Effect of Service Quality of Ncell on Customer Satisfaction

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to understand the effect of service quality dimension on the customer satisfaction of the Ncell users in Rupandehi. This research is of descriptive in nature. This research is descriptive in nature because it describes data and characteristics about the population being studied on the basis of statistics without any manipulation. The findings of this study are totally based on the primary survey. The study is based on various statistical tests and analysis. Descriptive statistics is used to calculate mean and standard deviation. Correlation and regression are calculated to analyze and interpret the data. For analysis, data are presented in table. For the study customers of Ncell are total population. Among the population, the sample size was 400 respondents. The sample size was determined by using convenience sampling method. The sample of the study were Ncell customers from Rupandehi area in Nepal, who using Ncell communication. This study shows that the correlation analysis indicates that dimensions of service quality reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy are positively correlated but tangibility is negatively correlated with customer satisfaction in Ncell. The regression analysis highlights the influence of various service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction in Ncell. Empathy, reliability, assurance, and empathy are positively associated with customer satisfaction, with tangibility demonstrating the strongest effect. Furthermore, Ncell is a service oriented organization, hence providing continuous training to the employees on issues like courtesy, etiquette and communication skills while dealing with customers is of immense importance. Ncell is a customer oriented organization, hiring potential human resource is a must important and for this reason, the Ncell should hire self-motivated, enthusiastic employees who will like to deal with customer and will try to solve customer complaints and other issues in an effective manner.

Keywords: *service quality reliability, responsiveness, assurance*

Background

The customer is the focus, and customer service remains the main differentiator (Al-Dhuwaihi et al., 2021). Excellent customer service can help a telecom provider stand out from the competition and has a direct effect on operational performance (Hossain et al., 2019). Customer happiness is widely regarded as the key to success in competitive markets. As a result, telecommunications businesses should prioritize service quality as a strategic goal (Rahman & Tajuddin, 2020).

The quality of the products and services used is very important in today's business world. According to studies, surviving in a highly competitive market economy requires offering high-quality goods and services (Ali & Shams, 2020). While certain physical attributes can be used to evaluate the quality of commodities, a variety of factors affect service quality, making evaluation more challenging (Ladhari, 2020). Being a customer-focused industry, the telecommunications sector depends on its capacity to meet customer needs in order to stay in business.

Service quality has been defined as the extent to which a service meets the needs and expectations of the customer. In the telecommunications industry, it is essential to comprehend customer expectations and perceptions. If telecom businesses have a better grasp of these aspects, they can take targeted actions to improve service delivery and ensure customer satisfaction (Kushwaha et al., 2019). Happy customers are more likely to stick around, even while dissatisfied customers might decide to do business with competitors, which would lower profitability and reputation.

Customer loyalty and retention are directly effected by customer satisfaction, which has been linked to service quality (Osman et al., 2021). When client perceptions fall short of expectations, service failures can cause relationship problems and discontent, which can result in bad word-of-mouth and switching behavior (Ha & Jang, 2009). Therefore, through effective service management and high-quality delivery, organizations must place a high priority on enduring client connections.

For many years, service quality has been a major area of study, and research has shown that pre-service expectations influence customer perceptions. In today's marketplaces, competitiveness, company expansion, and survival are guaranteed by excellent service quality (Chang et al., 2020). Customer satisfaction in the telecom industry is strongly correlated with staff interactions, perceived service quality, and organizational response. Increased loyalty as a result of customer satisfaction boosts profitability even more (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Service quality is becoming a crucial strategic differentiation for service companies in the current day. To be competitive, businesses strive to provide both essential services and improved consumer experiences (Loke et al., 2011). Customer happiness and high-quality service delivery are strongly related for telecom providers, and this has an effect on customer loyalty and profitability. Because services are intangible and rely on elements like employee interactions, responsiveness, and dependability, it is still difficult to measure their quality, unlike physical items. The "service quality gap" must be closed and consumer expectations must be understood by telecommunications providers (Wang et al., 2004).

