RESEARCH ARTICLE

Competencies of Educational Supervisors as a Support System to Improve Student Well-being Based Educational Program

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Abstract:

Introduction: The well-being of students has become one of the main concerns in the Indonesian educational system nowadays. In order to apply such kind of concept in an educational program at schools, the role of an educational supervisor is critical as the supervisor performs as a facilitator as well as a controller of the program.

Methods: This study investigates the competencies required by educational supervisors, especially concerning the government’s efforts to apply the concept of students’ well-being in an educational program. Since the program focuses on a particular concept, certain competencies may be needed differently from the existing educational policy. FGDs and in-depth interviews were used to analyze the influence of in-group interaction of participants in answering some questions during the discussion. These interviews were conducted with 24 educational supervisors from several cities in West Java. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data.

Results: The study identified advanced thinking, working attitudes, social skills, and managerial abilities as four main competencies, followed by 11 sub-categories that are considered important for educational supervisors to be acquired in order to support the students' well-being program.

The results also highlighted that out of these four competencies, social skills are perceived as the most primary competency needed for educational supervisors, as they are agents who have to perform plentiful interactions with many parties for the implementation of the program.

Conclusion: The primary competence needed for educational supervisors is social skills.

Keywords: Competency, Educational supervisor, Student well-being, Thematic analysis, School, Facilitator.

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the educational goals in every country is to equip young people with the knowledge, abilities, and skills. They are expected to have fulfilling lives and become productive and innovative workforce who can always adapt to the world of work. In order to achieve these goals optimally, a pleasant and positive educational climate is needed so that students can enjoy the educational process, be happy, and become fully functioning. Therefore, the student well-being concept remains a concern internationally and an increasing focus of activities, policies, programs, and professional developments for teachers and other parts in schools [1].

Conceptually, R.M and E.L [2] integrated two construct descriptions of students' well-being. Firstly, it encompasses how students evaluate their life at school, the affective component (how they feel), and the cognitive component (their perceptions and thoughts about their life at school). Secondly, it is an ongoing and positive dynamic process rather than a fixed state through the notion of self-optimization or students’ fulfilling their potential. Another conceptual definition which incorporates multiple dimensions states that students' well-being is a sustainable emotional state characterized
premominantly by positive mood and attitude, positive relationships with other students and teachers, resilience, self-optimization, and a high level of satisfaction with their learning experiences at the school [3, 4].

Creating students' well-being requires a well-planned, strategic, structured, and continuous program. It must involve various parties. Student well-being program is a planned and coordinated program of contents, activities, and strategies that focuses on building a positive learning environment and teaching students the values, attitudes, and skills that have the power to enhance their quality of life, relationships, connectedness to school, and learning and achievement [4]. Based on the universal approach, students' well-being involves several significant stakeholders, firstly, the government as the policy planner [5], secondly, the internal stakeholder in school, specifically teachers and school principal [6 - 10], and lastly, the educational supervisor [11, 12]. The greatest amount of time and resources should be spent on universal approaches that include the whole school [4]. An integrated program with academic learning embedded in teaching carried out by teachers will be more effective in creating a positive school climate for students' well-being.

In general, the educational supervisor should act as a facilitator and a controller to ensure that the program is executed well. They have the responsibility of monitoring, assisting, and giving specific guidance to all academic and managerial systems implemented in the school. They have the role of providing professional assistance to the teachers to help them achieve more desirable development; therefore, the learning process can be improved or modified, and more desirable results are obtained [13]. It is related to engaging teachers as peers in consultation over matters of instruction and learning [14]. Educational supervisors, particularly, have an important role in helping and assisting the teacher in doing some important tasks, such as building positive outcomes among students, teaching students to develop skills and attitudes that underpin the resilient behavior, and helping students feel good in the school environment so that students can fulfill their potentials. Their feedback, advice, and adequate support for teachers and schools are made available to acquire the goals of students' well-being.

Based on the previous studies, relationships among students, peers, and teachers must be pleasant [1, 5, 6, 15, 16]. The interpersonal role of the teacher has a great impact on students. Teachers have roles not only in teaching the academic subject but specifically encouraging, facilitating, and supporting students to enhance students’ capacity to flourish and thrive. Hence, educational supervisors can provide assistance and consultation to teachers, thus help in building a more positive relationship in order to support the implementation of the students' well-being program properly.

