Media Use for Entertainment amongst Studentsof Mass Communication of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

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Abstract
This study examines the pattern of media preference for entertainment purpose among students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Entertainment is one of the primary functions of media in society. Media texts for entertainment function perform a significant role of creating amusement and humour on the target audience. It also forms an important component of information and messages package by media institutions. The development of new media and ICT has created significant changes on the production and dissemination of media entertainment materials globally, that provides audience with various alternatives for receiving and storing entertainment materials. This poses a great challenge to the traditional Media position in the entertainment industry. This study employs the survey method of communication researeh. The study focuses on the students of a tertiary institution as they form a significant segment of audiences that are using communication media for entertainment purpose. The findings indicate that the students use both traditional and new media for receiving entertainment materials. This was influenced by various socio-economic factors such as peer group influence, fashion, finance and the technology involved in the new media and ICTs. The study concludes that new media will continue to attract the attention of youths as a favourable avenues for receiving entertainment materials, because of its portability and flexibility to the audience. The study recommends that parents and all the stake holders in the education sector should be proactive in guiding youth on media literacy.

Keywords: Media, Entertainment, Students, ICT's, Preference

Introduction

Entertainment is one of the primary functions of communication media in society, and a vital component of the media industry's output. The word entertainment is derived from the Latin word "tenere" which means to hold or keep steady, busy, or amused" (Turow, 1996,p.27). Entertainment is "a main branch of media production and consumption, covering a range of formats that generally share the qualities of attracting, amusing, diverting and taking people out of themselves" (McQuail, 2010, p.556). In both broadcast and print media entertainment materials are used for various purposes such as continuity or aesthetic materials, sometimes they form a complete programme or text of message. Therefore, the main purpose of entertainment materials in media "is providing diversion to an audience as opposed to explanation or interpretation" (Defleur & Dennis, 1996, p.630). The entertainment materials are very essential pillars of media industry as motion picture and sound recording segment of communication media are developed specifically for entertainment (Dominick, 2011).

The development of new media and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) has created significant changes on the production and dissemination of media entertainment materials globally. These have provided audience with various options for receiving, using and storing entertainment materials. This poses a great challenge to the traditional media position in the entertainment industry. Communication technology manufacturers have invented varieties for entertainment. Recent development has brought sophisticated innovations of mobile information devices for the entertainment media. "Entertainment is firmly enriched on the small screen. Almost all cell phones come with preloaded video games. New generation phones are equipped with MP3 players so that subscribers can download and listen to music over their phones" (Dominick, 2011, p.70). However, despite this new development, traditional media of communication are still relevant in the distributing and receiving entertainment materials.

The composition of audiences that are consuming entertainment materials from communication media is very large and complex. Youths in higher institutions of learning constitute asignificant segment of the entertainment audience. This can be identified from the way they utilize entertainment in their daily engagements. This study examines the factors that determine choice of communication media and its pattern of use for entertainment purpose among students of Mass Communication of Ahmadu Belle University (ABU). Zaria. The findings of the study will contribute to the body of knowledge on media and society, and also provide vital information to thepersuasive and marketing communicators that apply entertainment strategies to deliver various messages to the target audience.

Statement of the Problem

Entertainment is a vital component of media output playing a significant roles of creating amusement and attracting audience attention to the various information and messages of the communication media. "The largest category of media content can probably be labeled as 'entertainment' and it is the main reason why media are so popular" (McQuail, 2010, p.499). This popularity can be identified from the way people use various traditional and new media of communication to receive entertainment and other kinds of media materials. Students in Nigerian tertiary institutions are among the prominent audience of media entertainment materials, because of their pattern of media use. Studies have indicated that several socio-economic and political factors determine the pattern of media use for various purposes in the society. They include family orientations, peer group influence, financial reason, technology, portability, accessibility

etc. This study examines how these factors influence the choice of media for entertainment among the students of Mass Communication of Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria.

Objectives of the Study

The main aim of this study is to examine how Mass Communication students of ABU. Zaria choose media of communication for entertainment purpose. The study has the following objectives:

1) To find out the main factors that determines the choice of media for entertainment among the students of Mass Communication of ABU Zaria.
2) To find out the pattern of media and message choice for entertainment by the students of Mass Communication of ABU Zaria.