In order to prosper in a cutthroat industry, telecommunications firms mostly depend on client pleasure. Research has indicated that customer views of service quality are significantly influenced by network quality, customer support, and dependable service delivery. Maintaining customer happiness is essential for long-term growth and success in areas like Nepal, where the telecom industry is growing (Sah & Pokharel, 2021). When client perceptions fall short of expectations, service failures take place. Failures of this kind can harm relationships with customers, resulting in lower profitability and turnover. While unhappy customers may magnify bad experiences and harm an organization's reputation, satisfied customers are more likely to stick with the brand and spread the word about it (Alhkami & Alarussi, 2016).

Retaining clients and cultivating loyalty depend heavily on customer satisfaction. According to research, keeping current customers is more economical than finding new ones, highlighting the need of providing high-quality customer care in client retention tactics. Long-term business performance depends on aspects of service quality such assurance, empathy, and dependability, which have a big effect on customer satisfaction (Goyal & Kar, 2019). Customer satisfaction, loyalty, and organizational performance are all intimately correlated with service quality in the fast-paced telecommunications sector of today. To guarantee long-term success, providers must concentrate on comprehending client expectations, enhancing service delivery, and swiftly resolving service failures (Manandhar et al., 2024). For businesses hoping to keep clients, foster loyalty, and experience long-term success, maintaining a high level of service quality is still crucial.

The objective of this study is to analyze the effect of service quality dimension on the customer satisfaction of the Ncell users in Rupandehi. The study's limitations are present study collects relevant data on respondents' opinions and for content analysis from primary sources. Some of the sub-samples are quite small, even if the overall sample is restricted to Ncell customers. The findings do not apply to other telecom consumer categories. Rupandehi was the site of the survey. Thus, the study's scope was restricted to particular clients. This research attempted to examine service quality and customer satisfaction among Ncell users in Rupandehi, while the articles by Upadhyaya et al. (2024) and Bhattarai et al. (2024) are just concerned with consumer satisfaction of Nepalese telecommunication. Basyal et al. (2019) reports only address customer satisfaction in Nepali telecommunications from Rupandehi district. However, the study attempted to gather information on customer satisfaction and service quality from Rupandehi, for this report. This research examined several articles and thesis reports from Nepal that just addressed consumer happiness; however, this report also examined service quality and customer satisfaction.

Research Framework

In research, a conceptual framework is a set of concepts, hypotheses, and constructions that serve as a basis for comprehending and analyzing the connections among various variables. By outlining the potential effects of each service quality attribute on customer satisfaction and offering a framework for investigating these associations using regression analysis, this conceptual framework functions as a theoretical guide that directs the empirical inquiry. The first review of the relevant literature served as the foundation for the schematic diagram shown in Figure 1.
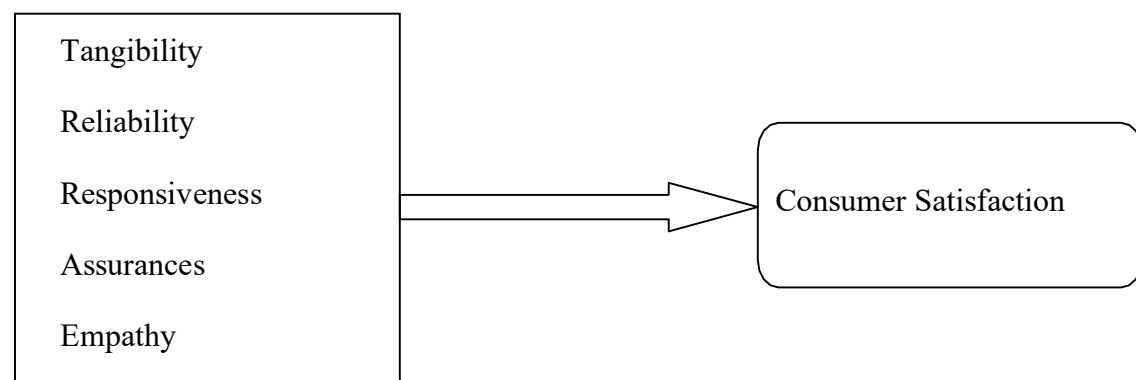

| Tangibility |
| Reliability |
| Responsiveness | → | Consumer Satisfaction |
| Assurances |
| Empathy |

