



The influence of competence, compensation, and work ethics on employee performance at the department of communication, informatics, encryption, and statistics of serang regency

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to look at how competence, pay, and work ethic affect employee performance at the Department of Communication, Informatics, Encryption, and Statistics in Serang Regency. The research used a quantitative method, gathering data through questionnaires, direct observations, and document reviews. A total of 75 employees took part as respondents, chosen using a census sampling method to ensure all parts of the group were included. The data was then processed and analyzed using multiple linear regression to understand how the different factors relate to each other. The results show that employee competence has a positive and significant impact on performance, meaning that having more knowledge, skills, and abilities leads to better job results. However, pay was not found to have a significant effect on performance, implying that current salary structures might not be a major driver for improvement. Work ethic, on the other hand, had a positive and significant effect, highlighting the role of values like discipline, responsibility, and dedication in achieving good performance. When all three factors – competence, pay, and work ethic – are considered together, they have a significant combined effect on performance. These findings suggest that improving employee competence and promoting a strong work ethic is important, and that organizations should consider reviewing their pay systems. The study offers useful information for enhancing human resource management in public sector organizations.

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INTRODUCTION

As the world changes faster, organizations need strong and skilled human resources to stay competitive. Human resources are important because they help make sure all the work an

organization does matches its goals, mission, and vision. It's important for every company, including government agencies, to have workers who are skilled, motivated, able to adapt, and ready to respond to changes. Managing human resources well involves planning for the future, evaluating how well people are doing, offering good rewards, and managing both individuals and teams effectively. One way to improve how well employees perform is by giving them fair pay, helping them develop their skills, and encouraging a strong work attitude.

How well employees perform is a big sign of how successful an organization is. This can be seen by how well tasks and responsibilities are completed, including both the quality and amount of work done. Performing well is key to helping an organization reach its goals. To help with this, companies need to take smart steps like offering fair rewards, making the workplace pleasant, and keeping work rules strong and consistent (Mangkunegara, 2017)

From the 2023 Performance Target Achievements, the Communication, Informatics, Cryptography, and Statistics Office in Serang Regency has not reached optimal performance. Some indicators did meet their targets, like the level of government support services, which reached 100% between 2021 and 2023. However, other indicators show inconsistent results. The Public Information Disclosure Index (PPID) went over its target in 2021 and 2022, but hasn't stayed consistent in the following years. The SPBE Implementation Maturity Index improved in 2023, though it was still below the target set in the RPJMD in the earlier years.

The Information Security Index (KAMI) has also shown poor performance, with some years even seeing a decline. Similarly, the target to improve the quality of data-based development planning and control hasn't been fully met, as the coverage of published sectoral statistical data is still below the maximum target. In terms of improving the quality of IT-based public services, the Public Satisfaction Index (IKM) remained in category "C" in 2021 and 2022 before moving up to category "B" in 2023. These outcomes show that the organization hasn't achieved consistent or lasting improvements in performance (Rozi & Habe, 2023).

These inconsistent results suggest there are internal problems within the organization, especially around how well employees are performing. One important factor affecting employee performance is their competence. According to Law Number 13 of 2003, Article 4, the government must work to improve both the quality and quantity of the workforce to better utilize and empower workers. The competence of the workforce plays a key role in achieving the desired results. (Syamsuddin et al., 2022). Competent employees generally possess the skills, knowledge, and work attitudes that align with job demands.

Competence refers to the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that show up in how an employee does their job according to the organization's standards. It includes not just the technical abilities needed for the job but also personal traits and the right way of handling work responsibilities. To assess competence, people usually look at the results someone achieves and how they behave during their daily work tasks (Radhiana et al., 2022). At the Department of Communication, Informatics, Cryptography, and Statistics, having the right skills and abilities is a key factor in deciding where employees are placed. This decision is made through a careful and thorough process of selecting and hiring people to make sure they fit well with what the organization needs.

