TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT ETHICAL SYSTEMS

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Abstract

The teaching profession and ethics are concepts that are closely related. Teaching generally has missions within education and training, such as guiding individuals to the right and good and setting an example for them. Ethics is the guide that ensures that the profession adheres to certain principles while fulfilling its mission. One of the most discussed issues in the field is the criteria by which ethical principles will be improved (Aydın, 2016). In this context, five important ethical systems stand out in the field. These are Rule Ethics (Kant, I.), Personal Ethics (Buber, M.), Intended Result Ethics (Mill, J. S.), Social Contract Ethics (Rousseau, J. J.) and Social Life Ethics. This study aims to reveal teachers' perceptions of ethical systems while practicing their profession. The study group of the research consists of 9 teachers working in the central district of Çanakkale. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and subjected to content analysis using the deductive method. As a result of the study, it was determined that teachers generally comply with ethical principles, but they are not aware of the approach they use to do this.

Keywords: Teaching, ethical systems, ethical principles, professional ethics

INTRODUCTION

The subject of ethics continues to be the subject of both philosophy and the concept of morality throughout the ages. As the culture of living together develops among people, it has constantly attracted the attention of researchers. In addition, it has diversified according to the characteristics of the period and continued its development until today. Naturally, the main actors of these developments were theorists. They shaped the society's culture of living together with the theories they developed. At the same time, the theories that include the characteristics of the period, according to C. Solomon (1991), generally focus on the requirements of being a good person and what the rules should be that determine and limit the individual's behavior in society (Aydın, 2016). The most important issue that theorists did not agree on was the definition of the good and the ways in which the individual fulfills his responsibilities towards society. As can be understood from the theoretical studies on ethics carried out to date, it is observed that consensus cannot be achieved. The most important reason for this can be seen as the fact that the culture, value system, beliefs and norms that enable the formation of ethical standards vary from society to society and from organization to organization. Today, different organizational structures that have emerged with the development of industrial society have further increased the existing complexity. In order to minimize this confusion, philosophers have identified unethical behavior and introduced the concepts of ethical code and professional ethics. Every individual within the community is expected to similarly comply with the ethical principles created based on these concepts, and an effort is made to ensure unity in practice. However, no matter how much the rules are tried to be universalized, humans need a different
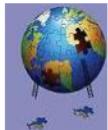
perspective on any situation, as they are constantly changing, developing and interacting beings. It is considered valuable in terms of offering different perspectives against different situations in ethical systems and the development of ethics. Ethics of Rules (Kant, I.), Personal Ethics (Buber, M.), Ethics of Intended Consequence (Mill, J. S.), Ethics of Social Contract (Rousseau, J. J.) and Ethics of Social Life, which are considered as ethical systems in the literature, also represent different human structures. The implementation of the proposed systems may vary according to the situation and the person. Especially when it is handled in the public sphere, this situationality comes to the fore. For example, an individual in a decision-making position will make his/her decision in the face of a situation according to his/her conscience, virtuous behaviour, the social life around him/her, the norms of society, or utility and happiness. Here, it is difficult to say what the individual should decide according to. Because every decision will have its own consequences, and predicting what impact it will have will depend on the individual's level of consciousness. Here, when an individual uses the same system in every situation, he or she may become questionable regarding ethical behavior either within the individual or within the community. In order to overcome such situations in the public sphere, ethical principles are being developed in the practice phase of the profession. The principles developed especially as professional ethics are intended to serve as a buffer against ethical violations encountered in the public sector. In Turkey, Law No. 5176 dated 2004 was enacted in order to disseminate ethical principles in public practices, which started as a fight against corruption within the framework of European Union harmonization and in order to prevent ethical violations in the public sphere. There are practices in the world to prevent ethical violations in the public sector by turning ethical principles into law. However, there are some differences especially between developed countries and Türkiye during the implementation phase. While Sweden follows an encouraging method rather than setting rules, Turkey adopts a rule-based ethical regime (Özkal, Sayal, 2017). Since ethical behavior is related to the control of internal behavior, it does not seem realistic to prevent ethical violations by simply making rules. The development and implementation of ethical principles in the field should be done by taking into account the requirements of the individual, profession, organization and society. Missing one may make the other problematic. For this reason, lawmakers need to take into account the characteristics of all parties when considering ethics. At the same time, the legal text prepared should be encouraging, encouraging and encouraging, as in developed countries. In addition to being a vital issue in school systems, ethics also has a supporting role in the trust and efficiency of society (Gözütok, 1999). In addition, education and ethics are both living and developing processes and have a structure that nourishes each other. The teaching profession is one of the leading names in these processes. In addition, the purposeful relationship between education and ethics makes the teaching profession a common denominator. While the teacher's duty is defined as being a role model in education and teaching desired behaviors, ethics is handled as guiding towards the right and the good within the framework of moral philosophy. A teacher, who is an exemplary position in both fields, can increase the effectiveness of education by being involved in both the development and implementation of ethical principles while practicing his profession. Acting in accordance with the behaviors required by the profession and developing these rules require appropriate environments (Gözütok, 1999). These environments must be provided for teachers through both legal regulations and school management processes. Ethics in education and training is of great importance in terms of conducting education in a healthy manner and achieving the desired goals and behaviors (Ilgaz, Bilgili, 2006). The determination of professional ethics principles, starting with the teacher oath and Law No. 5176, indicates that there are ethical violations in this field and that steps are taken to prevent this and that it is taken seriously. However, if the teacher is not involved in the arrangements made, the steps taken will remain on paper. Moreover, when we look at the studies conducted in the field (Minaz, 2017, Gözütok, 1999, Kuru-Çetin and Demirkasımoğlu, 2015), it shows that the problems exist and continue. The teacher's professional responsibility is not limited to the school. At the same time, teachers are expected to be interested in social developments, establish good relations with their environment and reflect this in their profession. Not including a
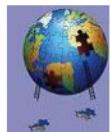
profession that has a mission and close relationship with all areas of education in ethics-related processes will weaken the existence of ethics in education. For this reason, including teachers who apply ethical principles in the field in the development and implementation processes may be a good step in terms of adopting the determined principles. The aim of our study is to reveal teachers' opinions about ethical systems.