Figure 1 Research framework

Customer Satisfaction: The degree to which a product or service meets or beyond a customer's expectations is known as customer satisfaction. For businesses, it is a crucial performance metric that captures the general client experience and loyalty. Kotler and Keller (2016) define customer satisfaction as "a person's feeling of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing a product's perceived performance or outcome against their expectations." A number of elements, including as service quality, pricing equity, product dependability, and the brand's emotional resonance, affect customer happiness. Customer satisfaction in service sectors like telecommunications is significantly influenced by aspects of service quality including responsiveness, empathy, and dependability. Increased customer loyalty, favorable word-of-mouth recommendations, and decreased customer attrition are all correlated with higher satisfaction levels (Zeithaml et al., 2023).

Tangibility: Includes the appearance of physical facilities, equipment, written signs, signals, and personnel. These tangible elements create the first impression of service

quality (Wilson et al., 2008).

Reliability: Emphasizes delivering service promises accurately and consistently. It reflects the organization's ability to provide dependable and trustworthy service outcomes (Wilson et al., 2008).

Responsiveness: Highlights the organization's willingness to assist customers and provide prompt services. This dimension is critical in addressing customer inquiries and resolving issues quickly (Wilson et al., 2008).

Assurance: Focuses on inspiring trust and confidence among customers through the competence, courtesy, and credibility of employees. It ensures customers feel secure in their interactions with the service provider (Wilson et al., 2008).

Empathy: Entails providing personalized attention and care to customers, recognizing their unique needs, and delivering customized services to meet those needs effectively (Wilson et al., 2008).

Literature review

The reviewed studies offer diverse insights into service quality across the transportation and logistics sectors. Rahim (2017) conducted an empirical investigation into the perceived service quality of domestic airline carriers in Nigeria using a modified SERVQUAL model, revealing an overall dependable framework despite subpar ratings in key aspects such as flight pattern and responsiveness. In Europe, Akan and Karataş (2023) examined airport services following the launch of Istanbul Airport, highlighting the critical roles of cleanliness, staff responsiveness, and operational efficiency in shaping international passenger satisfaction. Indonesia underscored that punctuality and safety are paramount in urban transport services, while Roh et al. (2024) demonstrated that a holistic mix of accessibility, communication, and reliability in container port operations is essential for high customer satisfaction in the logistics industry.

In the financial sector, several studies from Nepal illustrate how service quality directly influences customer satisfaction in banking. Ghimire et al. (2019) compared service quality dimensions between government-owned and joint-venture banks, finding that superior responsiveness and assurance in joint-venture banks fostered greater customer loyalty. Upadhyaya et al. (2024) further reinforced that reliability and assurance are the strongest predictors of satisfaction among bank customers, while Lamichhane (2022) highlighted the need for modern infrastructure and efficient transaction processes in commercial banks across Kathmandu Valley. Ghimire et al. (2019) added that bridging the satisfaction gap between bank types requires strategic investments in employee training and IT infrastructure.

Digital and online service platforms have also been a focal point of recent research, reflecting evolving consumer expectations in the virtual marketplace. Basyal et al. (2019) investigated Nepal's online marketplaces, revealing that perceived reliability significantly boosts customer trust and satisfaction. Manandhar et al. (2021) extended this analysis to the online retail sector, finding that delivery speed and product quality are vital for customer contentment in clothing e-commerce. Additionally, Ikhsan et al. (2024) and Manandhar et al. (2024) examined how the ease of use in digital payment systems and the transparency of online retail processes contribute to higher customer satisfaction and business growth.

Service quality improvements in public service delivery, energy, and broadband sectors are equally critical, as evidenced by studies in both Nepal and Kenya. Bhattarai et al. (2020) focused on Nepal's small hydropower projects, where energy supply reliability emerged as the most significant factor, although shortcomings in communication were

noted. Tiwari et al. (2022) examined urban broadband services in Nepal, finding that consistent connectivity, high-speed internet, and transparent pricing significantly enhance customer satisfaction, while hidden charges detract from user experiences. Munyua (2024) evaluated centralized service models at Huduma Centers in Nairobi, demonstrating that reduced wait times and consolidated services can substantially boost public sector satisfaction. Lastly, Bhattarai et al. (2024) underscored the importance of communication, operational effectiveness, and strategic infrastructure investments in the insurance and rural energy sectors, emphasizing that a customer-centric approach is vital for long-term loyalty and service excellence.