Researeh Questions

The study intends to find answers to the following questions:

1) What are the factors that influence the choice of media for entertainment amongst students of Mass Communication of ABU Zaria?
2) What is the pattern of media and message use for entertainment amongst the students of Mass Communication of ABU Zaria?

Methodology

This study adopted quantitative approach to communication researeh. A survey method was applied with the final year students of Mass Communication Department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria as the population of the study. The population size of the class is two hundred and sixty (260) students. A systematic random sampling technique was used to draw fifty percent (50%) from the final year students of Mass Communication, making the total number of one hundred and thirty (130) sample population for the study. A comprehensive class list of the students was used as the sampling frame. (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011; Stacks & Hocking, 1999; Gunter, 2000; Babbie, 2008). Therefore, one hundred and thirty (130) copies of questionnaire were self administered by the researcher.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

The communication media "includes the whole range of modem communication media television, the cinema, video, radio, photography, advertising, newspapers and magazines, recorded music, computer games and the internet" (Buckingham, 2003,p.L). Some of these media are regarded as mass media because of their ability to reach large and scattered audience, while others are designed to reach limited number of people or individuals. They play a significant role in the life of people in the society. Silverblatt, (2004) noted that:

> The media provide a sense of order and stability in the lives of individuals. People arrange their daily routines around media activities, such as reading the morning paper, watching their favourite television programs, and checking their e-mail. As a result, the media have an enormous affect on the lifestyle of a culture -dictating daily activities, language, and fashion (p.40).

The audience is a very essential factor that determines the existence and operation of communication media. They are"target group or constituency to whom efforts are directed or have an effect upon" (Hoffmann. 2007, p.24). Similarly, McQuail (2010) notes that it comprises

of “those who are actually reached by a particular media consent or media channels” (p.549). Development of ICTs and multimedia communication system has made audience of media to be highly segmented “Media audiences are becoming less “mass” and more selective” (Dominick, 2011, p.20). Audience of media has preference on the kind of medium they use for receiving media text. Burton (2010) notes that “media texts are objects produced” with the explicit intention of engaging an audience” (p.6).

Entertainment is one of the primary functions served by media texts in human societies, according to McQuail (2010) entertainment is “a humanbranch of media production and consumption, covering a range of formats that generally share the qualities of attracting, amusing, diverting and taking people out of themselves”(p.556). The media materials for entertainment are produced in different formats such as drama, musicals, programme, feature, articles photographs, cartoons, news stories etc. The producers of media entertainment materials apply several factors; the most popular are the six values of entertainment: humour, showbiz, sex, animals, crime and pictures that are used in planning and production of various entertainment packages for media (Hareup, 2009).

Humour as a value of entertainment message refers to “the quality in something that makes it funny or amusing” (Hornby, 2010, p.734). This element is considered in the production of varieties of entertainment materials such as news stones, feature articles, drama, etc. Hareup (2009) noted that “humorous stories are popular with news desk” (p. 120). Secondly, showbiz as a value of entertainment message refers to “stories about TV stars and other celebrities”(Hareup, 2009, p. 120). This value is used by both the print and broadcast media in presenting entertainment messages to the audience.

Thirdly, sex angle as a value of entertainment messages refers to approaching news items from “the classification of individuals as male or female on the basis of biological characteristics” (Chandler & Munday, 2011, p.386). This value used basically to portray the gender perspective to the entertainment materials.

Fourthly, animals as a value of entertainment messages refer to a situation where “animals feature in many entertaining stories about unusual behavior” (Hareup, 2009, p. 120). This is used in the production of entertaining materials through feature articles and programmes, fictional stories, drama etc. Fifthly, crime as a value of entertainment message refers to “activities that involve breaking the law” (Hornby, 2010, p.347). It is normally used in the presentation of entertainment materials through news stories, drama, discussion programme, personality interview etc. It’s regarded as a type of journalism devoted to crime (Zelizer & Allan, 2010).