Previous research stated that the supervisory skills of the educational supervisors affect the teacher’s capacity in the learning process [17]. On the other hand, the role of educational supervisors tends to be seen as undervalued by teachers [18]. In fact, the task of educational supervisors is not solely to evaluate and assess the academic process carried out by teachers or principals but also help principals grow as instructional leaders. Moreover, they support principals to lead strategic change that continuously improves the performance of schools and sustains high-quality educational programs and opportunities across the district [14].

An educational supervisor has to comprehensively understand the goal of the academic and school system, particularly when the educational policy orients to enhance the well-being of the students. This requires a certain amount of qualities or competencies that may be different from the usual educational policy. Referring to the PROSPER framework [3], a program of students' well-being consists of encouraging positivity, building relationship, facilitating outcomes, focusing on strength, fostering a sense of purpose, enhancing engagement, and teaching resilience. The implementation of the framework must be translated into school and classroom practices.

The Regional Government of West Java used the PROSPER student well-being framework as a foundation in the character education program. This program integrates student well-being framework and cultural values, thus creating the “Jabar Masagi” program. “Jabar Masagi” is a educational program in West Java, which combined local and cultural values. The program also focused on cultivating perfect human beings who live well and balance between learning to feel (Surti value), learning to understand (Harti value), learning to do (Bakti value), and learning to coexist (Bakti value) [19]. The government intended to involve not only students but also other stakeholders that surround them, teachers, school staff, school leaders, educational supervisors, and the community.

As a whole school approach, the program will be covered in policies and procedures, teaching practices, curriculum, code for positive school values and behaviors, positive behavioral support and the organization and supervision of the physical and social environment of the school [20]. Accordingly, it is necessary for educational supervisors to ensure that the implementation of the students' well-being program works well in schools. Besides controlling and evaluating role, the priority role also consists of providing support, coaching and development for principals and teachers. Thus, educational supervisors need to have specific competencies to support their performance.

Competencies include knowledge, skill, ability, and personal characteristics essential to perform a job or task [21]. To the best of our knowledge, only limited research has been conducted so far on comprehensive educational supervisor competencies. Several studies stated that competencies needed for an educational supervisor are knowledge about teaching, ability to demonstrate this knowledge by actually teaching under observation, willingness to sustain this ability continuously, and demonstration of a commitment to continuous professional growth supervision knowledge, technical skills, and interpersonal skills [22]. Other previous studies also stated that educational supervisors should understand the principles of good supervision [23]. The available evidence mainly focused on instructional leadership capacity or technical competencies of educational supervisors.

Although mapping the competencies needed in a job
requires a comprehensive perspective on essential human psychological functions, the underlying reason is that the competency model has a power that integrates a set of competencies necessary for an excellent performance. In the era of changes and digitalization, the role of educational supervisors is shifting from developing teacher’s capacity, coaching, facilitating, and orientation to humans competencies [8, 11, 12, 24]. Thus, it is expected that the supervisors know the characteristics of teachers and school principals as the educational program organizers. They can build work relationships among educational supervisors, teachers, and principals effectively.

These findings take the general perspectives of the educational supervisor’s role in school and academic supervision, and not specifically the relatedness of the educational supervisor’s competencies toward the educational supervisor’s role in enhancing students' well-being at school. Thus, this study aims to explore the competencies of the educational supervisor from the basic functional aspects of humans based on psychological perspectives. The competencies are selected mainly to support students' well-being based on educational programs.

2. METHODS

2.1. Participants

Twenty-four participants voluntarily took part in the present study from senior high schools and vocational schools in four cities in West Java, namely Depok, Bandung, Bogor, and Cirebon. They were appointed according to the criteria of those who had a minimum of five years of experience in their role as educational supervisors. Cooperating with the Education Office of West Java, we reached out to several regional education offices in those cities that were designated by the Education Office based on the population and schools that were fairly large. We collaborated with local educational supervisors to explore their knowledge, experiences, and opinions regarding well-being-based educational programs. As an initial step, we approached them as invited participants by explaining the aims of the study. After that, we sent official invitations to their offices consisting of details of the series of this study to ask for their involvement. Educational supervisors who were willing to cooperate submitted their online confirmation to participate in the allocated time and location. Finally, they were contacted and they agreed to join this study.

