power.

Currently, innovation is highly strategic for public organizations. Therefore, according to Mulgan and Albury (2003:2), the definition of the development of innovation for public sector organizations is considered important. It is seen from their statement that “innovation should be a core activity of the public sector: it helps public services to improve performance and increase public value; respond to the expectations of citizens and adapt to the needs of users; increase service efficiency and minimize costs.” Mulgan and Albury (2003) also mention some reasons why public sector must innovate, namely: (1) to respond more effectively to the increasing changes of public needs and expectations; (2) to include cost elements and improve efficiency; (3) to improve the delivery of public services, including at sections with little progress in the past; (4) to fully capitalize the use of information and communication technologies since it has been proven to increase efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.

Farazmand (2004: 20) acknowledges the importance of public sector innovation in one of his books, entitled *Sound Governance: Policy and Administrative Innovations*. He states that innovation is a key factor for sound governance. Innovation, both from the aspect of policy and administration is the center of sound governance. Without innovation, the government will be trapped in the breakdown and ineffectiveness, losing the ability to govern and being the target of crisis and failure.

Moreover, Borins (2001) suggests that the development of innovation in global public management and organizational sector is driven by several conditions. Some of the global conditions are summarized into five groups, among others; (1) The demand of political system, including the right through the mandate of the election, legislation, and pressure from politicians; (2) the emergence of new leadership, namely a leader who brings new ideas and concepts, from the inside or outside organization; (3) the existence of a crisis defined as the

failure to anticipate current and future public issues; (4) The internal problems, namely the failure to respond to the changes in the environment, the inability to include public requests in a program, the issue of resource, and the failure to coordinate various policies; and (5) the emergence of new opportunities, such as the creation of various types of new technologies affecting the lifestyle of the society.

In this context, the local government innovation as the object of the study is limited to the innovation related to educational affairs. This study will not examine all governmental affairs submitted to the autonomous region, but merely involve the authority to regulate and manage educational affairs in the autonomous district. The authority is regulated in Article 14 Paragraph (1) Point (f) of Law No. 32 of 2004 on Local Government and Article 7 Paragraph (2) Point (a) of the Government Regulation No. 38 of 2007 on the Division of Governmental Affairs between the Government, Provincial Government, and District/Municipal Government.

The locus of this study is Gowa District. Gowa is the second largest autonomous region after Makassar in South Sulawesi. Gowa District is the former central area of Gowa Kingdom whose majority of population is Makassar people. Since 2005, this district has been led under the leadership of Regent Ichsan Yasin Limpo and has implemented several innovative policies and programs in educational field. They are implemented in order to overcome the problems such as the limited accessibility of the community to educational services and to improve the quality of education. The steps taken by the local government of Gowa are certainly part of the manifestation of regional autonomy in Indonesia today. In the era of regional autonomy, according to Wahab (2002), the autonomous regions (provinces, districts/cities) have an extensive authority in governance. Autonomous regions must have the courage and the capacity to create differences from other regions. Regional autonomy provides a space of “political maneuver” for regions in expressing their autonomous policies. In the perspective of public administration, an extensive space to be creative and innovative in governing the local government is called discretion.

Various points of view confirming the importance of the local government innovation, the findings of previous studies showing various issues in the practice of development of local government innovation, and the innovation of educational affairs in Gowa are the reasons why the author carries out an in-depth study of innovation typology developed by the local government in educational affairs.

RESEARCH METHOD

The method of the study is qualitative or naturalistic inquiry approach intended to understand the existing actuality, social reality, and human perception as they are without being manipulated and regulated