Finally, pictures as a entertainment message value refers to “the practice of incorporating pictures or images as part of the news” (Zelizer & Allan. 2010, p.l12). This value is normally used in the presentation of entertainment materials through news stories, puzzles, feature article and programmes etc. The pictures are normally taken in photo opportunity which “refers to an agreed lime and place in which a certain individual or group is available to have their photograph taken by photo journalist” (Zelizer & Allan. 2010, p.112). This value is used in the presentation of print and broadcast entertainment news stories, feature articles, documentary etc.

The development of internet and multimedia communication systems has impacted significantly on the entertainment function of the media of communication. Dominick (2011) notes that:

> Theemergence of mobile media has also amplified the entertainment function of the media. Specially equipped vehicles let children watch DVDs as they go on family trips. Travelers in air port terminal can play games on their cell phones or watch movies on their laptops or iPods while they wait. Commuters can play video games on handheld devices while they travel (p.38).

The choice of media for entertainment in our contemporary society is made within or between traditional and new media of communication. The traditional media comprises the earlier mass communication media; newspapers, magazine, book, radio, television and motion pictures. While, the new media are "different kinds of communication that combine text, graphics, and video with computer technology to create a distinctive product" (Hoffmann, 2007, p. 194).Equally, Watson and Hill (2006) notes that the new media "refers specifically to the possibilities brought about by computers and telecommunications, encompassing the internet and its manifest applications. New media includes the mobile phones and is characterized technological convergence and, contrastingly in terms of its divergence" (p. 188). The main features that make the new media very unique and popular among youth are: audience segmentation, convergence, increased audience control, multiple platforms, user generated, mobile media and social media (Dominick. 2011). These have brought significant changes to the entertainment industry.

> The media and entertainment space has been irrevocably changed by the digital content revolution. Many forces are at work in the media ecosystem. Changes in technology, demographic shifts and the breaking of language barriers, among other trends, will continue to play an important role in how media is consumed. Traditional media has declined precipitously over the last decade in favour of online content, whiletraditional entertainment formats such as books, magazines. CDs and DVDs have given wayto digital incarnations (Cognisant. 201 I, p.2).

Generally, individuals use the media to accomplish various purposes or reasons. These reasons were identified by the studies conducted from uses andgratification perspectives of media use. People use the media to certify six needs of cognition, diversion, social utility, affiliation, expression and withdrawal (McQuail. 2010). Cognition is a psychological term that refers to "the process by which knowledge and understanding is developed in the mind" (Hornby. 2010. p.274). By certifying cognition need, media audiences use it as a source of acquiring knowledge and understanding various issues in the society. The diversion need of using media refers to "content usage for purposes such as stimulation (escape from boredom, routine or problems), relaxation or emotional relax (Chandler & Munday, 2011, p.109). This is one of the major ways in which media content is used for entertainment purpose. Social utility need refers to "the media function that addresses an individual's need to affiliate with friends, and others in the society" (Dominick, 2011, p.471). This can be identified in how media audience uses traditional and new media of communication for social interaction with friends, relatives and business associates. Affiliation need refers to "a close

connection or association with another entity, usually as a subordinate" (Hoffmann, 2007, p. 11). Through media of communication, audiences establish connection with individuals and organizations at local, national and international level. Silverblatt. 2004 states that:

> The media provide indirect access to sub-cultures within a country, as well as indirect contact with other countries. But, at the same time, the media also act as a buffer from society. Television programs, films, and magazines serve as a major form of escape and distraction from the pressures of everyday life (p.40).

Expression need of using media of communication refers to "things that people say, write or do in order to show their feelings, opinions and ideas" (Hornby, 2010, p.517). Through this need people use media as an avenue for expressing their opinions and feelings on varieties of issues in the society. Finally, the withdrawal need refers to where "people use of mass media to create a barrier between themselves and other people or activities" (Dominick, 2011, p.4.2). Individuals rely on media when they intend to disengage themselves from the social activities around them in the society.