2.2. Measuring instrument and Data Collection

A qualitative study in the form of Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and individual in-depth interviews was used in this study. FGD is a type of in-depth interview whose primary focus is to analyze the interaction inside the group where the participants influence each other through their answers to the ideas and contributions during the discussion [25]. There were three FGDs conducted in this study. Each of them was led by one facilitator, one co-facilitator, and one minute-taker who had experience performing FGDs and consisted of eight educational supervisors as participants. Question guidelines related to the students' well-being program were developed in Indonesian and were reviewed and discussed among the researchers prior to FGDs, as shown in Table 1. Before the FGDs were started, the facilitators explained the FGD process to the participants and asked them to fill the form of the list of attendees of the study. The facilitators also asked for permission to digitally record the process of discussions. Those 24 participants were emphasized to openly express and share their opinions, ideas, and experiences during FGDs. Each FGD lasted for about 2.5 hours.

Table 1. Guideline interview questions.

| No. | Questions                                      |
|-----|------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | How do you describe the program?              |
| 2   | What kind of adjustments or changes should the school make for the program? |
| 3   | What kind of adjustments or changes should the Education Office make for the program? |
| 4   | Based on your work duties as school supervisors, what kind of work roles need to be adjusted according to the program? |
| 5   | Based on your roles as supervisors, what competencies are needed to carry out the program well? |
| 6   | How each competency that has been determined by the government can be realized to support the program? |

We evaluated several participants during FGD and chose six knowledgeable participants to be involved in an in-depth interview. We purposefully selected those that would best help the researcher understand the problem and our research question [26]. The six participants involved in the in-depth interview were fully based on researcher consideration and the idea of saturation data [27]. They participated in our one-to-one in-depth interview to inquire further about the topic discussed in the FGDs, which has not been depicted yet. Participants were asked regarding (1) assessors' understanding of students' well-being curriculum and its implementation, (2) changes in the role of assessors specifically in supporting the curriculum programs, and (3) to what extent the assessors have performed the required competencies according to their duties and what they have done in response to this program.

By using in-depth interviews, we tried to gain detailed information about participants' thoughts and behavior or if they want to explore more about specific topics in depth-depth [28]. Moreover, all of the interviews were conducted by the same FGD facilitators in order to allow a comprehensive view of the topic. During the interview, the interviewers encouraged the participants to convey their perspectives toward the topic in more detail.

2.3. Analytical Procedure

The analysis of our data was guided by the systematic approach in grounded theory [29]. All transcripts were processed by Thematic Content Analysis (TCA) to determine appropriate coding and the formation of themes from those codes [30]. Initial coding was inductively conducted by nine coders, resulting in several aspects consisting of four categories and eleven sub-categories.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Characteristics of Participants

A total of 24 educational supervisors of West Java
participated in the Focus Group Discussion (FGD). We had educational supervisors from four different regions in West Java, which were Bandung, Cirebon, Bekasi, and Bogor. The supervisors comprised of 75% male ($M = 36$ years old, $SD = 3.4$) with experience in education field of 23 – 36 years ($M = 31$ years, $SD = 4.1$).

3.2. Emerging Categories

Table 2 shows emerging categories describing the competencies of the educational supervisors. According to the coding data, it was found that there were four categories and 11 sub-categories.

3.3. Advanced Thinking

This competency consists of cognitive aspects and mostly higher thinking order capacity. There are four sub-categories in this category. Analytical thinking is defined as the ability to describe a problem based on data from various sources and generate several appropriate alternative solutions. Conceptual thinking is defined as the ability to think inductively, to make logical generalizations from data based on a certain theoretical frame of reference. Education Strategic Perspective is defined as to demonstrate an understanding of education management policies, strategies and processes that are oriented to improve students’ well-being. The last one, Culture Strategic Perspective, is defined as using cultural knowledge to develop effective education strategies regarding students’ well-being (Table 3).