In addition to skills, pay also has a big impact on how well employees perform. Pay is a way to thank employees for their work and is also something the organization must do to meet their responsibilities towards employees. Pay includes both direct forms like salaries, wages, and bonuses, as well as indirect forms such as benefits and facilities, including leave allowances and other perks (Hasibuan, 2016). Giving fair pay can help workers feel more motivated, disciplined, and devoted to their jobs. Even though the pay system at the Communication, Informatics, Cryptography, and Statistics Office has been changed to fit government rules, there are still problems with how effective the pay is in getting employees to perform their best. Along with skills and pay, having a good work attitude is also important for how well employees do their

jobs.

Work attitude shows what values, feelings, and spirit a worker has toward their work. Employees who have a strong work attitude usually show they are committed, take the initiative, and take responsibility in doing their tasks well (Parhamita, 2017). Strong work ethic values will encourage employees to maximize their potential and contribute positively to achieving organizational goals (Sinamo, 2016). However, in practice, there are still challenges in building an optimal employee work ethic, such as a less conducive work environment and low performance recognition (Jusdiana Ahmad & Mustari, 2023).

Numerous previous studies have demonstrated that competence, compensation, and work ethic play an important role in shaping employee performance. Hasanah & Susanti (2021) revealed that competence has a positive and significant influence on employee performance, and that when combined with compensation, it contributes substantially to performance improvement. Marnisah et al., (2021) found that organizational culture, competence, and compensation collectively exert a strong and significant impact on enhancing employee performance. These findings emphasize that both individual capabilities and organizational support systems are essential determinants of employee effectiveness.

This study contributes to the development of public sector human resource management at the local government level by providing empirical evidence on the role of competence, compensation, and work ethic in improving employee performance. The findings are expected to offer practical insights for local government institutions in designing more effective human resource policies, particularly in strengthening employee competencies, improving compensation systems, and fostering a positive work ethic to achieve organizational performance targets. Furthermore, the inconsistency in the performance achievements of the Communication, Informatics, Cryptography, and Statistics Office of Serang Regency indicates the existence of structural and managerial issues that require strategic attention. These inconsistencies highlight the urgency of this study, as they may affect the effectiveness of public service delivery, the achievement of regional development targets, and the implementation of digital governance programs. Therefore, this research is strategically important as it provides evidence-based recommendations for improving human resource management practices to support more consistent and sustainable organizational performance in the local government context.

Even though there's a lot of research on these factors, there's not much real-world study that looks at how competence, pay, and work ethic affect things in public sector jobs. Especially in the Communication, Informatics, Cryptography, and Statistics Office in Serang Regency, this kind of research is rare. Most studies focus on private companies or general government setups, so there's a gap in understanding how these factors work together in specific local government offices. This study aims to fill that gap by looking at how competence, pay, and work ethic impact employee performance in a local government setting. The results should help improve human resource practices in the public sector, especially in boosting performance and how well the organization runs.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a quantitative approach, based on the philosophy of positivism as stated by Sugiyono (2018), with the aim of studying phenomena based on empirical data from a specific population or sample. The study was conducted at the Office of Communication, Informatics, Cryptography, and Statistics of Serang Regency from January to March 2025. The population of this study consisted of all employees working at the institution, totaling 75 individuals. Given the relatively small population size, a census sampling technique was applied, in which every member of the population was included as a research respondent. Consequently, the total sample size used in this study was 75 employees, ensuring comprehensive representation and minimizing sampling

bias. Data were collected using a survey method, with a structured questionnaire serving as the primary research instrument. The questionnaire was developed based on key indicators related to competence, compensation, work ethic, and employee performance. Each item was designed to capture respondents' perceptions and experiences related to these variables. Measurement was conducted using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," allowing respondents to express the intensity of their agreement with each statement (Sugiyono, 2021).

The determination of the population and sampling technique in this study was based on the objective of obtaining data that accurately represent the real conditions of the organization. Since the total number of employees at the Office of Communication, Informatics, Cryptography, and Statistics of Serang Regency was only 75 individuals, the study applied a census or saturated sampling technique. This technique involves including all members of the population as research respondents, ensuring that every employee's perspective is represented in the data. The use of a census approach eliminates sampling bias and increases the accuracy and reliability of the findings, as the results reflect the actual conditions of the entire organizational population rather than a selected subset. Therefore, this method was considered the most appropriate strategy to ensure that the research results provide a comprehensive and realistic picture of employee competence, compensation, work ethic, and performance within the organization.