through experimentation (Nasution, 1996). In other words, a qualitative study emphasizes meanings and interpretation on the object of the study (Ezzy, 2003). To be more directed and certain about the required data, the study is limited to focus on two questions: (1) what is the typology of innovative program developed? (2) how is the capacity of the local government of Gowa in developing innovative program of educational affairs? The data are collected through three processes: (1) interviews with key informants from the government, namely the Secretary of the Department of Education; the deputy speaker of the Regional People's Representative Council of Gowa; and an additional informant from each stakeholder such as the Principals, Boards of Education, the school committees, parents, and education-concerned NGOs; (2) direct observation in schools (SPAS, elementary, middle, and high school) where the program of innovation is implemented; and (3) the process of collecting secondary data through official documents of the local government such as the Regional Regulation, the Regulation of the Regent, Government Agency Performance Accountability Report (LAKIP), and evaluation and monitoring reports by the Fajar Institute Pro Autonomy (FIPO) on the implementation of educational services in South Sulawesi. The data is analyzed with Spiral Model developed by Creswell (2007), covering data collection, management, interpretation and classification, description, as well as visualization and presentation of the findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Theoretically, there are some sources of innovation in a governmental organization. According to Eggers and Singh (2009:9), the categorization of sources of innovation in governmental organizations, including the local government, can be observed from four axes: (1) internal partners, namely innovation through reinvented government; (2) employees, namely the governmental apparatus who innovate through collaboration focusing on impact; (3) external partners, namely innovation through partnership and networked government; and (4) citizens, namely innovation coming from the citizens' participation in governmental activities due to the respond and encouragement of the government.

According to the opinion by Eggers and Singh (2009), the programs of innovation developed in Gowa District are sourced from internal partners of the local government. The four innovation programs, namely SPAS, PDEP, Free Education, and Task Force for Education, are pure ideas and initiatives of the Regent of Gowa after carrying out comparative studies in other regions. SPAS is one of promises given during the political campaign of the Regent in Local Election in Gowa in 2005, later developed as a priority program of the local government aiming to reduce the high rate of illiteracy at that period. This program has been actualized until the end of 2005-2010 period, spread all over villages.

The type of innovations developed in Gowa District can be categorized using the opinion by Mulgan & Albury's (2003) and Muluk (2008), dividing innovations

into some innovation typologies of public sector related to service products, processes, methods, innovations, and systems. Mulgan, Albury, and Muluk also argue that an innovation can be categorized as incremental, radical or systemic (transformative) innovation. Programs of innovation examined in this study can be categorized as processes of service and incremental innovations with following explanation.

The four innovative policies and programs are (1) Educational Studio of Pious Children (SPAS); (2) Free Education Program, namely the exemption of school fee from elementary to high school (12-year compulsory education); (3) Punggawa D'Emba Education Program (PDEP), namely cinema class-based learning system; and (4) Task Force for Education (Satgas). These four programs of innovation are currently no longer novelties and considered mediocre programs. The assumption is reasonable because the programs have been implemented since several years ago. However, those programs of innovation are still ongoing. Based on the findings, SPAS has been carried out since 2005, free education program since 2008, and PDEP and Satgas since 2010.

The data is better understood by reviewing the meaning of innovation concept. Innovation concept in general can be understood in the context of behavioral change. Innovation is closely related to a dynamic and growing environment. The definition of innovation varies with many perspectives. According to Rogers (1983), an author of the leading innovation book, innovation is a new idea, practice, or object to a certain individual (one unit) and is adopted by others.

The innovative programs of educational affairs implemented by the local government of Gowa are in line with the opinion that innovation is associated with new ideas, practices and objects, particularly for the society and the local government. Those programs of innovation may have been applied in other regions, although in different forms and names, but they are substantially similar. However, for the local community and government, the programs such as SPAS, Free Education, PDEP, and Task Force for Education are novelty, even though these innovations are the result of the adoption or replication from programs of innovation in other regions or countries through comparative studies.

According to Sherwood (2002), innovation as one of the characteristics of the value of organizational flexibility is not merely doing, finding, or bringing in a new idea as the general definition implies. However, innovation is a process requiring four stages: (1) the introduction or to propose the idea first; (2) the evaluation or to follow up the idea; (3) the development or to refine the idea from concept to reality that produces something; and (4) the implementation or to actualize the idea.

Referring to the opinion by Sherwood and relating it to the facts about the development of innovation in Gowa District, it suggests that Gowa as an organization has begun to open to new things. The openness to new ideas and practices shows that the organization already has the nature of flexibility. This condition is certainly

interesting because local government organizations (public sector organizations) have been known to be highly inflexible and formal.