Table 3. Quotes on advance thinking competencies.

| Sub-Category | Quotes |
|--------------|--------|
| 1.1. Analytical Thinking | P4: I try again and again, analyze every step I do, and find the most suitable strategy to implement in my school. P8: When supervising school management, we need to check every aspect and how well is the learning process in 10/11/12 grades. Evaluating all aspects related to the national final examination grade is a must. |
| 1.2. Conceptual Thinking | P5: Students’ well-being is influenced not only by teachers and their friends but also by families and society. P3: Our foundation when supervising a school is the national standard of education. There are 11 standards that we need to understand. P11: We have to understand our mission as education supervisors; there are many supervisors who do not give attention to this aspect. |
| 1.3. Educational Strategic Perspective | P1: This well-being-based program needs to be integrated into the existing school program, and we need to manage the priority issue from the government, which is about the computer-based national examination. P2: Implementation of the well-being program has to be done on a large scale, not only in the school environment but also in West Java society. |
| 1.4. Culture Strategic Perspective | P7: Steve Mariotti said, “Your words, become action. Your actions become a habit, and your habits become destiny.” Therefore, we need to embed this new habit into our cultural habits. P9: Cirebon has a unique language. It mixes from Sunda and Jawa and is called Cirebonan. Therefore, if we want to implement this well-being-based program, we need to use how each culture produces state of well-being. Using a cultural language probably helps students to understand more. |

Table 2. Categories and sub-categories on the competencies of the educational supervisors in west java.

| S. No | Category | Sub-Category |
|-------|----------|--------------|
| 1 | Advance Thinking | 1.1. Analytical Thinking |
| 2 | Working Attitude | 2.1. Continuous Improvement |
| 3 | Social Skill | 3.1. Relationship Building |
| 4 | Managerial Ability | 4.1. Controlling |

Table 3. Quotes on advance thinking competencies.
Table 4. Quotes on working attitudes competencies.

| Sub-Category            | Quotes                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2.1. Continuous Improvement | P4: We have to know “what is trending now?”, be innovative and learn new technology.  
P7: Our attitude should always be towards trying hard, being a better person, and do self-evaluation; these are all important attributes for education supervisor.  
P8: The students belong to the digital native generation; therefore, I need to learn about technology to add more to their well-being.  
P20: I want to “grow,” and I want to change. |
| 2.2. Quality Orientation | P16: We need to accommodate all government programs and also cover all school-based management aspects.  
P17: Yes indeed. Our orientation is a national standard in school management and the school instructional process. |
| 2.3. Initiative         | P10: In my school, the students always play with gadgets during lectures in the classroom; I detect this problem and come to teachers and vice headmaster to solve this problem.  
P11: I initiate a new program to make students more disciplined in using their gadgets.  
P14: We develop an activity that makes students ready to start their studies. We use a ‘high spirit song’ to ‘wake them up.’ |
| 2.4. Passionate         | P2: I enjoy supervising  
P5: It is my turn to do anything that I can to help my school.  
P6: I am an educator. I educate people, not order people.  
P13: I have a high spirit to do my job. Every time I come to school, it is challenging. |

3.4. Working Attitude

The working attitude category is related to the educational supervisor's predisposition toward their job. There are four subcategories under this category. Continuous Improvement is defined as the willingness to be a long-life learner, to develop own knowledge and skills, and to learn new technology for education. Quality Orientation is defined as the ability to complete its responsibilities by paying attention to all related aspects according to work standards and accurately observing work results from time to time. Initiative is defined as a tendency to find opportunities and to act promptly when facing problems in the school. Passionate is defined as showing enjoyment while working or having strong feelings or a strong belief (Table 4).

3.5. Social Skill

The social skill category is related to competencies that help educational supervisors when interacting at their schools. There are two sub-categories. Firstly, Relationship Building is defined as building collaborative relationships with all school stakeholders, with various personal characters to support the implementation of the student well-being program. Secondly, Facilitating Change is defined as the ability to encourage school stakeholders towards the changes of educational policy for better educational management (Table 5).

