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Human Impact Of Property Valuation On Housing Costs And Urban Growth In Asaba (Okwe), Delta State

OGBOGO, Rosemary Nwannedinma[1] and OJOH, Collins Oghenekome[2]

[1]*Department of Estate Management, Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba, Delta State, Nigeria*
[2]*Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba, Delta State, Nigeria*

*Corresponding Author's email Id: **collins.ojoh@dou.edu.ng**

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Abstract: The study examines how property valuation practices affect housing affordability, compensation fairness, and urban growth in Okwe, Asaba. It addresses a research gap where prior studies emphasized valuation accuracy and market efficiency but ignored welfare outcomes. A quantitative design was applied, using descriptive, correlational, and regression analyses on data from 15 parcel valuations, planning authority records, and 15 displaced households. Findings show that average land transaction prices ranged from ₦1.25 million to ₦21 million, with mean monthly rent at ₦122,467. Rent burdens in the core zone reached 136 percent of household income, while compensation adequacy averaged 0.42. Displaced households were relocated an average of 6.5 km from their original sites. Regression analysis explained 98.8 percent of accessibility variation, confirming that distance, density, and land-use mix drive value differences. The study introduces a welfare-integrated valuation model that combines market alignment with relocation support. Under this model, compensation adequacy rose to 0.85, and 75 percent of displaced households remained within the same local government area. The results show that valuation reforms can balance equity and development, reframing valuation as both an economic and social process that supports fair and sustainable urban growth in Nigeria.

Keywords: Property valuation; Housing costs; Urban growth; Displacement; Accessibility

Introduction

Property valuation plays a decisive role in shaping who can afford to live within a community and who is ultimately displaced. Far from being a purely technical exercise, valuation influences access to land and housing, patterns of ownership, and the direction of urban growth. Across the world, escalating land values and large-scale urban redevelopment have intensified social and spatial inequalities, placing valuation at the heart of contemporary housing and planning debates. In many cities, rising property valuations translate directly into higher transaction prices and rental costs. While this enhances returns for investors and landowners, it simultaneously erodes affordability for low- and middle-income households (Ryan-Collins et al 2021). Nigeria is experiencing similar dynamics, with rapid population growth and accelerated urban expansion driving sustained increases in property prices, particularly in major urban centres.

Nigeria's urban population is projected to exceed 300 million by 2050, and housing supply continues to lag behind demand (Uduporuwa 2020). Within this context, property valuation remains essential for taxation, compensation, credit access, and investment decision-making. However, prevailing valuation practices often reinforce existing inequalities rather than mitigating them. Compensation paid to households displaced by urban development frequently falls short of prevailing market values, while relocation sites are commonly characterized by inadequate infrastructure, limited services, and weak connectivity to employment opportunities. These outcomes contribute to spatial exclusion, livelihood disruption, and declining welfare for affected populations.

Although existing literature has examined valuation accuracy, locational determinants, and market behaviour, much of this work remains focused on efficiency and price formation (Büyükkaraciğan 2021). These studies consistently show that proximity to central business districts, transport corridors, and public infrastructure increases property values. However, relatively little attention has been paid to how valuation decisions affect housing affordability, displacement, and household welfare. Research that concentrates solely on market performance risks overlooking the social costs embedded in valuation practices, particularly in rapidly urbanizing contexts.

The Okwe area of Asaba provides a compelling case for examining these issues. In recent years, Okwe has experienced rapid urbanization, speculative real estate development, and repeated episodes of displacement linked to estate expansion. Evidence drawn from household interviews and valuation records indicates that compensation paid to displaced residents often amounts to less than 50 percent of prevailing market values. As a result, affected households are pushed farther from the city centre, face longer commuting distances, lose access to employment opportunities, and experience declining living standards. This study therefore investigates how valuation practices in Okwe shape housing costs, compensation adequacy, and patterns of urban growth. It examines the ways in which valuation outcomes influence affordability, relocation decisions, and accessibility across different settlement zones. In addition, the study explores a welfare-integrated valuation model that combines conventional market-based assessment with social support mechanisms, with the aim of informing valuation policy reforms that balance efficiency with social equity in Nigerian cities.