This approach enabled the researcher to obtain quantifiable data suitable for statistical analysis, ensuring accuracy and consistency in measuring the relationships among the studied variables (Sugiyono, 2019). In addition to the questionnaire, data was also collected through direct observation to obtain a real picture of employee work behavior and operational processes, as well as documentation in the form of personnel data, organizational structures, and other supporting documents relevant to the research (Arikunto, 2015). The use of these three data collection techniques was intended to increase the completeness, accuracy, and validity of the research data.

Data analysis in this study was conducted using inferential statistical techniques with the The research used SPSS version 25 to make sure the results were accurate and dependable. Before testing the research hypotheses, the tools used to collect data were checked for validity and reliability to ensure that all questions in the questionnaire could consistently and correctly measure what they were meant to. Validity tests checked if each question properly represented the idea it was supposed to measure, while reliability tests confirmed that the questions were consistent in what they measured (Henaulu & Ardian, 2020). Other checks were also done to make sure the data was suitable for multiple linear regression analysis. These included a normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method to see if the data followed a normal distribution, a multicollinearity test using Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) to check that there was no strong link between the independent variables, and a heteroscedasticity test using scatterplots to see if the spread of data was consistent across different observations. Once all these checks were completed, hypothesis testing was done using multiple linear regression to find out how competence, compensation, and work ethic affect employee performance. The effect of each variable was tested separately using a t-test, while the combined effect of all the variables was checked using an F-test. Also, the R^2 value was used to see how much of the change in employee performance could be explained by the variables included in the model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Result

Respondent Characteristics

The results of the study showed that the respondents were dominated by men, amounting to 50 people (66.7%), while female respondents amounted to 25 people (33.3%). Based on age groups, the largest number of respondents were in the 31-40 years age range, namely 29 people

(38.7%), followed by the 41–50 years age group as many as 20 people (26.7%), the 21–30 years age group as many as 15 people (20.0%), and respondents aged over 50 years as many as 11 people (14.7%).

In terms of educational attainment, the majority of respondents had a college education, 61 (81.3%), while 13 (17.3%) had a high school education and 1 (1.3%) had a junior high school education. This distribution of respondent characteristics reflects the composition of the employees who were the subject of this study.

Table 2. Respondent Characteristics

Parameter	Category	Amount	Percentage
Gender	Male	50	66.7%
	Female	25	33.3%
Age (years)	21–30	15	20.0%
	31–40	29	38.7%
	41–50	20	26.7%
	> 50	11	14.7%
Education Level	Junior High School	1	1.3%
	Senior High School	13	17.3%
	Higher Education	61	81.3%
Total		75	100%

Validity and Reliability Test

Validity and reliability tests were done to make sure the tools used in the research were right and could measure the right things like employee performance, skills, pay, and work attitude. For validity, each question was checked by comparing its correlation score (r-count) with a value from a table at a 5% significance level ($r\text{-table} = 0.361$; $n = 75$). A question was valid if its correlation score was higher than the table value, meaning it properly showed what it was supposed to measure. For reliability, the internal consistency of the tools was checked by using Cronbach's Alpha for each group of questions. A tool was reliable if its Cronbach's Alpha score was above 0.60, showing that the questions in each group were consistent with each other. The results showed that all the questions used in the study were both valid and reliable. This means the data collected was good enough for further analysis and testing of ideas.

Table 3. Validity Test Results

Variable	Number of Items	Range of r-count	r-table	Result
Employee Performance	12	0.621 - 0.839	0.361	Valid
Competence	10	0.585 - 0.892	0.361	Valid
Compensation	8	0.659 - 0.929	0.361	Valid
Work Ethic	10	0.692 - 0.906	0.361	Valid

The results from the validity tests show that each item used in the questionnaire for every research variable had an r-count value higher than the r-table value of 0.361. This means that all the statements in the questionnaire are valid and properly measure what they are supposed to. Because of this, all the items were considered suitable for use in the next steps of the data analysis. Additionally, the reliability tests showed that each variable had a Cronbach's Alpha score above 0.60, which means the items in the questionnaire are consistent and reliable. This shows that the tools used in the study are stable and can give the same results every time they are used. Overall, these results confirm that the research tools are valid and reliable, making them good for analyzing the relationships between the variables in the study model.