Research Methodology

The study employs a descriptive and causal-comparative research design that systematically gathers primary survey data to examine the relationships between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction. The design is descriptive because it presents the characteristics of the studied population without any manipulation, and causal-comparative as it utilizes statistical analyses such as correlation and regression to explore potential causal relationships among variables. The population comprises Ncell customers, with a sample size of 400 respondents selected through convenience sampling from the Rupandehi area in Nepal. This sampling strategy is informed by Roscoe (1975) guidelines, ensuring that the findings can be reasonably generalized to the target population of Ncell subscribers.

Primary data were collected using a semi-structured questionnaire survey that employed a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The instrument was developed following a rigorous process that included a comprehensive literature review, expert consultations, and a preliminary pilot test before finalization. The questionnaire was divided into two main sections: one measuring various dimensions of service quality including tangibility, dependability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy and the other focusing on customer satisfaction through internal, social, and image factors. In addition to the survey, field visits and secondary data sources such as telecommunications-published papers and online resources were used to supplement the findings.

For data processing and analysis, the study utilized SPSS software to perform a range of statistical tests including descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis. Descriptive measures such as mean and standard deviation provided a summary of central tendencies and variability in responses, offering insights into customer perceptions of Ncell's service quality. Correlation analysis was employed to determine the strength and direction of relationships between different service quality indicators and overall customer satisfaction, while regression analysis further elucidated the effect of multiple independent variables on satisfaction levels. Graphical representations, including charts and tables, complemented the analysis by visually depicting patterns and trends, thereby strengthening the empirical foundation of the research.

The influence of independent factors on profitability is predicted using multiple linear regression analysis. The following equation is the equation for the influence of independent variables:

Linear Regression Model

$$\hat{Y} = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + e_i$$

Where, $\hat{Y}$ = Consumer Satisfaction (dependent variable), X_1 = Tangibility, X_2 = Reliability, X_3 = Responsiveness, X_4 = Assurances, X_5 = Empathy, α = Constant, β_1, β_2, β_3, β_4 and β_5 = Regression coefficients of factor 1, 2, 3, 4 and factor 5, e_i = Error term

Validity and reliability

According to the research, each variable's Cronbach's alpha exceeds 0.80, which strongly indicates that the data is highly reliable and that the survey instrument effectively measures the intended constructs. If the other validity indicators are similarly robust, a rating over 0.80 is considered excellent, while a value above 0.70 still reflects a high degree of dependability. As emphasized by Churchill et al. (1991), it is essential that the dependability rating does not drop below 0.70 to ensure the overall reliability of the measurement instrument, thereby minimizing measurement errors and enhancing the credibility and reproducibility of the study's findings.

Analysis and Results

The descriptive analysis of data collected from 400 respondents via questionnaires. It uses statistical metrics such as mean, standard deviation, and frequency to explain the data. The mean and standard deviation are presented in a table. Ncell customer responded to survey items on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Customer satisfaction	1.00	5.00	3.1247	.51241
Tangibility	1.00	4.86	3.2547	.75779
Reliability	1.00	4.34	3.6523	.51234
Responsiveness	1.00	5.00	3.7031	.52583
Assurance	1.00	4.95	3.8137	.44157
Empathy	1.00	5.00	3.3450	.51234

Note: From Researcher Calculation

The descriptive statistics presented in Table 1 provide an overview of the key variables used in the study, including customer satisfaction and the five dimensions of service quality: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Each variable is evaluated using a five-point Likert scale, with a minimum score of 1.00 and a maximum of either 4.34, 4.86, 4.95, or 5.00, depending on the variable. Customer satisfaction has a mean score of 3.1247 with a standard deviation of 0.51241, suggesting that respondents, on average, have a neutral to moderately positive perception of their overall satisfaction with Ncell's services, with a moderate level of variation among responses. Among the service quality dimensions, assurance has the highest mean score of 3.8137, with the lowest standard deviation of 0.44157, indicating that respondents generally perceive Ncell's assurance-related aspects, such as staff competence and trustworthiness, more

favorably and with relatively consistent opinions. Responsiveness also has a high mean score of 3.7031 with a standard deviation of 0.52583, suggesting that customers acknowledge Ncell's efforts in providing timely assistance and support.