The theoretical foundation of the study is grounded in Land Value Capture (LVC) theory, which explains how increases in land value generated by public investment and urban growth should be shared more broadly across society. In the absence of effective capture mechanisms, these unearned gains tend to accrue disproportionately to landowners, while the wider public bears the associated costs (Botticini et al 2022). In Okwe, rising land values have been driven by population growth, infrastructural improvements, and rural–urban migration. Landowners benefit from appreciating assets, while tenants and low-income residents face escalating rents and reduced access to housing. This outcome is consistent with the predictions of LVC theory.

However, while LVC offers a useful framework for understanding the distribution of land value gains, it often underplays the human consequences of valuation practices. In Okwe, valuation outcomes are shaped not only by market demand but also by informal practices, political influence, and weak institutional capacity. These distortions inflate prices beyond what can be explained by infrastructure investment alone, disproportionately burdening tenants and first-time buyers. Weak enforcement of planning regulations, incomplete cadastral systems, and low levels of property tax collection—

estimated at below 0.5 percent of GDP in Nigeria, compared to around 2 percent in middle-income countries (Simpasa, 2024)—further undermine effective value capture.

In synthesis, LVC theory provides a valuable lens for analysing the unequal distribution of land value gains in Okwe, but it does not fully account for local governance constraints, socio-cultural dynamics, and welfare impacts. This study adopts LVC as its guiding framework while extending it through the integration of welfare indicators, including income retention, compensation adequacy, and relocation distance. By linking market-based valuation with social outcomes, the study offers a more balanced assessment of efficiency and equity within the context of Asaba's urban growth.

Materials and Method

The study was conducted in Okwe, Asaba, Delta State, a fast-growing settlement influenced by migration and urban expansion. Asaba's metropolitan population exceeds 500,000, with Okwe absorbing much of the spill over (Ojoh et al 2023). These characteristics make it suitable for studying how valuation practices affect housing costs, compensation, and growth patterns. The research employed a quantitative design combining descriptive and correlational techniques. Two categories of data were collected: primary and secondary. Primary data were obtained from fifteen displaced households and fifteen parcel valuations selected through purposive sampling. This approach ensured that all cases studied were directly connected to recent valuation exercises and displacement events. Although the sample size is small, it provides reliable insights because the selected cases capture the full variation across low, medium, and high value properties, as well as different settlement zones. The study was exploratory, designed to reveal key valuation (welfare patterns that can guide future large) scale studies.

The main variables examined were transaction price, land size, rent level, compensation adequacy, relocation distance, income retention, settlement density, and land-use mix. Properties were grouped into three valuation bands: low (below ₦5 million), medium (₦5-10 million), and high (above ₦10 million). Settlement zones were defined by proximity to the central business district: core (0-3 km), intermediate (3.1-6 km), and periphery (beyond 6 km). These variables were quantified using verified records from valuers and planning agencies to ensure consistency. Data analysis combined descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression models. Descriptive statistics summarized land prices, rents, and household welfare indicators. Correlation analysis identified relationships among valuation, accessibility, and planning variables, while multiple regression measured how distance, density, and land-use mix explained variations in accessibility and valuation outcomes. These statistical tools provided an empirical basis for testing the link between valuation practices and welfare effects.

Observations and Discussion

Table 1 presents transaction prices in Okwe range from ₦1.25 million to ₦21 million, and monthly rents from ₦45,000 to ₦310,000. Price per square meter varies widely, with the highest rates observed in parcels near the city center. These figures show how proximity to infrastructure drives both property value and rental pressure. The results point to valuation as a key factor in affordability and access. Similar urban price gradients have been reported in Lagos (Oyalowo 2022) and Accra (Alexander and Okpakam 2024), confirming that value concentration in serviced areas creates exclusionary housing outcomes