Another definition mentions that innovation is an activity encompassing the entire process of creating and offering new, better, or cheaper services or goods. It can be explained that an innovation may be a new product or service, a new technology for production process, a structure of new system and administration, or a new plan for the members of an organization. Innovation can also be understood in the context of public sector management. This definition is introduced by Cohen and Elmicke (1998:2-3) that the innovation of public sector management is always concerned with the aspects of design and management of a policy and program. The draft of policy relates to policy formulation, while the management of a program relates to policy implementation.

The following is the description of the development of the innovative programs in educational affairs, beginning with the development of SPAS. Based on the findings, it is found that SPAS was first developed in 2005 by the local government of Gowa District, precisely at the early leadership of Regent Ichsan Yasin Limpo and Vice Regent Abdul Razak Badjidu. The idea of the development arises from the Regent in response to the fact that there are many illiterate school-age children who have not been able to read Koran fluently as well.

The development of SPAS is the initial breakthrough of the newly elected Regent of Gowa in 2005. The breakthrough emerges due to the social reality that, averagely, there are poor families in almost all villages having illiterate school-age children who have not been able to read Koran as well. In other words, SPAS is an educational facility for dropout children and for those who cannot go to school due to financial condition. In 2009, this program is developed into Early Childhood Education (PAUD) by the local government to comply with the policy of the central government (Ministry of Education) and to sustain SPAS. Thus, PAUD is directly formed in 154 villages in 2009 since all SPASs in villages were transformed into PAUD.

However, SPAS remains unchanged in terms of resources such as educators and management because the program still utilizes the existing resources, including the learning materials. The exception is the age requirement for santri (religious school student), namely from 6-13 years old to 6 year old or pre-school age.

SPAS is one of the programs of the local government with the value of innovation because it gives a real contribution in supporting the mission of the local government in improving the quality and accessibility to educational services for its citizens. The assessment is carried out by an independent institution called The Fajar Institute Pro Autonomy (FIPO). Established by Fajar Daily Newspaper in 2008, FIPO is an independent institution that intensively monitors and evaluates the implementation of regional autonomy in South Sulawesi.

Although the development of this program has received appreciation from the central government

in the form of the award of Aksara Anugerah Utama and other institutions such as FIPO in the form of an assessment that SPAS is a program of innovation, the program still receives criticism from several circles. The first criticism is related to the orientation of the program, to consider the considerable budget and not to merely be oriented to "project". The second criticism is related to the involvement of many stakeholders, such as local private sectors who should be invited to participate through a partnership program in the development of this program, as well as the existing community organizations such as religious organizations (Muhamadiyah and NU), professional organizations (PGRI) and youth organizations (KNPI). The development of SPAS is more oriented to character building. It does not only have a quantitative objective to decrease the number of illiteracy and the number of children who have not been able to read Koran, but also a qualitative objective to provide mental, character, and moral building for children from an early age.

The next program of innovation is Free Education program. In general, Free Education program aims to free students and parents from various types of school fees. Some important points of the implementation of Free Education program in Gowa District have been formulated. First, the policy innovation of the exemption of school fees in the form of free education is initiated by the Regent of Gowa, Ichsan Yasin Limpo. This policy is one of political will and commitment of the Regent to improve the quality of human resources of the region. Free Education Program is certainly not merely born but is underpinned by the minimal public accessibility to education and low education index in Gowa District at that time.

Second, the initiative and commitment of the Regent regarding the policy innovations in education is followed up by the establishment of the Regional Regulation submitted to the Regional People's Representative Council to be discussed, approved and ratified. Thus, the Regional Regulation No. 4 of 2008 on Free Education is established. In the framework of the implementation of the policy, the Regent also establishes the Regulation of the Regent of Gowa No. 8 of 2008 on the Implementation of Free Education.

Third, the innovation policy on free education regulated in the Regional Regulation and the Regulation of the Regent is still considered to have a drawback because it does not seem to firmly regulate the obligations and responsibilities of the community, particularly parents/guardians regarding educational issues. Therefore, the Regional Regulation No. 10 of 2009 on Compulsory Education is established. Principally, it regulates matters related to the obligations and responsibilities of the community and parents/guardians to the educational process of their children. This regulation even regulates the sanctions for parents who do not care about the education of their children.