METHOD

Model of the Research

The research was prepared with qualitative research method. Qualitative research is the reflection of the daily lives of individuals, groups, societies and organizations at the end of a process (Miles, Huberman, 2021). In the research, the phenomenological design, which is one of the qualitative research designs appropriate to the nature of the research, was used. The phenomenological pattern is an effort to make sense of and conceptualize various situations such as events, experiences, perceptions, tendencies and concepts in the world we live in (Yıldırım, Şimşek, 2021).

Working group

This study was carried out in the 2022-2023 academic year with 12 teachers working in schools affiliated with the Ministry of National Education in the central district of Çanakkale province, who wanted to participate in the study on the basis of accessibility and volunteering. The sample of the research was determined by the convenient (convenience) sampling model, which is a non-random sampling method.

Collection of Data

A semi-structured interview form prepared by the researchers was used in the study. While preparing the form, studies on ethical systems in the relevant literature were examined. The interview form was submitted to the review of three faculty members who are experts in their field in terms of content validity. One of the most discussed issues in the field is the criteria according to which ethical principles will be developed. In this context, two semi-structured questions were prepared for each of the five important ethical systems in the field (rule ethics, personal ethics, intended result ethics, social contract ethics and social life ethics) to obtain teacher opinions. Then, using expert opinions, a total of five (5) questions were prepared, one (1) question representing each ethical system, and the interview form was finalized. The interviews were recorded using the note-taking method. In addition, the open-ended questionnaire was given to the interviewer, and he was asked to fill it out in his own handwriting. With this method, the reliability and consistency of the findings were tested by taking both verbal and written statements of the interviewees about the subject.

Analysis of Data

Participants were allowed to participate in the interviews on a voluntary basis, and analysis and coding were carried out with the same impartiality to ensure transparency and reliability for practitioners. Before content analysis, themes appropriate to the conceptual framework and purpose of the research were determined. When the discourses and written statements of the participants were compared as a result of the interviews, the data of 3 participants were not included in the study due to their suitability for the purpose of the research. The data of the other 9 participants were tabulated in accordance with the themes. Data can be organized according to the themes revealed by the research questions, or presented by taking into account the questions or dimensions used in the interview and observation processes (Karasar, 2015). The data was subjected to content analysis and analyzed using

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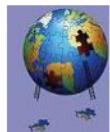
the deductive method. According to this approach, the data obtained are summarized and interpreted according to themes previously determined based on the research question or sub-questions. In phenomenological research, data analysis is aimed at revealing experiences and meanings and aims to conceptualize the data and reveal themes that can describe the phenomenon (Yıldırım, Şimşek, 2021).