Table 1: Raw parcel valuation data, Okwe Asaba sample

Parcel ID	Land area (sqm)	Transaction price (Naira)	Price per sqm (Naira)	Monthly rent (Naira)
OAW-01	500	7,500,000	15,000	160,000
OAW-02	300	3,600,000	12,000	85,000
OAW-03	420	5,200,000	12,381	90,000
OAW-04	250	1,800,000	7,200	55,000
OAW-05	360	4,050,000	11,250	95,000
OAW-06	480	6,500,000	13,542	120,000
OAW-07	900	21,000,000	23,333	310,000
OAW-08	600	8,400,000	14,000	140,000
OAW-09	260	1,250,000	4,808	45,000
OAW-10	350	4,000,000	11,429	80,000
OAW-11	520	8,750,000	16,827	170,000
OAW-12	700	10,500,000	15,000	200,000
OAW-13	400	5,000,000	12,500	100,000
OAW-14	310	3,200,000	10,323	72,000
OAW-15	450	6,000,000	13,333	115,000

Source: Field dataset (2025)

Table 2 shows parcel-level planning attributes including distance to the central business district, distance to arterial roads, settlement density, land use mix, and existing units. Parcels near the central business district, such as OAW-07 at 0.5 km, display the highest density (60 units/ha) and land use mix (0.6). In contrast, peripheral parcels like OAW-09 at 8 km from the central business district record low density (12 units/ha) and limited land use diversity (0.25). Parcels closer to the central business district and main roads display higher densities and stronger land-use diversity. Core parcels show more compact development and stronger investment presence.

Table 2: Planning attributes in Okwe Asaba

Parcel ID	Distance to CBD (km)	Distance to arterial road (m)	Settlement density (units/ha)	Land use mix index	Existing units
OAW-01	2.1	120	42	0.45	1
OAW-02	5	350	25	0.3	0
OAW-03	3.4	210	28	0.32	0
OAW-04	7.5	500	18	0.2	0
OAW-05	4	320	30	0.34	1
OAW-06	2.8	210	40	0.4	1
OAW-07	0.5	80	60	0.6	3
OAW-08	1.9	160	55	0.48	2
OAW-09	8	600	12	0.25	0
OAW-10	4.5	400	20	0.28	0
OAW-11	1.9	150	52	0.47	2
OAW-12	2.2	190	35	0.42	1
OAW-13	5.2	420	24	0.29	0
OAW-14	6	500	15	0.22	0
OAW-15	2.5	200	38	0.41	1

Source: Field dataset (2025), Estate surveyor valuation registers and planning authority records, Asaba

These spatial patterns demonstrate how planning and accessibility shape valuation outcomes. Unlike general descriptions in past studies, this table links these patterns directly to reform needs in valuation policy. By quantifying accessibility against land value, the study highlights how valuation systems can be adjusted to reflect both location benefits and social equity.

Table 3 presents summary statistics on land and planning attributes in Okwe. The mean land area is 453 square meters with a wide spread, ranging from 250 to 900 square meters. Transaction prices average ₦6.45 million but show large variation, with the maximum reaching ₦21 million. The mean price per square meter is ₦12,862, reflecting substantial disparities across parcels. Monthly rents average ₦122,467, with a maximum of ₦310,000. The planning indicators in Table 3 show a mean distance to the central business district of 3.83 km, and average settlement density of 34.7 units per hectare. The data show significant value variation, with high standard deviations across property attributes. This variation indicates market segmentation based on accessibility and land-use intensity. While location drives value, such unevenness calls for valuation reforms that incorporate affordability indicators. The Asaba data extend Nigerian valuation research by integrating planning variables into value analysis, offering a more social interpretation of what drives urban cost escalation.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics on valuation

Variable	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Land area (sqm)	453.3	176.3	250	900
Transaction price (Naira)	6,450,000	4,790,467	1,250,000	21,000,000
Price per sqm (Naira)	12,862	4,189	4,808	23,333
Monthly rent (Naira)	122,467	67,527	45,000	310,000
Distance to CBD (km)	3.83	2.18	0.5	8
Distance to arterial road (m)	296.7	156.3	80	600
Settlement density (units/ha)	34.7	14.9	12	60
Land use mix index	0.37	0.11	0.2	0.6

Source: Authors Computation (2025)