Reliability, with a mean score of 3.6523 and a standard deviation of 0.51234, suggests that respondents perceive Ncell's reliability in service delivery relatively well, though there is some variation in their responses. Empathy has a mean score of 3.3450, indicating a moderate perception of Ncell's ability to understand and cater to customers' needs, with a standard deviation of 0.51234, reflecting variation in opinions. Tangibility, which includes physical facilities, equipment, and staff appearance, has the lowest mean of 3.2547 and the highest standard deviation of 0.75779, indicating greater variability in how respondents perceive the physical aspects of Ncell's services.

Table 2
Correlation analysis

	X_1	X_2	X_3	X_4	X_5	Y
X_1	1					
X_2	-.042 .556	1				
X_3	.011 .877	.567** .000	1			
X_4	.078 .271	.525** .000	.633** .000	1		
X_5	.037 .601	.611** .000	.635** .000	.725** .000	1	
Y	-.092 .196	.684** .000	.647** .000	.611** .000	.688** .000	1

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

Note: From Researcher Calculation

The correlation analysis presented in Table 2 examines the relationships between customer satisfaction (Y) and the five dimensions of service quality: tangibility (X1), reliability (X2), responsiveness (X3), assurance (X4), and empathy (X5). The correlation coefficients indicate the strength and direction of the relationships between these variables, with values ranging from -1 to +1. A positive correlation signifies that an increase in one variable is associated with an increase in the other, while a negative correlation suggests an inverse relationship. The significance levels (p-values) are provided below the correlation coefficients, with values less than 0.05 indicating statistically significant relationships.

The findings reveal that customer satisfaction (Y) is significantly and positively correlated with reliability (X2, r = 0.684, p < 0.01), responsiveness (X3, r = 0.647, p < 0.01), assurance (X4, r = 0.611, p < 0.01), and empathy (X5, r = 0.688, p < 0.01). These strong correlations suggest that improvements in these service quality dimensions are likely to enhance customer satisfaction. Among them, empathy (X5) has the highest correlation with customer satisfaction, indicating that customers highly value personalized and understanding service. Similarly, reliability (X2) shows a strong association, implying that customers prioritize consistent and dependable service. Assurance (X4) and responsiveness (X3) also have significant correlations, highlighting

the importance of staff competence, trustworthiness, and timely assistance in shaping customer satisfaction.

Similarly, tangibility (X1) shows a weak and negative correlation with customer satisfaction (r = -0.092, p = 0.196), which is statistically insignificant. This suggests that the physical aspects of service, such as facilities, equipment, and staff appearance, do not have a notable effect on how customers perceive their overall satisfaction with Ncell's services. Additionally, the correlations among the independent variables indicate that reliability (X2), responsiveness (X3), assurance (X4), and empathy (X5) are strongly interrelated, with significant positive correlations among them. For instance, assurance (X4) and empathy (X5) have a high correlation (r = 0.725, p < 0.01), indicating that customers who perceive a high level of trust and competence in service providers also tend to experience greater empathy.

Table 3
Regression analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	1.233	.190		6.489	.000
Tangibility	-.046	.028	-.080	-1.684	.094
Reliability	.267	.061	.319	4.346	.000
Responsiveness	.235	.057	.306	4.104	.000
Assurances	.194	.055	.231	3.511	.001
Empathy	.194	.055	.231	3.511	.001
Adj. R^2			.746		
F-value			42.245		
P-value			0.000		

The regression analysis presented in Table 3 evaluates the effect of different service quality dimensions tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy on customer satisfaction. The model's Adjusted R^2 value of 0.746 indicates that approximately 74.6% of the variance in customer satisfaction (Y) is explained by the independent variables (X1-X5). This suggests a strong predictive power of the model, meaning that service quality factors significantly contribute to variations in customer satisfaction. The F-value of 42.245 with a p-value of 0.000 confirms that the overall regression model is statistically significant, implying that the selected variables collectively influence customer satisfaction.