RESULTS

Table 1. Teachers' perceptions of taking personal ethical principles into consideration while doing their job.

G1	No, unless there is a universal criterion. Because personal principles may differ for each individual, which can lead to very serious consequences.
G2	Yes. I care about personal ethical principles in order to have a clear conscience and feel at peace.
G3	Generally. I use it in cases where there are no other determining rules or ethical principles.
G4	Yes. Because I have a temperament and principles that I believe in and cannot compromise on.
G5	Yes. A world without morality and social norms is not livable for humans.
G6	Definitely. So that it won't be difficult to come to terms with my conscience when I'm alone.
G7	Yes. Because I think that one of the areas of competence in the teaching profession, as in every profession, is to have ethical values. Moreover, in private, it is not possible in practice for a person to act outside his own values.
G8	There are situations when I take personal ethical principles into consideration. Situations develop where social norms do not respond to the problem.
G9	Yes, this feels good.

Considering the interviewees' views on personal ethics, almost all of them revealed that they use it consciously. G1 interviewee again stated that he consciously preferred rule ethics and did not choose personal ethics. In studies related to the teaching profession and professional ethical principles in the public sector (Baloğlu, Karadağ, Doğan, 2008, Özmen, 2015, Doğaner, Özbek, 2019), it is seen that especially in principles such as impartiality, equality, justice, honesty, which are related to personal ethics, the participants stated that these principles are paid attention to in practice. The strength of personal ethics is that it allows individuals to express themselves and does not make the individual dependent on predetermined rules. This can add originality to the individual. Teachers may encounter individual decision-making situations due to their profession. In this case, it may provide opportunities for teachers to produce their own solutions. However, since the profession is done in the public arena, it may be difficult to determine public boundaries in schools that embrace personal ethics.

Table 2. Teachers' perceptions of ethical rules while doing their job.

G1	I evaluate the beliefs and rules specific to a society by looking at the criteria of whether they are local or universal. I pay attention to the same criteria in my profession.
G2	Ethical rules such as impartiality, justice, equality, honesty, accountability, respect for differences, caring about personal development, objectivity, being open to innovations and respect for people are important to me while performing my profession.
G3	Most rule ethics. Because this is the expectation of the institution we are in. Where rule ethics is not enough, personal ethics comes into play.
G4	Honesty, security, equality, accuracy, fairness. Because it is a requirement not only of the profession but also of being a human being.

G5	Equality, honesty, impartiality, respect. Without these principles, running my profession, or any profession, is meaningless. For example, evaluating and treating a segment of society differently is like planting a bomb at the foundation of social peace and social life.
G6	Being fair, treating equally, being a good example, integrity, honesty, respect.
G7	Justice, student rights, children's rights, respect for individuals, confidentiality, consistency in words and actions, respect for differences. Because, first of all, the teacher must be able to maintain his/her reputation in the school, family and society. A teacher who cannot earn the love and respect of his students cannot fulfill the requirements of his profession, regardless of his qualifications. The teacher should always remember that he is a role model for his students.
G8	I generally consider social contract ethics. I choose social norms because we run our business in accordance with laws and regulations.
G9	Personal ethics.

Rules are generally indispensable for living together. For this reason, organizations build their existence and sustainability on rules. But the existence of rules alone is not enough. It is also important from which perspective it is prepared and implemented. As reflected in the interviewees' statements, rules can be perceived and applied in different ways. In other words, it is important whether the rules are determined by the individual, society or laws and regulations. In general, the interviewees stated that they perceived the rules as based on universally accepted principles such as honesty, trust, equality, accuracy, fairness and respect. However, G8 participant stated "I generally consider social contract ethics", showing that he bases ethics on social life norms. The principles stated by the interviewees regarding rule ethics have been discussed in studies conducted in the field as professional ethical principles or professional codes in the public sphere (Meb, 2011). Rule ethics has two main emphases. One is to display virtuous behavior and the other is to have universal rules. The principles reflected by the interviewees coincide with these two basic emphases. G1 participant states that he practices his profession based on whether the rules are universal or not. Just because the rules are universal or shown as virtuous behavior does not mean that they will be applied in the same way. It is a question mark how to apply general rules in the special situations that teachers encounter most often. Participant G3 expresses this situation as "personal ethics comes into play when rule ethics are not enough".