3.6. Managerial Ability

This category is related to educational supervisors’ competencies to monitor, organize, and lead their school supervisees. There are three sub-categories. Firstly, Controlling is defined as monitoring the school system based on standards on the policy and program standard. Secondly, Impact & Influence is defined as a positive impression, confidence, and respect, which support the implementation of school recommendation. Thirdly, Developing Others is defined as the ability to understand the schools’ needs and development strategy (Table 6).

Table 5. Quotes on Social Skill competencies.

| Sub-Category            | Quotes                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3.1. Relationship Building | P3: Be adaptive; every school is different  
P6: Be an optimistic supervisor and send positive vibes to your supervisee.  
P10: Morality and code of conduct are necessary for a relationship as a supervisor.  
P12: Approach ... every school has a different strategy to be approached.  
P15: Caring for each other is very important.  
P16: Build networking, do not be shy.  
P19: We need to develop social awareness.  
P21: Students have their own characteristics, so do teachers, principals, and schools. How to relate with each person is different.  
P24: As government employees, we have to provide service to our society and not to be served. |
| 3.2. Facilitating Change | P1: If I want to change my school, I need to be a good communicator.  
P23: We, as facilitators, facilitate discussion to encourage students to come up with out-of-box ideas.  
P26: To change school management attitudes or performances, we cannot be a ‘dictator.’ It can only trigger ‘resistance.’ Therefore, we need to be social person and approachable. |
4. DISCUSSION

Teaching well-being in a school is a primary goal of positive education [31]. It needs a meta-framework and collaboration with all school stakeholders to develop a multidimensional curriculum. A supervisor, as one of the school stakeholders, assists teachers in designing and developing learning plans for each dimension of well-being [11]. Therefore, a supervisor needs to have sufficient knowledge of the well-being program, its philosophy, and its goal(s). The basic knowledge of designing a learning plan is also needed. Using all the knowledge, supervisors will assist, control, and evaluate teachers' performance through their advanced thinking skills. However, this study found that supervisor’s advanced thinking skills and managerial abilities (e.g., controlling, directing) will not be effective without a good and positive relationship with teachers. When supervisors only rely on thinking skills and directing abilities in evaluating teacher performance, their advice will not be easily accepted by the teacher. Hence, people prefer partners who are good at understanding others [30] or who act wisely toward human relations. A persuasive, attentive, and warm relational style plays an important role in encouraging teachers to develop their performance. Interpersonal skills are one of the bases for competence in supervision [17]. Social skills are essential in delivering the well-being program successfully. These humanistic-based competencies are directed toward treating teachers as human beings, listening effectively, understanding others, showing empathy, and approaching with tolerance toward them [8].

The implementation of the student’s well-being in schools has been reported to be very challenging as these programs typically require fundamental changes in the ways in which schools operate and organize [32]. Therefore, the implementation of the policies should be monitored. Educational supervisors can become communicators who help to translate these policies into operational regulations in program implementation. Accordingly, educational supervisors need to have a good communication style. They should use the appropriate way to persuade and influence various characteristics of teachers in schools. This will expand the delivery of constructive feedback skills so that the mentoring process runs smoothly. Impact and influence competency involves how to convince others to adopt a specific course of action and persuasive techniques to achieve desired results.

The ability to build cordial relationships will also develop a supportive school atmosphere and positive relations within the school. When the culture of schools fosters relations of recognition, the dialogic experience of being cared for, respected, and valued will impact positive outcomes for both students and staff [6]. A supportive relationship between educational supervisors and school staff also contributes to building a positive school climate so that students can experience learning experience satisfaction at the school.

Supervisors also need to be knowledgeable about the whole organization to coordinate, plan, control the system of records and information within the organization, as well as have the knowledge needed to plan, assess, observe, and evaluate the program improvement [17]. Supervisors may focus on controlling the implementation of the student well-being approach in organization management, curriculum, and operational planning. Controlling is essential to perform because it ensures that the right things happen in the right way and at the right time. The process of controlling requires the supervisor to measure the actual performance and take any necessary action to correct or improve things [33].