Examining the unstandardized coefficients (B), the constant value of 1.233 suggests that when all independent variables are held at zero, the baseline level of customer satisfaction is 1.233. Among the predictors, reliability (B = 0.267, p < 0.01), responsiveness (B = 0.235, p < 0.01), assurance (B = 0.194, p < 0.01), and empathy (B = 0.194, p < 0.01) have significant positive coefficients, indicating that improvements in these service quality dimensions are likely to enhance customer satisfaction. Reliability has the highest coefficient (B = 0.267, β = 0.319, p < 0.01), suggesting that dependable and consistent service plays the most crucial role in shaping customer satisfaction.

Similarly, responsiveness (B = 0.235, β = 0.306, p < 0.01) also has a strong effect, indicating that prompt and helpful customer service is a key driver of satisfaction. Assurance and empathy have identical coefficients (B = 0.194), reinforcing the importance of trustworthiness and personalized service in maintaining customer loyalty.

On the other hand, tangibility (B = -0.046, p = 0.094) shows a negative and statistically insignificant effect on customer satisfaction, meaning that physical aspects such as store appearance, equipment, and employee presentation do not significantly contribute to how satisfied customers feel with the service. The standardized beta coefficients further emphasize the relative importance of each variable, with reliability (β = 0.319) and responsiveness (β = 0.306) emerging as the strongest predictors.

Conclusion and Recommendations

According to the analysis, Ncell customers in Rupandehi believe that the service quality is mediocre. Customers appear to value Ncell's physical assets, as seen by the comparatively higher appreciation of tangibility which includes physical facilities and equipment among the evaluated attributes. On the other hand, reliability which refers to the service's consistency and dependability scores lower, suggesting possible issues in this area. Moderate satisfaction levels are also reflected in other aspects, such as assurance, empathy, and responsiveness, which point to areas that can benefit from service improvements. Tangibility and customer satisfaction have a weak relationship, according to correlation analysis, but other characteristics like assurance, responsiveness, empathy, and dependability have strong, positive correlations. This implies that elements pertaining to the service's dependability, the speed and efficacy of responses, the confidence and trust the service provider instills, and the level of individualized attention and understanding clients receive have a greater effect on their overall satisfaction.

Regression research provides more evidence that customer happiness is significantly improved by responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Enhancements in these areas are probably going to improve overall consumer satisfaction. Tangibility and dependability, on the other hand, do not statistically significantly affect satisfaction in this study, indicating that although consistency and physical features are relevant, they could not be the main factors influencing customer happiness among Rupandehi Ncell users. Furthermore, the results indicate that in order to build better client relationships, service providers ought to give priority to improving these interpersonal and service-related aspects. Businesses can increase customer loyalty and satisfaction by concentrating on enhancing responsiveness and making sure that clients feel understood and secure in the services provided. All things considered, the study emphasizes how crucial it is to spend money on high-quality customer service interactions in order to promote long-term client engagement and corporate success. In conclusion, this regression analysis underscores the importance of service reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy in driving customer satisfaction, while tangibility plays a minimal role in influencing customer perceptions.

From the above discussion, these are the recommendations:

- Invest in staff training programs to enhance interpersonal skills, ensuring that employees can effectively address customer needs and build trust.

- Regularly gather and analyze customer feedback to identify specific areas for service improvement and monitor the effectiveness of implemented strategies.

- Integrate service quality measures into overall performance management systems to maintain a consistent focus on customer-centric practices.

- Investigate potential moderating variables, such as demographic or cultural factors, that might affect the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction.

- Conduct longitudinal studies to assess how changes in service quality dimensions effect customer satisfaction over time.

- Examine the role of emerging digital technologies in transforming service delivery and their subsequent effect on customer satisfaction.

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