Table 3. Teachers' perceptions of ethical values in their social lives.

G1	Yes. I take this into consideration out of respect for myself, the people I socialize with, and nature.
G2	Yes. Because social life is entirely based on human relations. One of the features that distinguish humans from other living creatures is conscience. Loving and being loved are among the characteristics that make a person human. Ethical values are necessary to maintain social life.
G3	I use social life ethics, personal ethics and social contract ethics in my social life. I prefer social contract ethics in my general human relations, and social life ethics and personal ethics in my private relationships.
G4	Yes. From the instinct to be a good, true, reliable and fair person in every aspect of life.
G5	Yes. Social norms have emerged for social life to progress without conflict. Ethics also interacts with these norms. Acting unethically endangers the sustainability of social life. Ethics and social life mutually create each other.
G6	Yes. I do not include people who do not value ethical values in my social life. Because I want to have a respectable life.
G7	Ethical values are the basic elements that define a person in society. A person cannot be considered separately from his values and cannot develop attitudes, behaviors and attitudes independent of his values. Therefore, yes, I take many ethical values into consideration in social life.
G8	I'm taking it into consideration. I think that I need to pay attention to ethical values in order not to be excluded and isolated from society and to exist in social life.
G9	Yes, because I think it protects my boundaries and boundaries

At the center of the teaching profession are the social relationships established with the environment. These relationships are the nourishing veins of the profession. The teacher transfers what he gets from
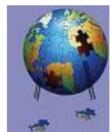
here to his students through another relationship through his profession. For this reason, it is important for teachers to care about ethics in their social relationships in terms of its reflection on their profession. Ethical values have a regulatory role in social life, as in other areas, with the norms they create. G5 interviewee revealed his awareness about the ethics of social life by saying that these norms interact with ethics and give rise to each other. Social life ethics has similar expectations from the individual regarding ecological life, just as it has expectations about social life. It is important for a teacher to adopt the norms formed within the ecosystem in terms of developing the ecological thinking skills of the individuals he educates. G1 has shown its awareness in this field by expressing its respect for the individual, society and nature. The interviewees generally stated in their statements that they were aware of the importance of social life for them and its complementary effect in terms of ethics. G8 and G9 participants demonstrated their attitudes by drawing attention to the social contract aspect of ethics.

Table 4. Teachers' perceptions about ethical values in social life.

G1	Universally accepted ethical values are more important to me than the local beliefs and values adopted by the majority of society. The approach to nature, children, animals, the environment and women within the education system must be at universal standards.
G2	Impartiality, courtesy, respect, truthfulness, good faith,
G3	Public moral ethics is often done for the sake of living up to the reputation of professional dignity.
G4	Equality, reliability, fairness and truthfulness are also the conditions for living together in society.
G5	For example, equal treatment, a teacher's equal treatment of each student, is indispensable for social peace. Any other action will create an excluded and marginalized layer in society.
G6	To be shown as a good example in every sense.
G7	Respect for the person, human rights, respect for democratic and universal values, consistency in behavior, honesty and fairness. Because professional life is not outside of social life. A part of our social identity is the work we do, our profession.
G8	All ethical values are important everywhere. While living collectively, I try to look at ethical values holistically as 'ethical' rather than classifying them.
G9	I find personal ethics and social ethics more important because it makes it easier for me to approach from a more benevolent perspective.