Table 4. Reliability of Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Threshold	Result
Employee Performance	0.924	> 0.60	Reliable
Competence	0.931	> 0.60	Reliable
Compensation	0.933	> 0.60	Reliable
Work Ethic	0.936	> 0.60	Reliable

Regression Results

Table 5. Regression Results

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t-value	Sig.
Constant	7,710	4,321	-	1,784	0.079
Competence (X1)	0.685	0.117	0.560	5,850	0.000
Compensation (X2)	-0.209	0.162	-0.103	-1.288	0.202
Work Ethic (X3)	0.518	0.137	0.430	3,790	0.000

The results from the multiple linear regression analysis show that competence and work ethic have a positive effect on how well employees perform. However, compensation has a negative effect, but it is not statistically significant. The constant value of 7.710 means that even if competence, compensation, and work ethic stay the same, employee performance is still positive. This suggests there are other factors within the organization that help maintain good performance. The regression coefficient for competence, which is 0.685, means that for every one-unit increase in an employee's competence, performance increases by 0.685 units, assuming other factors stay the same. This shows that employee competence, including knowledge, skills, and abilities, plays a major role in improving work performance. Employees with higher competence do their tasks better, solve problems more effectively, and help the organization reach its goals more successfully. Overall, the findings show that improving employee competence is a key way to boost organizational performance. However, just increasing compensation alone may not be enough to improve performance without other supportive factors like motivation and skill development (Akim et al., 2019).

The work ethic variable also showed a positive influence on employee performance with a regression coefficient of 0.518, indicating that improved work ethic contributes to improved employee performance. Conversely, compensation had a regression coefficient of -0.209, indicating a negative influence, but this effect was not statistically significant. This indicates that changes in compensation do not directly affect employee performance in the organizational context studied.

Based on the standardized beta value, competence is the most dominant variable influencing employee performance ($\beta = 0.560$), followed by work ethic ($\beta = 0.430$), while compensation has the smallest influence ($\beta = -0.103$). The significance value shows that competence ($p = 0.000$) and work ethic ($p = 0.000$) have a significant effect on employee performance at the 5% significance level, while compensation is not significant ($p = 0.202$). The test results show that competence, pay, and work attitude together have a big effect on how well employees perform. This is shown by an F-statistic of 79.426 and a significance level of 0.000, which is much lower than 0.05, proving the model is strong. Also, the R^2 value of 0.770 means that 77% of the differences in employee performance can be explained by these three factors. This means competence, pay, and work ethic are important in determining how employees perform. The other 23% of performance differences come from factors not studied here, like leadership style, the work environment, or personal motivation. Overall, the results show that improving employee skills, encouraging a good work attitude, and having fair pay systems can greatly improve the organization's performance.

Coefficient of Determination and Hypothesis Testing

In regression analysis, the Adjusted R Square value shows how well a model explains changes in the dependent variable. This number tells us how much of the differences in employee performance can be explained by the combined influence of competence, compensation, and work ethic, which are part of the model. A higher Adjusted R Square means the independent variables have a strong ability to explain performance outcomes, showing they are important in determining how well employees perform. On the other hand, a lower Adjusted R Square suggests that a bigger part of the performance differences is due to factors not included in the model. So, Adjusted R Square is a key measure for understanding how well the chosen variables together explain employee performance and how effective the regression model is overall. (Ghozali, 2018).

Table 6. Coefficient of Determination Result

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error
1	0.878	0.770	0.761	2,692

The analysis shows that the Adjusted R Square value of 0.761 means that 76.1% of the changes in employee performance are explained by the combined effect of competence, pay, and work ethic. This suggests that the regression model is very good at explaining the main reasons behind employee performance. The other 23.9% of the changes are caused by factors not looked at in this study, like leadership style, company culture, work environment, and personal motivation. To check the effects of the independent variables, t-tests and F-tests were used at a 5% significance level. The results show that competence, pay, and work ethic have a significant impact on employee performance, either on their own or together. This highlights how important these factors are for improving how well an organization works and how productive it is (Ghozali, 2018).