Table 4 presents mean values from three valuation methods across settlement zones in Okwe. Results show that parcels in the core zone record the highest values under all methods, with ₦8.2 million for market comparison, ₦7.1 million for depreciated cost, and ₦9.4 million for income approach. Values decrease outward, with the outer ring showing means of ₦3.9 million, ₦3.4 million, and ₦4.8 million respectively. Values consistently decline from the core to the periphery across all valuation methods. The income approach produces the highest mean estimates, confirming strong rental potential in central areas. The uniform downward gradient shows that valuation tools reflect, and possibly reinforce, market advantage for prime locations. The results suggest a need to introduce corrective measures within valuation frameworks to moderate the impact of spatial inequality on property assessments.

Table 4: Valuation outcomes by method and settlement zone in Okwe Asaba

Settlement zone	Market comparison mean (Naira)	Depreciated cost mean (Naira)	Income approach mean (Naira)
Core (≤ 2 km CBD)	8,200,000	7,100,000	9,400,000
Inner ring (2–5 km)	5,600,000	4,900,000	6,300,000
Outer ring (> 5 km)	3,900,000	3,400,000	4,800,000

Source: Field dataset (2025), Estate surveyor valuation registers and planning authority records, Asaba

Table 5 shows that households in the core zone earn a median income of ₦110,000 but face median rents of ₦150,000, producing a rent burden of 136.4 percent. This far exceeds affordability thresholds, indicating severe housing stress. The inner ring records a lower income of ₦82,000 and a rent burden of 115.8 percent, while the outer ring shows the lowest income at ₦64,000 but also the lowest rent burden at 85.9 percent. Travel times increase outward, from 12 minutes in the core to 40 minutes in the outer ring. Rent burden in the core exceeds 130 percent of income, indicating severe affordability stress. Outer areas have lower rents but reduced access to employment and services. This trade-off shows how valuation practices influence urban segregation by income. Similar conditions have been recorded in Lagos and Port Harcourt, but the Asaba case adds measured evidence on rent burden as a valuation outcome, not merely a market side effect.

Table 5: Fairness and spatial equity indicators of displaced households

Indicator	Core zone	Inner ring	Outer ring
Median household income (Naira)	110,000	82,000	64,000
Median monthly rent (Naira)	150,000	95,000	55,000
Rent burden (%)	136.4	115.8	85.9
Mean travel time to CBD (minutes)	12	22	40

Source: Field survey data (2025)

Table 6 shows how property valuation influences development activity in Okwe. Parcels in the core zone with medium and high valuations recorded consistent developer initiation. For instance, parcels OAW-07 and OAW-12, both high-value and close to the CBD, attracted immediate projects. In contrast, parcels in the periphery, with lower valuations such as OAW-04 and OAW-09, showed no development starts. High-value parcels in central locations recorded near-universal developer activity. Peripheral low-value parcels showed no new projects. This concentration of investment suggests that valuation outcomes directly guide urban growth. The results emphasize the need to adjust valuation models to encourage development beyond core areas, balancing growth and infrastructure provision.

Table 6: Land Parcel Classification and Development Response in Okwe, Asaba

Parcel	Transaction Price (₦)	Valuation Band	Distance to CBD (km)	Settlement Zone	Developer Initiation (observed project start = 1, none = 0)
OAW-01	7,500,000	Medium	2.1	Core	1
OAW-02	3,600,000	Low	5	Intermediate	1
OAW-03	5,200,000	Medium	3.4	Intermediate	1
OAW-04	1,800,000	Low	7.5	Periphery	0
OAW-05	4,050,000	Low	4	Intermediate	1
OAW-06	6,500,000	Medium	2.8	Core	1
OAW-07	21,000,000	High	0.5	Core	1
OAW-08	8,400,000	Medium	1.9	Core	1
OAW-09	1,250,000	Low	8	Periphery	0
OAW-10	4,000,000	Low	4.5	Intermediate	1
OAW-11	8,750,000	Medium	1.9	Core	1
OAW-12	10,500,000	High	2.2	Core	1
OAW-13	5,000,000	Medium	5.2	Intermediate	1
OAW-14	3,200,000	Low	6	Periphery	0
OAW-15	6,000,000	Medium	2.5	Core	1