Fourth, the aspects related to the management and implementation of Free Education program basically have already expressed in the Regulation of the Regent of Gowa No. 8 of 2008. The responsibility for the management and implementation of this program lies

in the local instruments managing the educational affairs, namely the Department of Education, Youth and Sports. According to the main tasks and functions of the related fields, the Regional Working Unit (SKPD) of the Department of Youth and Sports is responsible to realize Free Education program effectively.

Fifth, the school is a container where the Free Education program is implemented. Operationally, the principal is in charge of the Free Education program at the school level. The principal has power to appoint an administrative staff or a teacher to be a treasurer. The treasurer will manage the fund for Free Education that has been allocated to each school. Sixth, Free Education program is intended for all levels of schools, both public schools run by the local government and private schools owned by the non-governmental/private sector. The Free Education program in Gowa District is not a stand-alone program. This program is a complementary program to the Free Education policy regulated by the provincial government of South Sulawesi and supports School Operational Assistance Program (BOS) that has been declared by the central government.

The commitment of the government of Gowa District to encourage the improvement of the quality of education apparently is not only shown from the concept of policy innovation that aims to overcome the low accessibility of the community to the world of education, namely Free Education policy, but also from the encouragement to increase the quality of the learning process to produce more qualified output. The attention to the learning quality is initiated in the form of a program design called Punggawa D'emba Education Program (PDEP). The Free Education program aims to improve the accessibility of the community (parents and children) to more affordable, inexpensive, and equitable education services. Meanwhile, PDEP aims to encourage more qualified learning process in schools, both in terms of students' understanding of learning materials and the quality of teaching methods of teachers in schools.

Based on the findings in the field, PDEP is a revolutionary learning concept whose main purpose is to improve the quality of teachers and students in understanding the learning materials, possessing skills, positive mindset, and high nationalism, as well as having deep understanding of the local traditions and culture of the community of Gowa. Etymologically, the term Punggawa D'Emba is taken from the term in Makassar. Punggawa means a leader or a person who has the influence and power while D'Emba means Daeng Emba, an influential and respected local figure because of his great concern for education in Gowa District. The idea of improving learning quality through audiovisual-based learning model is the result of comparative studies to some regions in the country and other countries considered successful in applying the program. These comparative studies are carried out by the local government (the Regent), the Department of Youth and Sports, and the members of DPRD's committee for education sector.

The early development of PDEP certainly did not go smoothly. Therefore, the program is not directly implemented. The development of this program

technically requires experts/professionals. It is impossible to be implemented by the local government alone. Therefore, the opportunities for the involvement of parties outside the local government are opened. A third party is involved in the form of cooperation with a private company called I-Solution.

This innovative learning model is believed to have several advantages, among others: (1) providing a message that can be received more evenly by students through the audio-visual media; (2) explaining a process in a great way; (3) overcoming the limitations of space and time; (4) providing a more realistic learning, can be repeated and stopped as needed; And (5) leaving a deep impression that can affect the attitude and behavior of students.

Nevertheless, the concept of learning with information technology and communication approach through audio visual techniques with many advantages over conventional learning system still contains some weakness in the application. Operationally, this program requires certain facilities such as specifically-designed classrooms for the method of cinema class. Teachers still have limited skills in operating computers and information technology. In addition, according to some teachers and students, some learning materials seem to be more effective to be taught using conventional models.

Some points can be drawn from the development of PDEP. First, the implementation of PDEP is a part of the commitment of the local government and DPRD in providing optimal basic services in education to improve the quality of human resources through improving the education index of Gowa District. Second, PDEP is an innovation to encourage more qualified learning process in schools, characterized by the increase of the average value of subjects and the number of students passing the national exam. Third, PDEP is related to the learning method using audiovisual technology or cinema edutainment. This learning method and system is new and different compared to conventional teaching method.

The last innovation is the establishment of the Task Force for Education. This program is a breakthrough to maximize the functions and duties of the Civil Service Police Unit in enforcing the Regional Regulation of Free Education and Compulsory Learning. The program is local government innovation of Gowa District designed in the form of cooperation between local instruments. Although the cooperation is not a novelty, the cooperation between the Office of the Civil Service Police Unit and the Department of Education, Youth and Sports through the establishment of Task Force for Education is not only inspiring (thinking out of the box) but also methodically encouraging for a broader positive impact (UNfGI, 2012).