Society has a significant impact on shaping the individual. The individual is born and develops within the order created by society. Public spaces such as schools are also the most important factor in maintaining order and adapting the individual to the order. Teachers, on the other hand, are representatives of the society who transfer the rules created for order to individuals. The teacher complies with the rules established by laws and social norms, believes that they are necessary for order, and transfers them to the students through education. The interviewees generally drew attention to the social aspect of their profession. G3 demonstrated the social aspect of teaching by associating compliance with social contract ethics with professional respectability, and G7 saw the interviewer profession as a part of social life. Social contract ethics argues that acting in accordance with the general procedures of society as a collective and moral body is possible with framework rules (Aydın, 2016). We can think that G4 participant has adopted the framework rules required by the contract, which he sees as a necessity of living together. In the literature, criticisms are put forward about contract ethics, such as that it restricts the individual approach and that the general opinion of the society cannot be the criterion of everything (Aydın, 2016). G1 and G9 interviewees stated that they did not deliberately choose social ethics and were critical, emphasizing the aspects they saw as lacking. This approach can help teachers develop a different perspective on the problems they encounter regarding ethics.
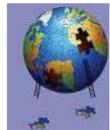
Table 5. Teachers' perceptions of the ethical values they adopt while achieving their goals.

G1	I take universal values into consideration. In order to raise more free-thinking and sensitive individuals.
G2	Ethical rules such as impartiality, justice, equality, honesty, accountability, respect for differences, caring about personal development, objectivity, being open to innovations and respect for people are important to me while fulfilling my professional goals.
G3	Rule ethics. Because I do not prefer to go beyond the rules and laws.
G4	Because values such as honesty, integrity, equality and fairness are essential for me to perform my profession in the best way.
G5	Human life, honor and dignity are superior to all material interests, and humans can only exist within a society by interacting with each other. The structure of society is determined by people's value judgments, and at the same time, individual human value judgments are also dictated by society. In other words, they are two intertwined, inseparable concepts that create each other. In this context, if we do not act morally, we will pollute the society that created us, and then we will be recreated by the society with that pollution. So this is cutting the branch you are sitting on. When a king does not govern his country fairly, morally and equally, the very existence of a king in a society is probably the seed of inequality. After a while, the decay he creates will find itself and he will no longer have a country to rule. It also applies to a task or responsibility. Ethical values are one of the basic elements of social life.
G6	Integrity, honesty, reliability, being fair and democratic, professional mastery
G7	While achieving his goals, a professional educator should act respectfully and fairly towards the student, be solution-oriented, try to reveal the facts without prejudice, be consistent in his words and actions, and be respectful of differences. I think professional respect and professionalism require this. Only a professional and respected teacher can receive support in achieving his goals.
G8	I try to approach holistically rather than any ethical value. But most importantly, I take individual and social ethics into consideration. Because while it makes me feel good as an individual, I also want it to be accepted by society.
G9	My personal ethical values are of the opinion that I should be satisfied before the results.

Education is a set of actions aimed at goals in itself. The way these actions are carried out may vary depending on the perspective of the practitioners. Participants generally state that their ethical behavior is determined by rules, social, societal or personal norms rather than goals. G9 participant states that he prefers personal values over results. G5 interviewee emphasized the ethics of social contract by expressing the opinion that "Human life, honor and dignity are superior to all material interests, and human beings can only exist within a society by interacting with each other." G1 and G3 participants seem to prefer rule ethics. It is seen that all of the participants take universal values, conscience, social and community norms into consideration when performing ethical behaviors in purpose-oriented actions. It is important for the integrity of education that teachers pay attention to how the goal is achieved, rather than the goal itself, in the education and training process, which is a set of goals. Again, if the teacher evaluates this process from his/her own perspective and designs the application based on the ethical values he/she adopts, this will result in a healthier change in the behavior aimed at the individual. Of course, what the ethical values that the teacher should adopt and use in practice should be, and under what conditions, is an issue that needs to be discussed separately. In the literature, in the study where teachers' opinions were sought in the context of corruption, teachers stated that administrators were close to some teachers and discriminated against them in
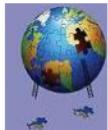
order to carry out school affairs, and also used their personal and communication power to make their name known, and stated that they adopted the purpose-oriented ethical approach of administrators (Minaz, 2017). Depending on the situation, it may be considered normal for the management side of the education and training process to act purposefully. The teacher can take individual approaches in decision-making, but management has to consider teacher behavior from many perspectives. For example, one must carry out its work for the benefit of the student and the other for the benefit of all components of the institution. Therefore, it may be necessary to apply a more diverse ethical understanding in the management part of the education and training process. Again, in another study on the utilitarian approach, which is the basis of the teleological ethics approach, it was concluded that it will force us to think about other people who will be affected by our decisions during the decision-making phase (Ilgaz, Bilgili, 2006). In summary, the fact that the teachers did not resort to the ethic of purpose in the study may be related to the flexibility of the process they carry out to develop individual behavior.