Communication scholars have asserted that media entertainment messages have both the positive and negative influence on the audience especially youths and teenagers (Miles, 2000); McQuail, (2011); Steele & Brown, (1995); Cole & Allahar (1996). In a study conducted by Useini and Ekeanyanwu (2011) on the perceived role of entertainment television in shaping social behaviour of teenagers. The findings show that majority of the respondents(68.8%) watched entertainment television. Also, 81.9% of the respondents are regular viewers of various television entertainment programmes such as: movies, soap opera, reality TV shows, music videos, fashion news and entertainment news. The study concludes that there was heavy exposure to entertainment television among the respondents, as they admitted that they spent a minimum of one hour everyday watching it, and they learn some social values that influence their behaviour.

Also, a study conducted by Adekunle (2011) on influence of Hip - Hop music video on Nigerian youth behaviour shows that majority of the respondents 74.4% are daily exposed to 1- 3 hours of hip- hop music, and television is the most preferred medium with 80.8% of the respondents. Also, (47.2%) of the respondents preferred hip - hop music to other genres of music. Moreover, majority of the respondents (71.1% & 75.0%) believed that the language and message of hip - hop music respectively has significant influence on heir behaviour. The study concludes that hip-hop music has both negative and positive side, so there is the need for broadcast regulatory agencies to scrutinize it video content that may have negative impact on the Nigerian youth.

Media literacy is a very significant means of shaping media choice and consumption of it messages particularly among youth. It refers to "possessing the knowledge to be competent in assessing messages carried by mass media"(Vivian, 2011, p.6). Similarly, it was defined as "competence in using various media and the ability to think critically about them" (Chandler & Munday, 2011. p.265). Also, Hoffmann (2007) defines media literacy from convergence perspective as "the ability to analyze, evaluate and produce communication in a variety of media forms (television, print, radio, computers etc)" (p.181). A study conducted by Ende and Udende (2011), on investing in young people through media literacy shows that majority of the respondents 100% said they prefer cell phone and radio as a medium of communication, and 56.6% said they spent most of their time daily on media. Also, majority of the respondents

(97.2% & 92.3%) use media for networking and listening to music respectively. On the level of engagement with the media majority of the respondents (97. 2%) said they set up status on social media and majority (46.1%) said there is no any regulation pertaining their use of media at home of school against (35.7%) that said there is regulation. The study concludes that young people have been inclined to the media as their major sources of information. Therefore, there is an urgent need to inculcate the skills for critical assessment of media sources. This will enable the youth to become active participants in mass media operation.

Theoretical Framework

This theory adopted for this study is Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT). This theory was propounded by Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler and Michael Gurevilch in 1974. "The theory holds that people actively seek out specific media and specific content to generate specific gratifications for result)" (West & Turner, 2010, p.393). The UGT focuses on the audiences of communication media, as they play active role in the selection and using themedia in their personal lives. According to Watson and Hill (2006), Uses and Gratification Theory "mass media audiences make active use of what the media have to offer arising from a complex set of needs which the media in one form or another gratify" (p.297). Therefore, this theory is relevant in explaining the main variables that this study examines as the "theory provides a framework for understanding when and how individual media consumers become more or less active and the consequences of that increased or decreased involvement" (West & Turner, 2010, p.397). The central theme of the theory is summarized in five basic assumptions.

- The audience is active and its media use is goal oriented.
- The initiative in linking need gratification to a specific medium choice rests with the audience member.
- The media compete with other sources for need satisfaction.
- People have enough self-awareness of their media use, interest, and motives to be able to provide researehers with an accurate picture of that use.
- Value judgement of media contents can only be assessed by the audience.

Study Findings

Out of the total of one hundred and thirty (130) copies of the questionnaire administered, one hundred and twenty five (125) were returned. The majority of the respondents (74.4%) are males, and their age group is within 22 - 26 years with (44.0%) of the respondents. The core data related to the study are presented in tables with the frequency and proportion of each entry.

Table 1: Frequency of using media for entertainment

Options	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Most of the time	57	45.6
Moderate time	49	39.2
Little time	19	15.2
Total	**125**	**100**

Table 1 above shows the time spent using media of communication for entertainment by the respondents. Majority (45.6%) of the students indicated that they use media for entertainment most of the time while 39.2% used it moderate time, and only 15.2% said they used it for a little

time. These indicate that majority of the respondents are regular receivers of entertainment materials, as the use it most of the time and moderate time.