The establishment of Task Force for Education is a breakthrough to find the format of inter-institutional cooperation in the sphere of SKPD that can be re-function to support strategic policy of Gowa District (UNfGI, 2012). In the general provisions of Article (1) of the Regulation of the Ministry of Home Affairs No. 33 of 2008, the term cooperation is defined as a

pattern of working relationships, namely a series of procedures and protocols between local instruments forming a circular work patterns in order to optimize the work. The Article (2) also affirms several principles that must be held in the pattern of working relationships between local instruments, among others: (a) mutual aid and support to improve the sustainable performance of public services; (b) mutual respect for position, tasks, functions and authorities of each local instrument; (C) mutual benefit; and (d) encouragement for mutual independence of each local instrument leading to the increase in the ability to perform the duties of governance.

Some points related to the establishment Task Force for Education in Gowa District are concluded. First, this program is a local government innovation designed in the form of cooperation or working relationships between SKPD (instruments), particularly Civil Service Police Unit and the Department of Education, Youth and Sports. It is not only inspiring (thinking out of the box) but also methodically encouraging for a broader positive impact. Second, the Task Force for Education is intended to accelerate the strategic policy of Gowa District, declared through the Regional Regulation of Free Education and Compulsory Education. Contextually, the Task Force for Education is extremely relevant to encourage the increase of quality and accessibility of the society to educational services. Third, the personnel of Task Force for Education are recruited through a pattern of formal and informal mechanisms. Formal recruitment mechanism is carried out through verification scheme by Civil Service Police Unit and the Department of Education, Youth and Sports.

Theoretically, according to Eggers and Singh (2009:9), an innovation in governance can come from four sources, namely (1) External partners in partnership with government such as contractors (third party), a nonprofit organization (NGO), government partners at the same level and the higher government (central and provincial government); (2) Citizens and customers; (3) Internal partners from other governmental agencies (SKPD and DPRD); and (4) Public employees (the personnel of local government).

Referring to the concept developed by Eggers and Singh, the four innovative programs of educational affairs can be categorized as follows: (1) SPAS and Task Force for Education are sourced from the internal partners because both are pure ideas of the Regent of Gowa. However, they involve the elements of DPRD in the planning process. Both programs of innovation are based on local resources; (2) Free Education Program and PDEP are sourced from external partners because both are the result of the comparative studies to other regions. Free Education Program is a complementary program to BOS and BOSDA developed by the provincial and central governments. PDEP is a program for quality improvement of information-technology-based learning using experts in the partnership or contractors.

Observed from some opinions on the strategic concept of government innovation developed by Eggers and Singh (2009) and Behn (2008), the

findings of this study show that the relevant strategy of development for the programs of innovation is replication. It is also strengthened by the opinion by Hetifah Sj. Sumarto (2004), an expert and researcher of innovation practices in Indonesia, concluding that essentially the most appropriate strategy used by the government in developing innovation is replication. Although replication etymologically means to imitate and has “negative” connotations such as to duplicate, to reproduce, uncreative, and even loser, in the context of public policy and services, replication is an act that should be encouraged in order to generate reform more widely and rapidly. Through replication, there will be an acceleration that is not as expensive as having to start from zero. Thus, the possibility of success is greater, compared to develop an initiative with no reference at all.

CONCLUSION

There are four types of innovative programs in educational affairs developed in Gowa District, namely SPAS, Free Education Program, PDEP, and Task Force for Education. Those four innovative programs of educational affairs have been developed since ten years ago and have provided positive and actual effect to increase the accessibility to education and the learning quality in schools as well as to contribute to the improvement of education index and human development index of Gowa District. It can also be said that the four programs are identified as incremental innovations developed through a replication strategy towards identical programs of innovation in other regions by taking the local context into account. This shows that the most important innovation in public sector is the improvement contained by the innovative programs of public service to the community. This means that a public sector innovation (local government innovation) can be the result of modification and development of a successful program of innovation in other regions.

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