Source: Field survey data (2025)

Table 7 shows a strong concentration of developer activity in the core and intermediate zones. All initiated projects are tied to low, medium, or high-value parcels within these zones, while no activity is observed in the periphery. Medium-value parcels dominate, with five projects in the core and two in the intermediate zone All developer projects occurred in the core and intermediate zones. No development appeared in the periphery. Medium-value parcels recorded the highest initiation rate. This pattern confirms that value gradients control growth dynamics. Comparing this to Abuja (Michels et al 2020) shows a similar pattern of speculative clustering. The Asaba data add depth by quantifying how these value thresholds shape developer behaviour and spatial concentration.

Table 7: Developer Project Initiation by Valuation Band and Settlement Zone in Okwe, Asaba

Valuation Band	Core Zone	Intermediate Zone	Periphery	Total
Low (<₦5m)	0	3	0	3
Medium (₦5–10m)	5	2	0	7
High (>₦10m)	2	0	0	2
Total	7	5	0	12

Source: Field survey data (2025)

Table 8 highlights how valuation outcomes affect displaced households across settlement zones. Compensation adequacy falls from 0.48 in the core to 0.36 in the periphery, while relocation distances rise sharply. Only 7 percent of peripheral households remain within the same local government area after displacement. These findings illustrate how valuation methods that omit welfare metrics can deepen inequity. The evidence supports integrating welfare criteria, such as livelihood retention, into valuation reforms to ensure socially responsible resettlement.

Table 8: Fairness and Spatial Equity Indicators of Displaced Households in Okwe, Asaba

Indicator	Core zone	Inner ring	Outer ring
Compensation adequacy ratio	0.48	0.42	0.36
Average relocation distance (km)	3.5	6	9.2
Share relocated within same LGA (%)	67	27	7
Livelihood loss reported (%)	40	60	80

Source: Field survey data (2025)

Table 9 compares planning outcomes across three valuation systems. Under the status quo, compensation adequacy remains low at 0.42, relocation distances average 6.5 km, and only 35 percent of displaced households stay within the same LGA. Market-based valuation improves adequacy to 0.9 and reduces relocation distances to 5 km. Projected welfare-integrated valuation improves outcomes across all indicators: compensation adequacy rises to 0.85, relocation distance reduces to 3 km, and 75 percent of displaced households remain within the same LGA.

Table 9: Projected Planning Outcomes under Valuation Reforms in Okwe, Asaba

Indicator	Status quo	Market-based valuation	Welfare-integrated valuation
Compensation adequacy ratio	0.42	0.9	0.85 + relocation support
Average relocation distance (km)	6.5	5	3
Households relocated within same LGA (%)	35	55	75
Service access maintained (%)	50	65	80
Households retaining income level (%)	55	70	82
Housing affordability index (rent-to-income)	0.38	0.45	0.55
Developer project initiation rate (%)	55	72	78

Field survey and modelled projections (2025)

These results show that market alignment combined with welfare support enhances social equity. This section introduces practical reform implications, showing that valuation tools can be restructured to balance growth with affordability.

Table 10 presents the descriptive statistics of accessibility and spatial planning attributes across 15 parcels in Okwe. The mean accessibility score of 62.87 with a wide variation (SD = 17.07) highlights unequal access to urban amenities. Average distance to the CBD is 3.83 km, while parcels are located about 294 meters from arterial roads. Settlement density averages 32.93 units per hectare, and the land use mix index stands at 0.36, showing moderate functional diversity. Accessibility scores vary widely, reflecting unequal distribution of services. Parcels near major roads and central areas score highest. The data confirm that accessibility is the dominant spatial determinant of land value. These metrics support a more transparent valuation approach that accounts for planning equity rather than relying on market distance alone.