Table 2: Choice of new media for entertainment

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Computer set. online magazine & newspapers, online radio	30	24.0
Blog spot, websites, cell phone, online TV. video game, social media	75	60.0
EBook, DVD, MP3	20	16.0
Total	**125**	**100**

Table 2 above shows the kind of new media used for receiving entertainment materials by the respondents. Majority (60.0%) of the students said they used social media, website, video game, online radio & TV, DVD, computer and cell phone. Also, 24.0% said they use online magazine, online radio, online newspapers and computers for receiving entertainment materials; only 16.0% use eBook, MP3 and DVD. These indicate that social media, cell phone, video game, websites and blog are the major types of new media used by the respondents for receiving entertainment materials.

Table 3: Choice of traditional media for entertainment

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Television & radio	60	48.0
Radio cassette player *&.* audio CD.	23	18.4
Magazine & Book	22	17.6
Newspaper	20	16.0
Total	**125**	**100**

Table 3 above shows the kind of traditional mass communication media used by the respondents for entertainment purpose. Majority 48.0% said they use television and radio tor entertainment. Also l8.4% said they use radiocassette player and audio CD, while 17.6% used magazine and books for receiving entertainment materials. Only 16.0% of the students said they used newspaper only for entertainment. These indicate that radio and television are the major types of traditional communication media used by the respondents. Also, there is no significant difference in the proportion of remaining types of the traditional communication media used by the respondents.

Table 4: Choice of media category for entertainment

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Traditional media	41	32.8
New media	84	67.2
Total	**125**	**100**

Table 4 above shows the category of communication media used by the respondents for entertainment. Majority (67.2%) of the students said they use new media for entertainment, while *(32.8%)* uses Traditional media for entertainment. These indicate that majority of the respondents preferred using new media for entertainment purpose.

Table 5: Reasons for the choice of media for entertainment

Options	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Technology & peer group	55	44.0
Financial reason	18	14.4
Fashion	39	31.2
Family	13	10.4
Total	**125**	**100**

Table 5 above shows the factors that inform the choice of media for entertainment by the respondents. Majority (44.0%) of the students said technology & peer group are the main reason for the chosen media for entertainment. Also, 39.2% of the students mention Fashion as the factor that inform their choice of media for entertainment while, 14.4% of the students said financial reason is the main factor and only 10.4% mention Family as a factor that inform their choice of media for entertainment purpose. These indicate that technology and peer group influence are the major factors that inform the choice of communication media for entertainment among the respondents.

Table 6: Cherished entertainment values

Options	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Animals & Crime	57	45.6
Sex & Pictures	19	15,2
Humour & Showbiz	49	39.2
Total	**125**	**100**

Table 6 above shows the most cherished entertainment values by the respondents. Majority (45.6%) of the respondents said that they cherish animal & crime and values of entertainment materials. Also, 39.2% said they cherished humour and showbiz values of entertainment materials. Only 15.2% of the respondents said they cherish Sex and Pictures as entertainment materials. These indicate that Humour, Showbiz, Animal and Crime are the major entertainment values cherished by the students.

Table 7: Location for receiving entertainment materials

Options	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
School	9	7.2
At home	48	38.4
All of the above	68	54.4
Total	**125**	**100**

Table 7 above shows the place where the respondents received media entertainment materials. Majority 54.4%- of the students said they receive entertainment materials in both at home and school while, 38.4%' and 7.2% of the students mentioned Home and School respectively as the locations they receive entertainment materials. These indicate that majority of the respondents received entertainment materials at both the School and Home.

Table 8: Types of entertainment preferred

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Modern Entertainment Materials	86	68.8
Traditional Entertainment Materials	39	31.2
Total	**125**	**100**

Table 8 shows the types of entertainment materials prepared by the respondents for entertainment. Majority (68.8%) of the students said they prefer modern entertainment materials from the communication media forentertainment, while 31.2% of the students prefer traditional entertainment materials from the media for entertainment. These indicate that majority of the respondents preferred to received modern entertainment materials of the communication media.