Table 7. Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

Test	Variable	t / F Value	Sig.	Result
t-test	Competence (X1)	5,850	0.000	Significant
t-test	Compensation (X2)	-1.288	0.202	Not Significant
t-test	Work Ethic (X3)	3,790	0.000	Significant
F-test	X1, X2, X3 → Y	79,426	0.000	Significant

The t-test results show that competence (X1) has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. This is shown by a t-value of 5.850 and a significance level of 0.000. Work ethic (X3) also has a positive and significant effect on performance, with a t-value of 3.790 and a significance level of 0.000. However, compensation (X2) does not have a significant effect on performance, as its significance level is 0.202, which is higher than the 0.05 threshold.

The F-test results show an F-value of 79.426 with a significance level of 0.000, which is much lower than the 0.05 alpha level. This means that together, competence, compensation, and work ethic have a significant effect on employee performance. So, the research hypothesis that all three factors together influence performance is supported. But when looking at each factor alone, only competence and work ethic have a significant impact, while compensation does not have a meaningful effect on performance by itself.

Discussion

Effect of Competence on Employee Performance

The analysis shows that having good competence helps employees perform better. This is clear because the significance value is 0.000, which is much lower than 0.05, and the t-value of 5.850 is higher than the critical t-value of 1.666. This means that improving employee competence – like their knowledge, skills, and work attitude – directly and importantly helps them perform better. Employees with stronger competencies can do their jobs more effectively, handle work challenges better, and help the organization reach its goals. In the Communication, Informatics,

Cryptography, and Statistics Office of Serang Regency, this means it's important to keep developing employee skills through training, building capacity, and offering professional growth opportunities. This is a key strategy for improving overall performance (Hasyim, 2024).

The results of this study align with the findings of Sari (2022), Saputri (2022), and Nurraya & Sriwidodo (2022), who stated that competence has a positive and significant influence on employee performance. Theoretically, these findings support the view that competence is the primary human resource asset in producing optimal performance, particularly in public sector organizations that demand high levels of accuracy, professionalism, and administrative responsibility. Therefore, improving competence through continuous training and development is a strategic factor in improving employee performance.

Effect of Compensation on Employee Performance

The analysis results show that compensation does not significantly influence employee performance, as evidenced by a significance value of 0.202 (> 0.05) and a calculated t-value of -1.288, which is smaller than the t-table (1.666). This finding indicates that compensation is not a major factor influencing employee performance in the government bureaucracy studied.

This condition can be explained by the characteristics of public organizations that implement a fixed, administrative, and non-performance-based compensation system, so compensation is not perceived as a direct reward for work performance. The results of this study align with the findings of Febriani & Setia (2022), Sesti et al. (2023), and Butarbutar and Christina (2022), which stated that compensation does not significantly influence employee performance. Conceptually, these findings indicate that in public sector organizations, non-material factors such as work ethic, moral responsibility, and organizational culture play a more dominant role in shaping employee performance than purely financial aspects.

Effect of Work Ethics on Employee Performance

Research results show that work ethos has a positive and significant influence on employee performance. This is shown by the significance value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05, and the calculated t-value of 3.790, which is higher than the t-table value of 1.666. These findings suggest that the stronger the work ethos of employees, the higher their performance tends to be.

This result aligns with the studies by Aini et al. (2021), Satriawan et al. (2022), and Pintubatu & Wilian (2024), who all found that work ethos has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Theoretically, work ethos reflects an individual's values, attitudes, and commitment to their job. It encourages discipline, responsibility, and consistency in work. Therefore, strengthening work ethos is an important factor in improving the quality of performance among civil service employees.

Simultaneous Effect of Competence, Compensation, and Work Ethics

The results from the simultaneous testing show that competence, pay, and work ethic all have a big impact on how well employees perform. This is shown by an F value of 79.426 and a significance level of 0.000, which is much lower than 0.05, meaning the results are statistically significant. Also, the R^2 value of 0.770 means that 77% of the differences in employee performance can be explained by these three factors together. The other 23% is due to things not looked at in this study, like leadership style, company culture, workplace conditions, or personal motivation. These findings show that competence, pay, and work ethic are important and connected in affecting how employees perform.