Table 10: Descriptive Statistics of Accessibility and Planning Attributes in Okwe, Asaba

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Accessibility score	62.867	17.0665	15
Distance to CBD	3.833	2.1793	15
Distance to arterial road	294.000	159.9018	15
Settlement density	32.933	14.8105	15
Land use mix index	.362	.1115	15

Source: SPSS Computation

Table 11 shows the regression model linking accessibility scores with locational and planning attributes in Okwe. The model explains 98.8 percent of the variation in accessibility ($R^2 = 0.988$), with predictors including distance to the CBD, distance to arterial roads, settlement density, and land use mix index. The high explanatory power and significant F change ($p < 0.001$) confirm that these spatial factors strongly shape accessibility outcomes. The regression model explains 98.8 percent of accessibility variation, with significant effects from distance, density, and land-use mix. These results establish a clear quantitative relationship between spatial form and value. While past studies have described this link qualitatively, this model provides measurable evidence that can guide future valuation standards in Nigeria and similar cities.

Table 11: Regression Model of Accessibility and Planning Predictors in Okwe, Asaba

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.994[a]	.988	.983	2.2476	.988	199.303	4	10	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Land use mix index, Distance to arterial road, Settlement density, Distance to CBD
b. Dependent Variable: Accessibility score

Source: SPSS Computation

Table 12 shows strong positive correlations between land area, transaction price, price per square meter, and monthly rent, with coefficients above 0.89. This indicates that larger parcels and higher market values directly drive higher rents, reinforcing the affordability burden for households. In contrast, distance to the CBD and arterial roads shows strong negative correlations with property values and rents, with coefficients between -0.75 and -0.91. Strong positive correlations exist between parcel size, price, and rent, while distance variables show strong negative correlations. This confirms that accessibility is both a physical and economic advantage. The findings imply that valuation reform must factor in equity mechanisms to prevent concentration of value and investment in central zones only.

Table 12: Correlation Matrix of Parcel, Market, and Locational Attributes in Okwe, Asaba

		Land area	Transaction price	Price per sqm	Monthly rent	Distance CBD
Land area	Pearson Correlation	1	.967**	.898**	.967**	-.853**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
Transaction price	Pearson Correlation	.967**	1	.932**	.985**	-.802**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
Price per sqm	Pearson Correlation	.898**	.932**	1	.936**	-.905**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
Monthly rent	Pearson Correlation	.967**	.985**	.936**	1	-.827**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
Distance CBD	Pearson Correlation	-.853**	-.802**	-.905**	-.827**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
Distance road	Pearson Correlation	-.803**	-.751**	-.860**	-.783**	.976**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001	.000	.001	.000
Density	Pearson Correlation	.843**	.819**	.863**	.831**	-.912**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Land use mix	Pearson Correlation	.909**	.887**	.894**	.905**	-.929**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

b. Listwise N=15

Source: SPSS Computation

The findings show that valuation practices shape urban inequality by amplifying location advantages and excluding lower-income groups from central areas. Across all tables, three insights stand out. Accessibility and density remain the strongest determinants of value and rent; current valuation approaches reflect market forces but neglect welfare implications, creating affordability stress and displacement; and welfare-integrated valuation can moderate inequities, ensuring that rising land values contribute to inclusive urban growth. Compared to prior studies in Lagos, Abuja, and Accra, this study's originality lies in its explicit linkage between valuation methods and welfare outcomes. The Asaba data provide a structured, quantitative demonstration of how valuation reform can support social equity, offering a model for similar mid-sized African cities managing rapid urban expansion.

Conclusion

The study shows that valuation outcomes in Okwe influence housing costs, displacement, and urban development patterns. High-value parcels close to the central business district attract most investment, while peripheral areas record limited activity. Rent burdens in central zones exceed household incomes, and compensation for displaced residents remains inadequate. These results indicate that valuation practices shape both spatial growth and social welfare. The analysis further demonstrates that welfare-integrated valuation, when compared with market-based and status quo systems, produces better outcomes for affected households. It improves compensation adequacy, reduces relocation distance, and increases income retention. These results show that incorporating welfare measures into valuation enhances both fairness and efficiency. Based on the evidence, the study concludes that valuation practices have measurable social consequences. Strengthening valuation frameworks to include welfare indicators can help align economic value with equitable urban development. The findings provide empirical support for applying welfare-sensitive valuation as a balanced approach to urban growth management in Asaba.

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