The cultural strategic perspective of teaching has always been in critical need of a supervisor in the last decade. Culturally responsive teaching perspectives will help students to value academics and use them to succeed in the real world. This perspective believes that culturally diverse students, teachers, and schools are a resource for a supervisor, who will utilize this diversity as an asset to enhance academic and teaching well-being [34, 35]. Identifying diversity not only in students but also in other school stakeholders and knowing how to utilize them is not a simple matter. It requires the amount of knowledge and wisdom from supervisors’ experiences so that it becomes a part of advanced thinking skills.

The findings regarding working attitudes of educational supervisors (i.e., continuous improvement, quality orientation, taking the initiative, being passionate) reflect adult learning principles. Adult learning principles include self-directedness, accumulated experiences, which become learning resources, readiness to learn and growing orientation of the learner’s social role, and internal motivation to learn [36, 37]. Self-directedness will not appear if the supervisor does not have a continuous improvement and quality orientation attitude. Initiative becomes an indicator of learning readiness. A passionate attitude serves as a drive-in internal motivation to learn. A recent study shows that the principles of adult learning are recommended for the educational supervisor to follow when working with all school stakeholders to build a good
school atmosphere for students' well-being and provide a supportive learning environment [34, 38].

Supervisors can not change and improve school quality directly. They make a change by inspiring the school principal and teachers. Therefore, supervisors need to become effective models by demonstrating good working attitudes. Using social learning perspective, change in school stakeholder’s understanding, both at a surface level (e.g., recall new information) and at a deeper level (e.g., change in attitude and beliefs), occurs because of social interaction between actors within the social network [39]. The supervisors, who become working attitudes role models, will serve as a powerful factor in changing and developing internal school stakeholders.

Supervisors should pay more attention to develop school staff because education seeks to address and reflect on developing human skills and capacities and the necessities of the future [12]. The educational supervisors should understand the needs of the school and also have broad knowledge about the student well-being program; only then can they match the characteristics of school staff and the effective strategies to develop them. Teachers as well as the principal need to be assisted by an educational supervisor on how to foster students' well-being through classroom strategies, practices and structures. From a teacher's perspective, implementing the student well-being program is not always a simple task. However, the strongest influencing factor in the effectiveness of such programs is the teachers who enact them [40]. Since teachers nourish others, therefore, they also need nourishment so that they can continue to grow. They look for new ideas and new ways to adapt to a variety of students and situations in the educational process [41]. Supervisors also have to encourage, motivate and increase the spirit of all the teachers to use the program regularly.

Principals also play a pivotal role in students' well-being. A principal as an educational leader [42] has control over activities in the school. Principals need to build capacity at the school level by supporting leadership among educators and creating a culture that fosters collaboration and forges trusting relationships geared toward learning [14] so that educational supervisors can become partners for discussion and share opinions with the principal. Supervisors can provide suggestions, views, and strategic directions so that the principal will be more confident in leading the implementation of the student well-being program.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the students' well-being program involves all the stakeholders, including educational supervisors. Through the whole school approach, the implementation of strategies, operations, and curriculum runs in accordance with the objectives of the program. The results of the study stated that the primary competence needed for educational supervisors is social skills. The skills are related to empathy and concern to understand the difficulties faced by the school staff, including teachers and principals. Educational supervisors need to build supportive relationships, openness, and development-oriented relationships so that the program mentoring process can run smoothly.

This research is limited to educational supervisors only. For further research, we suggest analyzing the competency framework for teachers and principals as the main part who implement the student well-being program at the school, set by the government. Based on these findings, it can be practically used as a reference for mapping the competencies of educational supervisors. Then, the mapping result can be used as a basis to design the training and development program in the context of the student well-being program.

ETHICS APPROVAL AND CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

Not applicable.

HUMAN AND ANIMAL RIGHTS

No animals were used in this research. All human research procedures followed were in accordance with the ethical standards of the committee responsible for human experimentation (institutional and national), and with the Helsinki Declaration of 1975, as revised in 2013.

CONSENT FOR PUBLICATION

Informed consent was obtained from the participants of this study.

AVAILABILITY OF DATA AND MATERIALS

The data supporting the finding of the article is available in the Zenodo Repository at zenodo.org, reference number: https://zenodo.org/record/5576990#.YW5NgxpBw2w.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest, financial or otherwise.

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Declared none.

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