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSIONS

Ethics is seen as a set of norms and rules. The elements that make up society are brought together around certain principles, norms and rules by knitting a network of functional relationships. Within these, principles are developed through models, causing norms and rules to change over time. According to Kuçuradi (2003), modeling is a kind of Social Philosophy views or social theories. Ethical systems are also the product of these theories.

Public spaces are places where social relations develop, change and are shaped. Schools are the most important representatives of these areas. Schools have two separate areas: public administration and education-teaching process, and teachers are responsible for carrying out these areas. The function of teachers is to shape the variable structures of social relations arising from their structural characteristics. The purpose of ethics is not only to learn the relationships of individuals with each other, but also to teach how important moral principles and values are in individual, social and community life and how people should treat each other (Meb, 2011). For this reason, teachers' perceptions of ethics and the ethical system will also determine the direction of the norms and rules that will emerge. The variable structure of social relations that constitute the structure of society makes ethical norms and principles constantly controversial. Therefore, ethical systems constitute the source of discussions on framing ethics in the field.

We can also see the emergence of ethical systems as an effort to create a social model. In the study, it is seen that teachers' perceptions about this model vary depending on the event, situation and environment. For example, a teacher seems to prioritize social contract ethics or social contract ethics within the community. They stated that they commonly take rule ethics into consideration in the public sphere, and that they apply personal ethics in individual situations. It has been observed that they do not include the intended result ethic while doing their profession and prefer other models. In all models discussed in the field, the problem of where the institution and its target audience and their conflicting interests can meet attracts attention (Sayımer, 2006). According to Raci (2004) and Sayımer (2006), in the field of management of the public space, outcome ethics is used based on experience, while rule ethics is adopted in cases that require a subjective and universal perspective such as justice. If we consider the changes in teachers' ethical perceptions depending on the situation in the light of the discussions in the field, we can see it as a normal situation. In fact, if we consider the variable structure of social relations, we can go one step further and argue that it should be like this. In the study, it is seen that the opinions of teachers who are not at the management level are consulted, and that many ethical understandings are used in the operation of the education and training process and that the ethics of the intended result is not included, which also coincides with the discussions in the field.
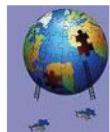
Unethical behavior, especially in the public sphere, can cause high material and moral costs. It is necessary to create an understanding of good governance in the public sector with an ethical infrastructure consisting of regulations, mechanisms and processes that prevent the unethical use of public power, and to eliminate unethical behavior norms that have high social costs (Gönülaçar, 2022). Reflecting the steps taken may lead us to obtain more effective results, especially due to the representative power of schools in this field. Raising awareness for both those who exhibit ethical behavior and those who are exposed to it is important for effective results. As can be seen from the results of the study, school environments should be created where teachers can use ethical systems flexibly, that is, exhibit a situational approach.

Suggestions
According to the results of the study;

- An educational environment should be prepared in which both teachers and students can learn together on the basis of ethical systems.
- In Turkish public administration, the process of establishing something, fixing something or preventing negative consequences is carried out by legislation from top to bottom. This process should be reversed by creating educational environments. In other words, policy makers should ensure that the process is carried out properly with supportive supervision, rather than determining ethical principles and expecting those below them to comply with them. In this sense, school administrations should provide flexibility to teachers and students to demonstrate and develop ethical behavior.
- Instead of expecting teachers to comply with pre-prepared principles that only address general situations, they should be given the opportunity to behave in special situations.
- An ethical audit board consisting of administrators, teachers and students should be established for each school. The concept of auditing should be encouraging and advisory, as in developed countries.
- Ethical behavior is the private area of an institution and this area should be approached with a self-regulation approach, not legislation. Otherwise, ethical principles will be prepared and implemented formally and an inefficient educational environment will be created.

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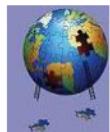
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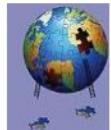
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