Table 9: Kinds of entertainment materials received

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Musicals, movie, video game, puzzles, photographs, chatting	67	53.6
Request programme, fictional stories, puzzles, news bulletin	30	24.0
Feature articles, drama, musicals, video games	28	22.4
Total	**125**	**100**

Table 9 above shows the kind of entertainment materials received by the respondents. Majority 53.6% of the students prefer movies, video games, photographs, puzzles and chatting for entertainment, while 24.0% and (22.4%) of the students said they prepare Request programme, fictional stories, puzzles and news bulletin and feature articles, drama, musicals , video games for entertainment respectively. These indicate that there is significant difference on the proportion of the entertainment materials prepared by the respondents.

Discussion

This study sought to find answers to the two researeh questions about media use for entertainment among the students of Mass Communication at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The study findings presented reaffirm previous researeh findings. The first question was set to examine the main factors that influence the choice of media for entertainment. The findings derived from the study indicate that the majority (44.0%) and (31.2%) of the students mention peer group, technology and fashion as the main factors that influenced their choice of media for entertainment. This was in line with one of the core assumptions of the UGT by Katx, Blumler and Gurevitch (1974) cited in West and Turner (2010) that "People have enough self- awareness of their media use, interest, and motives to be able to provide researehers with an accurate

picture of that use" (p.397). However, the new media is the most preferred category of communication media for entertainment with (67.4%) ofthe students. This is in line with the work of Ende and Udende (2011) -- that youth are more interested in new media because of its flexibility and mobility. The second researeh question was set to examine the pattern of media and message choice for entertainment by the students of Mass Communication of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The findings indicate that majority (45.6%) and (39.2%) of the students are regular audience of entertainment materials as they spent most of the time and moderate time respectively receiving entertainment materials from the media. This is in accordance with the findings of Adekunle (2011) and Useini and Ekeanyawu (2011) that the youth and teenagers are daily exposed to media entertainment materials. It is evident that all the students used both the traditional and new media for entertainment purpose, where majority (60.0%) of the students said they use the following types of new media of communication for entertainment: social media, blog, websites, cell phone and video game. Also, 48.0%' of the students said they use television and radio traditional mass communication media for entertainment. This is in accordance with the assertion of Chavvla, Foolcn and Ponsart (2011) that the new digital media is dominating the mode of consuming media entertainment materials. Moreover, majority (54.4%) of the students receives the media entertainment materials at home and school. Also, majority (68.8%) of the students prefer to receive modem entertainment materials from the media of "communication. Moreover, the students receive varieties of entertainment materials as majority (53.6%) preferred to receive musicals, movie, video game, photographs and chatting entertainment materials from the communication media. These findings certify one of the main assumptions of uses and gratification theory (UGT) by Katz. Bumler and Gurevitch (1974) that "The audience is active and its media use is goal oriented" (Cited in West & Turner, 2010, p.397). The findings also, show that majority (45.6%) and (39.2%) claimed that cherished; crime, humour and showbiz values of entertainment. This was in line with the work of Hareup (2009) that these are the core values that are considered in the production of media entertainment materials. It also confirmed the assumption of Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT) by Katz, Bumler and Gurevitch (1974) that "Value judgement of media contents can only be assessed by the audience" (Cited in West & Turner, 2010, p. 397).

Conclusion and Recommendations

From the data gathered and analyzed it's evident that the entertainment function of media is very popular among students of higher institution, they utilize both the traditional and now media for receiving entertainmentmaterials. However, new media of communication is a major driving media vehicle for receiving varieties of entertainment materials by the students in higher institutions. This was motivated by the influence of peer group, finance, fashion and the portability and flexibility of the technology involved in the operation of various media. Consequently, the main goal of media content producers is to make profit. Thus, some of the media entertainment materials are harmful to the audience as "many films, television programs, and websites contain sexual and violent content designed to attract the largest imaginable audience. The massages contained in these programs can be confusing or disruptive to individuals looking to the media for direction, purpose, and meaning" (Silverblatt, 2004, p.40 - 4J).Therefore. it is imperative for parents and all the stake holders in educational sector to play a significant role of guiding and enlightening the youth through effective media literacy, since it is very "essential in this age of mass communication that envelops our lives dawn to dusk, cradle to grave" (Vivian, 2011. p.6). This will enable the youth to positively understand the kind of

entertainment materials they will access and develop more interest on the positive entertainment materials from the communication media.

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