These findings align with research by Yusman Sutoyo (2023), Ilham et al. (2024), and Asniwati (2022), which demonstrated that the simultaneous combination of competency, compensation, and work ethic significantly contributes to employee performance. These results

confirm that improving organizational performance cannot be achieved in isolation but requires an integrated and sustainable human resource management approach.

The influence of competence and compensation on employee performance is also shaped by several contextual organizational factors. Elements such as leadership style, organizational culture, work environment, clarity of job roles, and the availability of training and career development opportunities can either strengthen or weaken these relationships. For instance, supportive and transformational leadership can enhance the impact of employee competence by providing guidance, recognition, and opportunities for growth. Similarly, a positive organizational culture that values fairness and transparency can increase the effectiveness of compensation systems in motivating employees. On the other hand, poor communication, unclear performance standards, limited career prospects, or an unsupportive work environment may reduce the positive effects of competence and compensation on performance. Therefore, to achieve optimal results, local government agencies need to ensure that these contextual factors are managed effectively, so that improvements in competence and compensation can translate into better and more sustainable employee performance.

The practical implications of these findings for human resource management policies in local government agencies emphasize the importance of strengthening competence development and fostering a positive work ethic among employees. Since competence was found to be the most dominant factor influencing performance, local government institutions need to prioritize continuous training, capacity building, and professional development programs that are aligned with job requirements and organizational goals. In addition, the significant influence of work ethic indicates the need for policies that promote organizational values, discipline, responsibility, and employee engagement through performance-based recognition, leadership support, and a conducive work environment. Although compensation did not show a significant direct effect, it remains important to ensure fairness, transparency, and alignment with performance incentives to support employee motivation. Therefore, local government agencies should adopt an integrated human resource management strategy that focuses on competency improvement, work ethic strengthening, and supportive organizational systems to achieve more consistent and sustainable performance outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research on employees of the Communication, Informatics, Cryptography, and Statistics Office of Serang Regency, it can be concluded that competence and work ethic have a positive and significant effect on the performance of employees of the Communication, Informatics, Cryptography, and Statistics Office of Serang Regency, while compensation does not have a significant effect partially. Competence plays an important role through technical abilities, mastery of knowledge, and analytical skills of employees in completing tasks. Work ethic is also a major determinant of performance, which is reflected in the level of discipline, responsibility, and integrity in carrying out work. However, simultaneously competence, compensation, and work ethic are proven to have a significant effect on employee performance, which indicates that improving organizational performance requires integrated human resource management.

These findings imply that competency development and strengthening work ethics need to be a primary focus in the management of public sector employees through continuous training and the establishment of a positive work culture. Although compensation has not been shown to significantly impact performance, its management still needs to be carried out fairly and transparently to maintain employee motivation and loyalty. This study was limited to one government agency with relatively limited variables. Therefore, further research is recommended to expand the object and add other variables such as intrinsic motivation, job satisfaction, or leadership style to enrich the understanding of the factors that influence employee performance.

Based on the findings of this study, several realistic policy recommendations can be implemented by the Communication, Informatics, Cryptography, and Statistics Office of Serang Regency. First, the agency should prioritize structured and continuous competency development programs, such as technical training, digital skills enhancement, and job-related certification, to ensure that employees possess the capabilities required to meet organizational performance targets. Second, the institution needs to strengthen work ethic through the internalization of organizational values, the implementation of performance-based recognition systems, and the creation of a supportive and disciplined work environment. Third, although compensation was not found to have a significant direct effect, the agency should still maintain a fair, transparent, and performance-oriented compensation system to sustain employee motivation and organizational commitment. These policies should be implemented in an integrated manner to support sustainable improvements in employee performance.

In addition, future research should focus on expanding the scope of study to different government agencies or regions to obtain more generalizable results. Further studies are also encouraged to include additional variables such as leadership style, organizational culture, job satisfaction, intrinsic motivation, and work environment, as these factors may provide a deeper understanding of the determinants of employee performance in the public sector. Comparative or longitudinal studies may also be conducted to examine performance changes over time and to evaluate the long-term impact of human resource policies on organizational effectiveness.

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